Thinking Schools Academy Trust

"Transforming Life Chances"

The Victory Academy
Exam Policy

Policy Holder: Tracey Littlemore
Position: Examinations Officer
Date Ratified: October 2026
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The Exam policy

The Policy Purpose

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.

The exam policy will be reviewed every year.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre and Exams Officer.

Exam Responsibilities

Having overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre, the Head of Centre:

- Advises on appeals and reviews of marking
- Is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document - *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*

Exams Officer:

Manages the administration of public and internal exams:

- Advises the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Curriculum Leaders (CL), class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all 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
- Organises entries and ensures they are checked by HoD prior to deadlines
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Administers Access Arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manages the invigilator team and organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams with the support of the HR department
- Submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch 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/reviews of marking requests

Head of Departments are responsible for:

- Checking candidates are entered for the correct units and tiers
- Submission of candidate names to SLT and the Exams Officer (EO) of who they would like to apply for a post result enquiry for

The SEN Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access Normally from Year 9 onwards, or when a need is identified, to ensure their need/s are identified before they begin their GCSE course
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements before they begin their Post 16 course
- 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
- Applying for recommended Access Arrangements, with the support of the Exams Officer, via Access Arrangements Online in a timely fashion, but before the Awarding Body deadline
- Informing the Exams Officer once the request has been approved

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supplying requested evidence to the SENCo, in a timely manner, for the identification of access arrangement needs

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the Exams Office before the start of the exam
- Setting up of the exam room in accordance with JCQ regulations
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the Exams Office

Candidates are responsible for:

- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own
- Confirming they understand what constitutes malpractice (and what AI misuse is) and the consequences of committing malpractice
- For producing legible writing
- Signing the declaration on the front of the question/answer booklet where required by the awarding body

Qualifications

Qualifications offered:

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The qualifications offered are A Levels, GCSE, Level 3 Certificates, OCR Nationals and BTECs.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there is to be a change of syllabus for the following year, the Exams Office must be informed by July 1st.

Informing the Exams Office of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the Curriculum Leaders and Senior Leadership Team.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the candidate and subject teachers.

Exam Series and Timetables

Exam Seasons:

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled throughout the year.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June, though there may be BTEC exams in January and March. Re-sits for GCSE English and Maths are scheduled in November.

Mock exams for all year groups are held under external exam conditions. End of Unit tests are held in the classroom.

The Head of Department decides which exam series they will enter their students. Some exams are offered on an on-demand basis.

Timetable:
Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetable for external exams.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Candidates have their exam entries confirmed by the Curriculum Leaders and subject teachers.

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal directly to the Exams Officer and should instead consult with their child's teacher to discuss this.

The Centre accepts entries from external candidates. Any additional costs e.g. Invigilation will be charged for. The Centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Curriculum Leaders via briefing meetings and email.

Late entries are authorised by departments and the Exam Officer. The department will be charged the late fee charged by the exam board.

Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with candidates, Exams Officer and Curriculum Leaders.

Exam Fees

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

All exam entry fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Departments. The Centre will pay late fees for candidates who are late entrants to the academy.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline/fail to sit an exam/do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Re-sit fees are paid by the Centre whilst the candidate is still educated at the academy.

Disability Discrimination Act

The centre complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments regulations.

The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

'A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

The centre will meet the requirements of the DDA by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and Exams Officer. See separate policy.

Access Arrangements

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with Special Educational Needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo.

Curriculum Leaders are responsible for ensuring candidates have their approved access arrangements for their subject's controlled assessments.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCo.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer. Access candidates will be roomed separately where possible.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams Officer.

If a candidate has never made use of an approved arrangement, it is not their normal way of working. The SENCo may consider withdrawing the arrangement. See separate policy.

Overseas Students

Managing overseas students is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Bilingual dictionaries are available for students who require them, this is the responsibility of the EAL department and the Line Head. Where the use of a bilingual dictionary is the student's normal way of working it may be used in an exam, where permitted by the Awarding Body.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer, and a detailed risk assessment has been produced. See The Victory Academy Contingency Plan.
https://thevictoryacademy.org.uk/policies/

Private candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Estimated grades/Coursework and Internally Assessed Marks

Curriculum Leaders are responsible for submitting grades to the Exams Officer when requested to do so.

