

WORKING EXAMS POLICY



**Resilience
Multi Academy
Trust**

Summary	Working Exams Policy
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14 March 2024	3	Amendments	Added section on Exam materials
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25/2/2026	5	Amendments	Para 8 – Assessor qualification checks added. Para 55 – Identity verification requirements added. Parah 64 – Emergency evacuation procedure added. Para 88 – AI misuse paragraph amended. Para 91 – Alternative rooming arrangements added. Para 92 – Candidate absence added. Para 93 – Candidate late arrival added. Para 94 – Leaving the exam room added. Para 95 – Managing behaviour added. Para 96 – Food and drink rules added.

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Purpose of the Policy

1. The purpose of the 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.
2. It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the Trust's exam processes to read, understand, and implement this policy.
3. This document is not intended to reiterate the numerous regulations pertaining to the actual running and implementation of examinations as laid down by the JCQ. Queries relating to examination regulations can be found in the documents listed in section 13. Staff involved with this aspect of examinations should be fully conversant with these regulations and are recommended to consult the documents listed. Any reference to mandatory procedures is therefore only for clarification or to explain why our policy may differ from the mandatory instructions issued by JCQ.
4. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Exam responsibilities

5. The Academy Principal:
 - Has overall responsibility for the Academy as an exam centre:
 - advises on appeals and re-marks.
 - the Principal is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.
6. Exams officers manage the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:
 - advises the senior leadership team, subject and class teachers 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, LRB members 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.
 - Facilitates access arrangements with the SENDCO 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. The Exams Officer will implement access arrangements.
 - identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
 - accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
 - Organises the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
 - Has an overview of the submission of 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.
7. Heads of department have guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries by:
- 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.
8. SENDCO:
- Administration of access arrangements supported by the Exams officer.
 - 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.
 - The SENDCO must confirm assessor qualifications and store evidence on file for inspection. Assessor processes must follow JCQ Chapter 7.
9. Invigilators:
- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams' office or another space supervised by the Exams Officer before the start of the exam when requested by the Exams Officer or otherwise the Exams Officer will provide them.
 - Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams' office.
10. Identifying candidates in exams and declaration of work:
- Candidates must understand coursework regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

- Candidates are to be escorted to the exam room by Academy staff for identification into the exam room.

11. Alternative Rooming:

- Students with access arrangements may be invigilated separately. E.g., Students requiring extra time may be placed together.
- Students needing readers with a ratio of 1 to 3 or 1 to 4 to be separated from students requiring scribes who need 1 to 1 invigilation.
- Students needing a smaller environment as identified by the Senco will be facilitated as appropriate and feasible.
- Students that turn up to school on exam days with an injury and cannot physically enter the main exam area are to be invigilated separately also.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered.

12. The statutory tests and qualifications offered at Trust Academies are decided by the subject leaders and the senior leadership team in each Academy.
13. CATS and NFER plus qualifications offered are GCE, GCSE, IGCSE, Entry Level, Vocational, National, and BTEC courses.
14. The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Academy's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed.
15. Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject, or all will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, subject teachers, and subject leaders.

Exam seasons and Timetables

16. Exam seasons are scheduled as follows:
- Internal exams are scheduled throughout the academic year.
 - External exams are scheduled in November, January, May, and June. The timing of internal exams will be reviewed annually in consultation with and by agreement with the leadership.
 - All internal exams are held under external exam conditions. Where internal exams are timetabled in classrooms, invigilators should observe exam conditions as closely as possible.
17. In respect of Timetables, once confirmed the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal exams and external exams. Copies of external exam timetables will also be shared online via the school website.

Entries, entry details, and late entries

18. Entries:
- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Leaders and the subject teachers.

- Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. Requests will be discussed with the Leadership Team and Subject Leaders.
- Trust Academies do not accept entries from external candidates excluding A-Level candidates and coursework/practical examinations. Where the centre will be hosting an examination of its own on the day requested, external candidates are asked to seek alternative provision.
- Where a student is registered as commencing a course an entry in that subject is an expectation. If for any reason an entry is deemed inappropriate this must be discussed and agreed with the subject leader and the appropriate member of the Leadership Team who provides professional support for that learning team. Withdrawing an entry would be regarded as exceptional.

19. Late entries:

- Entry deadlines are circulated to subject leaders.
- Late entries are authorised by Principals.

