

Haven High Technology College

Examination Policy

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This exam policy will be reviewed at the start of each academic year by the head of centre and the exams officer.

1. Exam responsibilities

1.1 Head of Centre/Executive Head Teacher

Overall responsibility for the college as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

1.2 Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and assists with the analysis of exam results:

- Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all external exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes

- Assists with the analysis and preparation of reports for the SLT showing results achieved
- Organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks dispatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Books all exam rooms after liaison with other users and makes the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available at the specified time.
- To start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- To ensure relevant staff are aware of any specific procedures that are in place for a student with a disability.

1.3 Deputy Head Teacher (Teaching & Learning)

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4.

1.4 Assistant Head Teacher (Student Progress)

- Manages the analysis of exam results
- Prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made.

1.5 Heads of Faculty/Department

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

1.6 Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to heads of faculty.

1.6 Head of Learning Support

- Administers and makes applications for access arrangements using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Provision of additional support – with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment – to help candidates achieve their course aims.

1.7 Invigilators

- To be familiar with the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Exams and statutory notices to candidates.
- Ensure that examinations are conducted properly and to inform the exams officer or head of centre of any irregularities
- Distribution of exam papers and other material as required by the exams officer
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams officer.

1.8 Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- To arrive for scheduled examinations on time.
- To comply with the JCQ Rules and Regulations regarding conduct during examinations.

1.9 Administrative staff

- Support for the input of data.
- Posting of exam papers.

1.10 Site management

- Setting up the allocated rooms as required.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Deputy Head (Teaching & Learning), the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty, in consultation with subject teachers.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, OCR National Awards, BTEC Awards, City & Guilds qualifications and 14-19 Diplomas (from Sept 2009).

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's curriculum statement published annually.

Decisions on whether candidates should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, subject teachers, and the Director of KS4, Assistant Head (Student Progress) or Deputy Head Teachers.

At key stage 3

The college will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.

At key stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body. The college will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal examinations schedule:

- Y7 CATS tests in September.
- KS3 Examinations in May.
- Y10 examinations in March.
- Y11 Mock examinations in November.

External exams are scheduled in November, January, March, May and June.

Which exam series are used at this centre is decided by the Deputy Head (Teaching & Learning), the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty, in consultation with subject teachers.

3.2 Timetables

The exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of Faculty and the subject teachers.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

Individual statements of entry and timetables will given to students whenever possible.

The centre accepts entries from external candidates at its own discretion.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Faculty.

Late entries are authorised by Heads of Faculty and exams officer.

4.3 Retakes

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, Heads of Faculty and subject teachers.

5. Exam fees

Initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre.

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes, provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence, or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

The centre will pay the fee for an enquiry about a result; however, where the centre does not uphold a request for such an enquiry, the fee will normally be paid by the candidate.

(See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements

6.1 DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

The centre is committed to equality of opportunity and is keen to promote a learning and working environment that is inclusive, celebrates diversity and does not discriminate against any group.

As far as is reasonably practicable, the centre will ensure:

- Lighting is appropriate for candidates
- Premises will meet legal and DDA requirements
- Adapted facilities are provided as necessary
- The needs of all students will be considered in the event of an emergency evacuation
- Evacuation procedures will be provided at the beginning of each exam
- Appropriate seating / seating arrangements will be arranged in line with the candidates needs
- Access arrangements will be applied for and put in place according to the individuals needs and with the agreement of the Awarding Body

Full details of the DDA Access Policy for Examinations is available from the exams office.

6.2 Special Needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO / Head of Learning Support and the educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

The Head of Learning Support will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam. The Head of Learning Support can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Head of Learning Support with the exams officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Head of Learning Support with the exams officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Head of Learning Support with the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Head of Learning Support with the exams officer.

7. Estimated grades

The Heads of Faculty will submit estimated grades when requested by the Assistant Head (Student Progress) or the exams officer.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for all exam supervision.

The recruitment and training of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams officer.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Administration Manager.

CRB fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams officer.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Administration Manager.

8.2 Exam days

The exams officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available at the specified time.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Exams Officer (or other person designated by the Head of Centre) will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff and other authorised personnel may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates and instill discipline.

Heads of faculty/department may be present during the exam but are not allowed to bring any unauthorised material into the examination room, including coaching, subject specific PowerPoint's or other subject specific material, and must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to heads of department/faculty at the end of the exam session.

8.3 Health & Safety Procedures during Emergencies

Using the guidelines set out by the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ), the following action will be taken in an emergency such as a fire alarm:

- Candidates will remain in their seats and wait in silence until given instructions by the Exams Officer or the invigilators.
- If it is necessary to evacuate the examination room, the Exams officer or the invigilators will inform the candidates, who will then leave through the nearest fire exit doors, quickly and quietly. Candidates will be escorted to the field adjacent to the Y7 assembly point, where an exam register will be taken.
- Candidates will be supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination.
- All question papers and scripts will be left in the examination room.
- A note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted will be taken by the exams Officer or an invigilator.
- Candidates will be allowed the full working time set for the examination.
- If there are only a few candidates, candidates may be taken (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.
- A full report of the incident and of the action taken will be sent to the awarding body within 7 days of the incident.
- In case of a power cut, candidates must remain in the seats until the fire exit doors are opened by the invigilators, in order to bring light into the room. Candidates must wait quietly in their seats until the problem is resolved. Candidates will be allowed the full working time set for the examination.

9. Candidates, Timetable Clashes and Special Consideration

9.1 Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour will apply.

JCQ rules regarding candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.

The attendance officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

9.2 Timetable Clashes

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

9.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the exams officer or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Heads of faculty/department will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers, heads of department and the heads of faculty.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office.

The main points are:

- Appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- Candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- Appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the head of centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- The head of centre's findings will be notified in writing copied to the exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

11. Results, Enquiries about Results (EARs) & Access to Scripts (ATS)

11.1 Results

GCSE results are usually issued on the fourth Thursday in August and will be made available to candidates from 11.00am.

Candidates can collect individual results slips on results days in person at the centre.

If the candidate is not able to collect the results slip in person on results day, alternative arrangements should be made in advance with the Exams Officer. Results will not be issued by telephone or e-mail.

Arrangements for the college to be open on results days are made by the head of centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the exams officer.

11.2 Enquiries about Results

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate pursues this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

(See section 5: Exam fees)

11.3 Access to Scripts

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

12. Certificates

Candidates will be notified when certificates are available for collection and must be collected in person.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for a minimum of two years.

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