



# Queen's Croft High School

# EXAMINATION POLICY

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# **EXAMINATION POLICY**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this exam policy is to ensure the planning and management of exams at Queen's Croft High School is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates and 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 two years.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership team and approved by Governors.

## **Responsibilities**

Overall responsibility for examinations sits with the Headteacher. On a day to day basis this responsibility is delegated to the relevant member of the senior leadership team (the exam officer) who is supported by the Administration Officer at the school.

The designated member of the senior leadership team manages the administration of public and internal exams in conjunction with administrative staff:

- 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 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.
- 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 12/13.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- 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/re-mark requests.

- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Ensure all staff involved in examinations are aware of the Examination Policy and all the provisions and principles contained within it.

Subject Teachers are responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to curriculum leads and the Examination Officer.
- Ensuring all candidates are aware of the provisions and principles of the Examination policy including the procedure to following for any appeals against the outcomes received. (the procedure is appended to this policy) and Malpractice as detailed later in this policy.

The Deputy Head, as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates in relation to 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.

Invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the main office to be secured in the safe.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

### **Accredited Qualifications**

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Senior Leadership Team in conjunction with subject staff and Heads of Key Stage.

The accredited qualifications currently offered at Queen's Croft High School include GCSE, BTEC (at entry level, Level 1 and Level 2), ASDAN and Functional Skills.

**Any change of specification must be reported immediately to the Administration Officer in the office. It is the responsibility of the subject teacher in charge of a qualification to provide full details of the course specification and details in respect of examination entries.**

### **Exam seasons**

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June each year. Some functional skills exams will take place outside this period and other practical examinations may also fall at different times.

On-demand assessments are to be scheduled in agreement with the exams officer.

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetable for External exams.

### **Entries, entry details and late entries**

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Curriculum Leads / Subject Teachers.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via Email.

Late entries are authorised by the Exam Officer.

Re-sits are offered to students where appropriate.

### **Exam fees**

Exam entry fees are paid by the school.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the school.

### **Equalities Act**

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010.

The centre will meet the disability provisions under the Equality Act 2010, by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Queen's Croft High School will make every possible reasonable adjustment to meet the individual needs of any student with any form of disability covered under the provisions of the Equality Act (2010). Each candidate will be assessed on a case by case basis and provision made in relation to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments in line with our internal procedures. These are based on best practice and guidance from the specific exam board.

## **Fair Assessment**

Queen's Croft High School is committed to ensuring that all learners have the opportunity to achieve their full potential by the most appropriate and direct route available. Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken following a review of their progress and in consultation with the Candidates/parents/carers and Subject teachers.

In addition to the specific provisions for disability detailed under the Equalities Act section above, the policy is based on all concepts of equality and diversity, as outlined in the School's Equality Policy. Candidates will not be disadvantaged on the basis of a protected characteristic; sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation, pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment.

Assessment procedures clearly detail the processes applied and ensure that exams are administered consistently and openly, and that the procedures are fair and non-discriminatory.

## **Controlled Assessment**

Controlled assessments are carried out in accordance with the regulations set down by JCQ. A copy of the procedures and systems for controlled assessments is appended to this policy.

## **Access arrangements**

The Deputy Head will work with subject staff to identify those students who need access arrangements in advance of any examination series.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by an Educational psychologist or Specialist teacher assessment.

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 Exams officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the exams officer.

## **Contingency planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the exams officer.

## **Managing invigilators**

Support staff are used to invigilate all examinations, as they know the pupils best and can reduce anxiety.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams office.

## **Malpractice**

Malpractice is any illegal or unethical activity or practice that deliberately breaches regulations, or might compromise quality assurance or control, or undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification, or could otherwise compromise the reputation of the centre, or the wider qualifications community.

Malpractice may involve any or all of the following: candidates, centre staff, for example:

- Candidate malpractice could be plagiarism of any kind; collusion or copying of another candidate's work; assuming the identity of another person for the purposes of assessment; providing false information in relation to exemption from assessment.
- Centre staff malpractice could be contravention of, or continued failure to meet centre approval, or administration or quality assurance requirements; providing improper assistance to candidates in the production of work for assessment; allowing evidence which is known by the staff member not to be the candidate's own to be included; or making claims for certification prior to the candidate completing all the requirements of the assessment

Maladministration is any unintentional activity or practice that leads to non-compliance with individual awarding organisation requirements. In most cases, maladministration will relate to administrative or quality assurance procedures, and may involve staff or candidates. Maladministration, if serious enough, may be treated as malpractice.