Exam fees

20. The Trust will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates.

21. The Trust pays late entry or amendment fees.

22. 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 or where learning team leaders have approved the alterations.

23. Staff are asked to bear in mind the large sums of money that are involved with late entries and amendments. Subject leaders should therefore vet applications for late entries and amendments with this point borne in mind to avoid departments being financially penalised.

Special needs and access arrangements

Special needs

24. The SENCO determines a candidate's special needs requirements. Subject staff and subject leaders should communicate any concerns they have regarding to the access of their students to the exams to the SENCO or Principal where the SENCO has failed to identify that student as requiring special considerations.

25. 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.

Access arrangements

26. Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO with support from the exams officer.

27. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO, supported by the Exams Officer.
28. Rooming for access arrangement will be arranged by the Exams Officer in accordance with paragraph 11 above.

The use of Word processors

29. Students are identified by a Senco and trained up in the use of a Word processor.
30. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the exams officer.
31. Where a reader is required whether for one student, the invigilator can also be a reader. Where more than one student requires a reader, an additional invigilator must also be present.

Students with emotional and behavioural issues

32. Where provision for students to sit away from the main body of students is required, staff must ensure that permission to accommodate students has been sought and approved by the SENCO who will work with the exams officer to facilitate this. Applications for students to sit away from the main exam hall should be made to the SENCO at least six weeks prior to the examination. It is essential that staff adhere to this rule to avoid the SENCO and exams officer being forced to make last minute arrangements. The scope for mistakes being made in relation to the issuance of correctly tiered papers and in relation to the implementation of examination protocol is increased in such instances.
33. Where unavoidable last-minute arrangements have been made it is especially important that the exams officer is consulted where students are given alternative accommodation for exams. This is because there are certain requirements relating to notices to candidates and the preparation of the examination room that must be strictly adhered to.
34. The same is also true for the off-site provision of examinations to accommodate students on alternative pathways, phobic students, M.E sufferers etc. In such cases invigilation/examination rules must be strictly adhered to.

Specific Instructions Relating to the Provision of Exam Papers to Students sitting exams away from the main body of students.

35. Where students will be sitting examinations in rooms other than the main exam hall staff responsible for those students may collect papers from the Exams Officer.
36. **Students:** All students who have been seated in alternate rooms will be informed of this by the exams officer prior to the exam.
37. **Collection of papers:** Provision of papers for students seated in alternative venues will take place from the exams' office. **NO** papers should be removed from the main exam hall. Papers should be collected ten minutes before the start time for the exam. The exam papers will have been extracted from the sealed exam packets and invigilators should check the papers against seating plans to ensure that there are no mistakes made in relation to papers with different tiers.

38. Starting the exam in alternate rooms: Staff supervising exams in alternate rooms should start the exam as close as possible to the agreed start time. Staff should confirm that the relevant warning notices are displayed and that an exam clock is visible. Warning notices normally comprise:
- Warning about use of mobile phones.
 - Silence exam in progress.
 - No entry – exam in progress
 - Instructions to candidates
 - Clock
39. **Return of papers:** papers should be returned immediately once the exam ends to the exams officer in the exams' office along with all other materials provided for the examination.
40. Invigilators supporting students sitting exams in alternate venues should not need to enter the main exam room, however, if students fail to turn up for their examination Exams officers and/or the Attendance Officer should visit the main exam room to confirm that the missing students have not entered the main examination hall erroneously.

Estimated Grades

41. Subject leaders will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

Exam Materials

42. Secure exam materials will be stored in line with requirements as outlined in the JCQ instructions for conducting exams.
43. Secure electronic materials will be accessed and handled in line with requirements as outlined in the JCQ instructions for conducting exams.

Managing invigilators and Students on exam days

Managing invigilators

44. External invigilators will be used for external exams and may be used for internal exams.
45. The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer who has responsibility for the allocation of staffing for examinations. All invigilators will attend a full training session provided by the Exams Officer before performing any duties relating to examinations.
46. Securing the necessary (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Trust Academy.
47. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the Trust Academy.
48. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams officer.
49. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration via the Trust's HR team.

Exam days

50. 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.
51. Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.
52. The exams Officer and a delegated person will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Identifying students on Exam days

53. Academy staff will assist in the identification of students prior to entering the examination rooms
54. Photographic evidence may be provided for invigilators. External candidates are told that they must bring photographic evidence with them.
55. The identity of every candidate must be verified before the exam starts. Photo ID should be provided for external candidates and school records can be used for internal candidates. Invigilators must follow this process.

