



PRESFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

Examinations policy

Date Ratified: 3rd March 2022

Date for review: 3rd March 2023

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Cooper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a trailing flourish.

Chair of Governors

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The policy is next due for review in January 2023.

The purpose of this exams policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates and all staff involved within the exams process.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient exams 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 exams policy will be reviewed every year.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Examinations Officer - Natalie Jones.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Exam responsibilities

Head of Centre - Tony Fay Headteacher

Deputy Headteacher - Lucy McLoughlin

Exams Officer - Natalie Jones

Special Educational Needs Coordinator - SENCo - Leeanne Elston

The Head of centre:

- Has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document- Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

Exams officer :

- Manages the administration of internal exams and external exams.
- Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Oversees the production and distribution to all centre staff 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 exams timetable that will affect them.
- Checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.

- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publications for 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 and is responsible for the training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- Keeps a record of all external examination results achieved by the students throughout their time at Presfield
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.

Subject Coordinators are responsible for:

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

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Subject Coordinator and/or exams officer.

The **special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)** is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.
- Ensuring students EHCP reflect the students' access arrangement requirements.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the exams office.
- Distribution of relevant materials/equipment during examinations.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and checking of entries.
- Understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Ensuring the conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Senior Leadership Team with agreement of the Head.

The types of qualifications offered are General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSE), A and AS levels and a range of vocational qualifications which include BTEC Levels 1 and 2, Cambridge Nationals, Functional Skills and Entry Level qualifications.

Qualifications Currently Offered 2021-2022

- English (Functional skills entry levels 1, 2 and 3, English Skills entry levels 1, 2 and 3, level 1. GCSE)
- Maths (Functional skills entry levels 1, 2 and 3. Mathematical Skills entry levels 1, 2 and 3, level 1. GCSE)
- Science GCSE
- PE and Sports Leadership
- ART/DT (Functional skills entry levels 1, 2 and 3. GCSE, AS and A level)
- ICT - imedia
- Performing arts GCSE
- Humanities - Geography and History (Functional skills entry levels 1, 2 and 3. GCSE)
- Business Studies GCSE
- Food preparation and hygiene/hospitality GCSE
- Language - Spanish and German GCSE
- Ethics - Religious Education (Functional skills entry levels 1, 2 and 3. GCSE)

All subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by September.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Subject Coordinator.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Subject Coordinator in consultation with the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Exam series

Internal exams (mock exams) and assessments are scheduled in the Spring and Summer term. External exams and assessments are scheduled in November, January, May and June.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Subject Coordinator, in agreement with the Headteacher decides which exam series are used in the centre.

The centre does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the Exams Officer.

Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates or parents/carers can in agreement with the Subject Coordinator or Senior Leadership Team request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does not accept entries from private candidates, unless they are ex-students who have left the school within 1 year of the requested entry at the agreement of the Exams Officer.

Subject Coordinators will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of the Subject Coordinator and the late fee may be charged to the Department budget as appropriate.

GCSE resits are allowed in agreement with the Subject Coordinator and Headteacher.

Exam fees

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.

The exams officer will publish the deadline for action well in advance for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre, however can be charged to departments if resulting from administrative errors/oversights or charged to the candidate for very late tier changes or re-sit entries past the published deadline.

Re-sit fees are paid by the centre for Key Stage 4 qualifications.

Equality Legislation

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer under the advice of the Senior Leadership Team.

Access arrangements

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQCIC awarding body approval.

Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an exam. Presfield High School will make any decisions regarding access arrangements based upon whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect on their **normal way of working**. This will be in line with JCQ regulations and the involvement of the teaching staff in determining the need for access arrangements.

Access Arrangements / Reasonable Adjustments may include any combination of those listed below:

- Scribe
- Word Processor

- Prompter
- Practical Assistant
- Reader/Computer Reader
- Supervised Rest Breaks
- Additional Time (up to 25% or 50% and over 50%)
- Colour naming by the invigilator
- Coloured overlays
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Music
- Individual rooming

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo in agreement with the Examination Officer they should reflect the normal way if working for the student.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCo.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Examinations Officer with the help of the class Team and teaching departments.

Exam barriers for all Autistic students

Exams are stressful and difficult for most students and autistic students may face additional challenges such as sensory overload and unclear or ambiguous questions and instructions. The DfE in collaboration with the AET foundation has published guidance on supporting Autistic learners (1)

- **Student specific accommodation.**

“Differences in the way sensory information is processed

Many autistic students are under-sensitive or over-sensitive to particular sensory stimuli such as sights, sounds and smells. They may also be overwhelmed as they have problems in separating out sensory information and attending to the most relevant”⁽¹⁾

- **Inability to access exam content.**

Limited Theory of Mind

“This may affect students in exam situations when responding to instructions during an exam from an invigilator or understanding colloquialisms and hidden and subtle meanings within exam questions. It may also affect how they answer certain exam questions that require a response that involves inference and empathy.”⁽²⁾

Poor Executive Function

“Differences in how information is processed may make it difficult for a student to answer exam questions that involve understanding another person’s perspective or responding to a question that is presented in a different context to how they have been taught about a concept.⁽²⁾”

At Presfield we recognise the need to minimise these barriers and put in place subject and student specific strategies (**reasonable adjustments**)* to enable our students access to external exams. We have high expectations for our learners and set target grades in line with mainstream schools.

We work hard to reduce the anxiety around exams by putting in place **access arrangements** in year 9 to enable the students to become familiar with the way of working in preparation for their exams.