The Exams Officer is responsible for investigating any suspected malpractice. Malpractice is taken seriously and could potentially lead to disciplinary action for centre staff malpractice or disqualification for malpractice relating to candidates.

The procedure for dealing with Malpractice is detailed in Appendix 4 although all suspected and actual incidents of malpractice are reported to the examination board or JCQ as appropriate.

## **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 for the invigilator.

The exams officer and subject staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Examinations Officer or nominated deputy will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections 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 curriculum leads / subject teachers at the end of the exam session.

A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required.

### **Candidates**

Candidates' personal belongings are handed in at the start of every exam. It is school policy for students to hand in mobile phones on a daily basis.

Disruptive candidates will be dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the exams officer or nominated deputy.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff 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 stays.

### **Special consideration**

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

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example by providing 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.

### **Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)**

Queen's Croft High School will be open on results day each August for Year 11 students to collect their results. Any candidate who does not collect their results will have them posted to their home address.

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 consent is required before any EAR is requested.

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.

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. Any queries of this nature should be addressed to the exams officer.

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. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

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

### **Appeals**

Any student or their parents wishing to appeal in relation to the school's marking of internally assessed work for public examinations should follow the *Internal Appeals Procedure* which is appended to this policy.

### **Certificates**

Certificates are presented to candidates at the awards evening in November. Any candidate who is not present has their certificates posted to them.

## Appendix 1: Controlled Assessment

Controlled assessment is a form of internal assessment where the control levels (High, Medium or Low) are set for each stage of the assessment process: task setting, task taking and task marking. In some subjects, work will be marked by the awarding body. For most subjects, however, work will be marked by the centre and moderated by the awarding body.

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Deputy Head will:

- Ensure that each department carries out controlled assessment in accordance with the instructions issued by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ);
- Co-ordinate, with Heads of Department, a schedule for controlled assessment to take place;
- Map overall resource management requirements for the year and adjust as necessary, issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks), and to avoid clashes;
- Ensure all staff, students and parents have access to a calendar of events.

Heads of Department / subject leads will ensure:

- The safe and secure conduct of controlled assessment in their area and comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions;
- Internal standardisation of the marking of all teachers in their department involved in assessing an internally assessed component.
- All teachers in each department understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment and are familiar with the contents of the JCQ publication "*Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*"; <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/controlled-assessments>
- Individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification, particularly the level of control required, and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instruction;
- All confidential materials, together with the work produced by the candidates, are stored securely at all times. Secure storage is defined as a secure locked steel cabinet, a metal cabinet or similar;
- Support Staff are given sufficient notice in which to order and prepare materials needed for assessments;
- Liaise with the Deputy Head regarding the administration and management of access arrangements;
- Where videos or photographs/images of the candidates are to be included as part of the controlled assessment consent is obtained from parents/carers/guardians;
- A log is kept which contains the date and time of each assessment together with its title; the name of the supervising teacher; a list of candidates who were present during the assessment; and a list of any absent candidates
- A log of any incidents which occurred during the assessment is kept for each controlled assessment.

- Supervise assessments (**at the specified level of control**) and undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows;
- Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment;
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks to the exam's officer at the date required, keeping a record of the marks awarded;
- Retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one);
- Retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.

Exams administration will:

- Take responsibility for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD, digital or hard copy format;
- Download and distribute mark sheets for teaching staff to use, and collect and send mark sheets to awarding bodies before deadlines;
- On the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out, at the direction of the Deputy Head;

Queen's Croft is a special school, therefore access arrangements will be applied for and resources will be made available to support students accordingly.

## **Appendix 2: Internal Appeals Procedure**

Queen's Croft High School is committed to ensuring that whenever staff members assess students' work for qualifications, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments are conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained for this activity. The centre is committed to ensuring that assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of relevant specifications for each subject. Where a set of work is divided between staff, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency.