Candidate Behaviour

56. Candidates must always adhere to exam rules and regulations. Candidates must not turn around or speak to any other candidate in the exam room. Candidates must not bring into the exam room any materials or notes. Any breach of the rules will be dealt with by a member of SLT and if necessary, the candidate will be removed.

Students arriving late on examination day.

57. See Examination guidance for students and parents. For students more than an hour late the exams officer will follow exam board procedures and complete necessary forms and submit to exam board with the examination paper.
58. In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
59. 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 once all candidates have sat the exam.
60. Students who are late to an exam should proceed to the designated venue where they may or may not be allowed to sit the exam dependent upon the current regulations cited by JCQ. The lead invigilator or exams officer will deal with late attenders. In any case, late arrivals must be reported to the exams officer.
61. Where invigilators are concerned at potential malpractice, the matter must be reported immediately to the exams officer.
62. Staff are reminded that mobile phones should be switched off and not to silent. This is especially important when tape recordings or CD are being used in the exam room since mobile phones can interfere with the amplifier circuitry.
63. In the event of a fire drill staff are to follow the requirements stated on warning notices in each room. All staff should be familiar with the relevant escape routes and procedures for reporting fires. This policy does not seek to replace that outlined in current health and safety policy guidelines; however, the following points will be adhered to in the event of a fire during an examination:
 - Papers will be left face down on the desks.
 - Students will be removed from the building in an orderly manner and wherever possible they will be monitored by invigilation staff and excluded from other students for the duration of the removal from the examination room.
 - Invigilation staff will note the time of exit and allow candidates the full period available to them to sit the exam on return to the examination room. The exam officer will notify the relevant authorities of the interruption.
 - It will be the responsibility of the invigilation staff to confirm with the exams officer whether they consider the security of the paper to have been seriously compromised by the interruption.
 - Invigilation staff will oversee the orderly return of students to the exam room once an all clear has been received.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

64. In the event of an emergency evacuation, students should:
 - Stop writing immediately.
 - Leave all papers on the desk.
 - Remain supervised and silent outside the room.

- Resume the exam with the full remaining time once safe.
- Staff must record the time of interruption and actions taken.

Food and Drink in the Exam Room

65. Under no circumstances is food or sweets of any kind allowed in the Exam room unless there is a medical need which has been agreed with the Academy before the exams.
66. Candidates can have a drink of water only; the bottle/container must be clear see-through plastic with no writing on it.
67. Fizzy drinks are not allowed.

Candidates, clash candidates, and special consideration

Candidates

68. The Trust Academy's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices always apply.
69. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility, and the Trust Academy accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
70. Disruptive candidates will be dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
71. Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose determined by an invigilator providing there is an immediate return to the exam room, a member of staff must accompany them.
72. The Academy attendance officer or another appropriate member of staff will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and the exams officer will deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Clash Candidates

73. The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue, and agreeing overnight supervision.

Special Consideration

74. 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 Academy, the exams officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.
75. Any special consideration claim must be supported by a member of the Academy's Senior Leadership Team who is responsible for ensuring there is sufficient evidence, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

76. The exams officer will forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body.

Controlled Assessment

Coursework

77. Candidates who must prepare coursework should do so by the date they are informed of which will be at the latest by the end of the course.
78. All coursework completed by candidates must be their own work and not plagiarised or generated by AI.
79. Heads of department will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.
80. Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exam's office by the subject teachers and the subject leaders.

Appeals against internal assessment and results.

81. The details of the appeals process can be found in the main Exams Policy document.
82. Appeal forms are available from the exams officer, who will keep a log of all appeals made.
83. 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 as soon as possible to the head of centre.
 - the head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams officer, and recorded for awarding body inspection.

Review of Marks

84. Subject leaders can apply for a review of marks of examinations where the results are possibly erroneous and must seek the permission of the candidate and the Academy Principal prior to notifying the examinations officer of the request for a remark.
85. Candidates may also request a review of marks of examinations and should make their request to the examination officer. Candidates should be aware that whilst a review of marks can indeed result in an improvement in their mark they may also result in no change to the result or even a lower grade or mark. Candidates should first request a review of marks via the subject area. Where a review of marks is endorsed by the subject area and the Academy Principal, any fee levied will be honoured by the school. If candidates who request a review of marks fail to obtain the endorsement of the subject area and the Principal, the fee may be charged up front to the candidate.