We start mock exams in the hall in a designated seat to help students prepare for their final exams in year 10 with agreed **access arrangements** in place and give them an opportunity to sit them early, if appropriate to give them another chance in Year 11.

Most able

According to Beardon (2014) many autistic students will process language accurately (or literally). If a question is not absolutely clear, or if there are ambiguities, then there is an increased risk of the autistic student answering the question in an incorrect manner. It is important, therefore, to make sure that the student has a fair opportunity to ascertain the meaning of the questions and what is required of them in terms of answers. Ambiguity within questions, diagrams or pictures can distract autistic students or prevent them from completing a correct answer. For example, a picture in an English paper that doesn’t accurately capture the intent of the writing objective.

In addition, teachers can spend a considerable amount of time teaching students with autism to anticipate possible narrative scenarios they might encounter to prepare for exams, aware that a new scenario might prevent them from decoding the intention behind questions.

For example, a trigonometry question that asked for the calculation of the angle of a boat to a cliff. An autistic student, who was capable of doing the trigonometry, said they couldn’t answer the question, as they hadn’t yet learned about boats.

Therefore, **even with the current access arrangements that can be awarded for autistic students, these issues cannot be mitigated unless Exam Boards are careful to avoid ambiguity when setting exam questions.**

For example, extra time in an exam will not enable an autistic student to decode the intention behind a question if it requires social imagination in order to be answered.

This could explain our most able pupils reaching their potential target grades in GCSE’s a year or two after their mainstream counterparts due to the extra demand due to teaching subject specific strategies (**reasonable adjustments**) to answer questions alongside subject content within the same guided learning hours.

Evidence is seen with the spiky profiles of our most able learners who meet or exceed their target grades when there are reduced exam related barriers. Art and Food and Nutrition where 100% or 50% is portfolio based assessment.

*• Reasonable adjustments – There is a requirement under the Equality Act 2010 that reasonable adjustments should be made. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of

factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/education/exams/teachers>)

- (1) https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/AET-Exams-Guidance-for-Examining-Boards_I-S.pdf
- (2) https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-11/AET-Exam-Accommodations-Guidance_I-S.pdf

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer - see separate policy.

Contingency plans are available via the school intranet and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Summer 2022 Series

Grades

Subject Coordinators are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

Internal Quality Assurance IQA

The process for internal quality assurance must be documented to ensure that the judgements being made are fair, consistent, evidence based and minimise the risk of bias and discrimination.

The process for assessment in summer 2022 including the IQA process are detailed in the appendix.

Records of student evidence will be kept accessible so they can be easily found and used if a student wants to appeal their grade.

Managing invigilators

Invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Business Manager.

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

Invigilators are timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Examinations Officer and the SENCo.

Malpractice

The head of centre in consultation with the Exams Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

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.

Site management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements at least 3 weeks in advance.

The Exams Officer or invigilator at the request of the Exams Officer will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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 subject coordinators in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 24 hours after candidates have completed it.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with the Examinations and Data Administrator.

Candidates

The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the class Team.

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

In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. The exception to this is any items such as MP3 players, or sensory toys as listed in EHCPs that support the candidate's concentration and ability to be on task. These must be confirmed with the Head of centre, SENCO and exams officer before use. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Examinations Officer or lead invigilator in the examination room. Should a candidate leave the room/exam early, this should be documented on the 'notes' sheet made available in each exam room.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

If students do leave the exam room, ask a question or are disruptive, this should be noted down on the piece of paper left with the invigilators in each exam room titled 'notes for exams officer'. This must be handed back to the exams officer at the end of the exam so any arrangements/alterations can be made for future examinations if necessary.

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

Students arriving late to an examination within 1 hour of the JCQ Official start time will be allowed to sit the exam with the full time allowance. Any students arriving very late will be allowed to sit the examination at the discretion of the Exams Officer.

Clash candidates

The Examinations Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

Special consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 6 days of the exam.

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the exam.

Internal assessment

It is the duty of heads of department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by a week prior to the Awarding body deadline. The exams officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

The submission of any internal marks electronically will be double checked by a second person within the Examinations team and a paper record of the final marks submitted will be kept for a period of 3 years.

Results

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days,

- In person at the centre
- By post to their home address - candidates to provide self-addressed envelope
- By a nominated person as stated by the candidate on the correct form prior to the end of the summer term.

The results slip will be in the form of a centre produced document.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Exams Officer. The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the candidate unless agreed by the Subject Coordinator for the cost to be covered by departmental budgets.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the candidate following advice from the Exams Officer.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the centre will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 30 days of the receipt of results.

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

Re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of ATS will be paid by the candidate unless agreed by the Subject Coordinator for the cost to be covered by departmental budgets.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Certificates

When certificates are received into school, they will be signed in on the document 'Certificates received/signed out'. This provides a paper trail of receipt for both the setting and candidate. This sheet will be signed by the candidate, third party or signed to post out by the exams officer, once left with the admin team should it be sent this way. This document will be stored in the exams cupboard and handled by only the exams team.

Candidates will receive their certificates

- In person at the centre, a signature will be required - on the appropriate document.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre retains certificates for 3 years.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

Linked Policies

Exam contingency plan

Special Educational Needs Policy

Equal opportunity Policy

Linked documents

Teacher Assessed Grades protocol

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qjUwsxr-zrPSbKOPeIm66IRljZyXWUWBYoveC0IEYO/edit?ts=60420d90>

Natalie Jones

N Jones

Examinations Officer

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Head of Centre

Date: **3rd March 2022**