Managing invigilators

Core staff and External staff are used to invigilate examinations and act as readers and/or scribes where necessary, subject to job description restrictions. External invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.
Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Office and HR Department.
Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR Department. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.
Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Office.
Invigilators rates of pay are set by the HR Department.
Invigilators will receive training and refresher training yearly.

Where the Awarding Body requires it, the Centre (School) will observe all new Invigilators on their first invigilation of an assessment related to the qualification overseen by that Awarding Body and thereafter annually. These observations shall be recorded using the Awarding Body supplied form and completed forms then retained for audit purposes.

Malpractice

The Exams Office is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice with the help of the SLT and Head of Centre. Statements will be sought from all parties involved and all evidence sent to the relevant exam board, in line with JCQ regulations.

Where necessary, reimbursement of the exam fees will be sought from the candidate's parent/carer.

Exam days

The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and ensure the question papers, other exam stationery and materials are available for the invigilators.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Exams Officer/Lead Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at line up to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted. Only identified members of staff are allowed in the exam room for subjects they do not teach.

In practical exams subject teachers will be needed in addition to invigilators.

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 Curriculum Leaders (CL) 24hrs after the exam end time, by placing them in the CL pigeonhole.

No coaching is allowed in the exam room.

Candidates

A member of SLT or their designated representative will identify candidates entering the exam room.

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates use of mobile phones and other 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 are expected to stay for the full exam time. Access candidates are expected to use any extra time awarded to them.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately. They must be accompanied by a member of staff, agreed by the Exams Officer, at all times.

The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.

Clash Candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision by parents, if applicable.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or be otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the Centre, the Exams Officer, or the exam invigilator to that effect.

The candidate must support any Special Consideration claim with appropriate evidence. Candidates should provide evidence as soon as possible and normally within three school days.

Any Special Consideration claim must be approved by SLT in the first instance. The Exams Officer will then forward a completed Special Consideration form to the relevant awarding body within the deadline provided. See separate policy.

Non-examination Assessment and Appeals

It is the duty of the Head of Department to ensure that all non-examination assessments (NEA) are ready for despatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all NEA assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the Exams Office by the Head of Department by the internal deadlines set by the Exams Officer. Curriculum Leaders are responsible for liaising with the Exams Office regarding any late submissions and any implications.

Subject teachers are to inform candidates of the timescale set by the subject lead or as indicated in the centre's internal appeals procedure to enable an internal appeal/request for a review of marking to be submitted by a candidate and the outcome known before final marks are submitted to the awarding body.

Appeals against NEA must be made by the given deadline.

Appeals Against NEA

The process for managing appeals against NEA is detailed in a separate appeals policy, available from the Exams Office.

Retention of NEA and Portfolios

The centre will store safely and securely NEA or portfolios retained in, or returned to, the centre until the certificates have been issued by the Exam Board, with the exception of Pearson BTEC which will be retained for no less than twelve months after the results have been issued. After this time, they will either be returned to the candidate or disposed of securely. The candidate will need to make arrangements with the Head of Department for the collection of work.

Appeals

If the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome of a review of marking or moderation (RoMM) or special consideration, they may wish to appeal against the decision, where the awarding body allows.
The Head of Centre can appeal within 30 calendar days for the receipt of the outcome.

Results

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, in person at the Centre. Should a student wish for a representative to collect on their behalf, a signed letter of consent must be provided by the representative to the Exams Officer along with a form of approved identification.

The academy does not routinely post results home due to data protection and security considerations.

Arrangements for the Centre to be open on results days are made by the Exams Officer in association with the site team and the Head of Centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

EARs (Enquires 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. The candidate's written consent is required before any EAR is requested, which must be sought after the results have been issued.

If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the Centre's expense.

When the centre does not support a candidate's or parent's request for an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged the exam board's fee. The written consent of candidate will be obtained prior to the request being made. See separate policy.

ATS (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. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The written consent of candidate will be obtained prior to the request being made.

Certificates

Certificates are presented in person, collected, signed for and dated.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so by the candidate in advance in writing to the Exams Officer and provide a form of approved identification on arrival at reception.

The Centre retains certificates for two years after which time they will be confidentially destroyed.

The Centre will direct ex-candidates to the appropriate website if they have lost their certificates.

Candidates must advise, in advance, when they wish to collect their certificates. There will be no guarantee certificates will be available should they arrive without notification.