Malpractice

86. Malpractice means any act or practice which is a breach of the regulations governing exams, coursework, or controlled assessment.
87. All Trust staff must adhere strictly to the regulations otherwise they will be in breach of the regulations and will be subject to a malpractice investigation.
88. All students must ensure they produce all their own work and do not attempt to plagiarise another's work or to introduce unauthorised materials into an exam or controlled assessment session. This includes the use of AI generated content. All suspected acts of malpractice will be investigated and reported to the appropriate awarding body.
89. Students must not use AI to create or adapt any assessed work; they must acknowledge any AI use that supports research. Copying or paraphrasing AI generated material is malpractice. Staff must report AI misuse immediately.

Reporting Procedures

90. If malpractice is suspected the examinations officer must be informed immediately.
91. Where malpractice is suspected the following procedures will be followed regardless of whether it is against a student or a member of staff:
 - An investigation will be undertaken by the Academy Principal/exams officer which will involve questioning the person(s) involved and any other people with information about the incident.
 - Where necessary written statements will be obtained
 - The relevant examination board will be informed immediately.
 - The individuals concerned will be told what evidence there is to support the allegation and be given the opportunity to provide a written statement in response to the allegation.
 - The individuals concerned will be informed of the outcome once a decision is received from the examination board and given a copy of the written communication.

Alternative Rooming Arrangements

92. You may sit exams in an alternative room only where you have an established difficulty that affects performance and it reflects your normal way of working.

Candidate Absence

93. If you are absent at the start time, staff will contact you immediately. You must attend unless medically unfit.

Candidate Late Arrival

94. If you arrive late, the Exams Officer or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will decide if you are allowed to enter. Your full exam time will be given.

Leaving the Exam Room

95. You may leave at the end of the exam once all papers have been collected and they have been authorised to leave either by the exams officer or the invigilator. You may have additional time only where justified.

Managing Behaviour

96. You must follow all instructions. Disruptive behaviour will lead to removal from the room and penalties.

Food and Drink Rules

97. You may bring only water in a clear bottle without labels. Food is not allowed unless agreed for medical reasons.

Appeals

98. An appeal against the penalties arising from the malpractice decisions must be made to the Academy for any student or staff who have been found to be involved in malpractice.

Results

99. Candidates will receive individual results slips on results day in person at the centre.
100. Arrangements for the Academy to be open on results day are made by the exams officer in conjunction with the Academy senior leadership and site management teams.
101. The provision of staff on results day is the responsibility of the Academy senior leadership team.

Enquiries about Results (EARs)

102. Students and staff should speak to the Academy Exams Officer about any enquiries.
103. Students need to initially speak to the head of subject, about any concerns about any mark/grade is to be discussed with the Exams Officer this will be considered and any request put to the appropriate Exam Board **once a signed consent form has been completed.**
104. Students should approach a member of staff about an EAR as soon as possible.
105. EARs may be requested by Academy staff or students if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking or if a student has missed a certain grade by 1 or 2 marks.
106. If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and Academy Principal will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marks at the Trust's expense.
107. When the Academy does not uphold 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.

Access to Scripts

108. After the release of results, candidates may ask to request the return of papers, all forms are available from the exams officer.
109. Academy staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The consent of candidates must be obtained.
110. GCSE review of marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

Certificates

111. Certificates are collected and signed for.
112. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.
113. Replacement certificates are only issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred although most boards will not provide reprints. They should be requested from the Exam board, not the Academy.
114. The Academy retains uncollected certificates for one year.

Other Important Documents

115. Staff should familiarise themselves with the following documents where the regulations pertain to their duties. The documents are available from the JCQ website.
 - JCQ Access Arrangements and Special Considerations – Regulations and Guidance
 - JCQ instructions for conducting exams.

Monitoring

116. Exams Officers will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the policy by liaising with senior leaders in their Academy on a regular basis. Issues arising from regular reporting or audits will also help inform this process as will any ad hoc concerns raised by staff, students, or the community.
117. Exams Officers will monitor the relevant legislation, guidelines, and information forthcoming from the relevant statutory bodies for any recommendation or changes.
118. Exams Officers will advise the Head of Governance who will advise the Standards committee of the Trust Board of any changes that are needed, and a proposal will be submitted to the Trust Board within an appropriate timescale. There will be a full review of the policy by Exams Officers and the Head of Governance & Compliance prior to the stated review date where recommendations will be made for consideration by the Standards Committee.