If a student feels that this may not have happened in relation to their work, they may make use of this appeals procedure. This procedure may only be used in relation to the marking by Queen's Croft High School and not against the mark submitted by the centre for moderation by the examination board.

1. Appeals should be made as early as possible and at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examination series (e.g. the last GCSE written paper in the June GCSE exam series).
2. Appeals should be made in writing by the candidate's parent/carer to the exams officer who will investigate the appeal with at least two other members of staff who have not been directly involved in the internal assessment decision. If the examinations officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, the headteacher will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to lead the investigation. In exceptional circumstances, the headteacher will lead the investigation.
3. The purpose of the appeal will be to decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the awarding body and the examinations code of practice of QCA.
4. The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal including any relevant correspondence with the awarding body and any changes made to the procedure relating to internal assessment.
5. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the headteacher and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body on request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. This is outside the control of Queen's Croft High School and is not covered by this procedure. If you have concerns about it, the examination officer should be approached for a copy of the appeals procedure for the relevant awarding body.

### **Appendix 3: Procedures in the event of a fire alarm during an exam**

In the event of a fire alarm, the following procedures apply:

- Note the time that the fire alarm went off and how long the examination has been going on.
- All examination question and answer papers and materials should be left on the candidates' exam desk and NOT taken out with them. No bags or personal belongings should be taken out of the hall with the candidates.
- Tell the students to remain calm and ask them to leave their belongings and papers on their desk and leave by the nearest fire exit.
- **IMPORTANT** – BEFORE the students exit, remind them that they are still under examination board conditions and under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** should talk to one another or use a mobile phone. Remind them that a breach of regulations could mean disqualification from their examination.
- **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES** are students to take their mobile 'phones or other electronic devices outside with them. This will be a breach of examination board regulations and they will risk being disqualified from their examination.
- Invigilators should leave with a group at each fire exit. The registers (photocopied and original) should be taken out with the invigilators, together with pens. Invigilators should take a register to ensure that all students are present and accounted for.
- **IMPORTANT** – the students should assemble under the canopy just outside the Sports Hall. This will ensure that they are isolated from the other classes/students. Students should be lined up.
- Note the time of re-starting the examination and change the finish time. Inform the exam board of the incident, so that a Special Consideration Form can be produced.

**NB. Mobile phones should be kept in a plastic pocket so that they can be taken out of the hall in an evacuation.**

For smaller examination rooms, the same rules apply. Leave by the nearest exit and assemble under the canopy outside the Sports Hall.

## **Appendix 4 Procedure for Investigation into Malpractice and Maladministration**

The following procedure applies to the reporting of malpractice and maladministration:

1. As soon as a case of alleged or actual malpractice is identified the exams officer will conduct an initial investigation. Following consideration of all the initial facts a decision regarding the next course of action will be taken in conjunction with the Headteacher. Should it be deemed that quality of the assessment practices is compromised then the awarding organisation or JCQ should be informed using the appropriate methods as determined by the individual awarding organisation. A full record of the initial findings will be documented along with the reasoning and justifications regarding the next course of action.
2. Should a full investigation be required then the Headteacher will appoint an Investigating Officer, this Officer will be someone who is neutral to the situation, where there is no conflict of interest but someone who has the appropriate seniority, skills and abilities to conduct the investigation. Those responsible for conducting an investigation should seek evidence from which the full facts and circumstances of any alleged malpractice can be established. It should not be assumed that because an allegation has been made, it is true.
3. Any individual accused of malpractice will be given in writing the full allegation against them and where appropriate a copy of any documentation used to report the malpractice to the awarding organisation. Malpractice involving staff will be investigated under the School's disciplinary policy. Investigation interviews may be conducted with the accused and any witnesses and these will be conducted in line with the School's Investigation procedures, planned with sufficient notice, allowing individuals the opportunity to be accompanied and full notes of the meeting provided to the individuals following the meeting.
4. All investigations will be completed swiftly and as soon as is reasonably practicable. The school will co-operate fully with the individual awarding organisation or JSC and follow the individual awarding organisation procedures.
5. The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the accused in line with the awarding organisation's procedures. Upon conclusion of the investigation all records will be retained in line with the school's data retention schedule.