



---

*Inspiring Learners for their future*

The Ridgeway School

# **EXAMS POLICY**

**UPDATED APRIL 2009**

## Consultation History

<b>Governors/staff/parents/students</b>	<b>Date</b>
Executive (Leadership Group)	
Curriculum Committee	
Full Governing Body	
Next Review of Policy	19 <sup>th</sup> August 2010

# Contents

Exam responsibilities	5
The statutory tests and qualifications offered	8
Exam seasons and timetables	9
Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes	10
Exam fees	11
The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements	12
Estimated grades	12
Managing invigilators and exam days	13
Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration	14
Coursework and appeals against internal assessments	15
Results' enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)	16
Certificates	17



The purpose of this exam policy is:

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

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

This exam policy will be reviewed every two years.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the deputy head.

## 1. Exam responsibilities

Headteacher/Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams office manager / exams officer

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

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

- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made
- 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.

#### Deputy Head

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

#### Faculty Team Leaders/Subject Team Leaders

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

#### Learning Co-ordinators

- Guidance and careers information.

#### Subject Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to Faculty/Subject Team Leaders.

## SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements.
- 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.

## Lead invigilator/invigilators

- 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 exams office.

## Candidates

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

## Administrative staff

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

## **2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered**

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the senior leadership team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are NCTs, GCSE, A levels and AVCE.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by 19/08/2008.

At key stage 3

All candidates will take English, mathematics and science and ICT (from 2008). The school will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.

Decisions on whether candidates should not take an individual subject or all NCTs will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENCO, subject teachers and the head of key stage.

At key stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

At post-16

It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12.

### **3. Exam seasons and timetables**

#### **3.1 Exam seasons**

Internal exams are scheduled in November and June.

External exams are scheduled in January and June.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the heads of sixth form, heads of curriculum, heads of subject and the heads of department.

#### **3.2 Timetables**

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

## **4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes**

### 4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of curriculum, heads of subject, heads of department and the subject teachers.

Candidates, or parents, cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

### 4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Faculty/Subject Team Leaders via email.

Late entries are authorised by Faculty/Subject Team Leaders and exams officer.

### 4.3 Retakes

Candidates are allowed 2 retakes per subject in GCSE.

Candidates are allowed 2 retakes per subject in AS.

Candidates are allowed 2 retakes per subject in A2.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers, Faculty/Subject Team Leaders, Learning Co-ordinators and Exams Officer.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

## 5. Exam fees

GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

AS initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments.

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

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements.

This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates.

(See also section 4.3: Retakes)

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.

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

Candidates must pay the fee for the return of papers for scrutiny.

(See also section 11.3: ATS)

## **6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements**

### 6.1 DDA

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

### 6.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO.

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 may be granted during the course and in the exam.

### 6.3 Access arrangements

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

## **7. Estimated grades**

Estimated grades

The Faculty/Subject Team Leaders will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

## **8. Managing invigilators and exam days**

### **8.1 Managing invigilators**

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for all exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.

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

CRB 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 centre administration.

### **8.2 Exam days**

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

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The lead invigilator 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 are to be attempted.

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

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

## **9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration**

### **9.1 Candidates**

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

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

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

For exams longer than one hour, candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until at least one hour after the published starting time. They will not be allowed to return.

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

### **9.2 Clash candidates**

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

### **9.3 Special consideration**

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

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

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

## **10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments**

### 10.1 Coursework

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

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

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Faculty/Subject Team Leaders.

### 10.2 Appeals against internal assessments. (See Appendix A)

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

The main points are:

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

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

### 11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the senior leader.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the senior leader.

The centre aggregates at the end of year 12 or 13 for AS grades, as appropriate.

### 11.2 EARs

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

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

(See section 5: Exam fees)

### 11.3 ATS

After the release of results candidates may ask subject staff, within the specific examination board's timescale, to request the return of papers for scrutiny. (A charge will be raised and is payable by the candidate).

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

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

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

## 12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person.

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

Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees.  
A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The centre retains certificates for three years.

---

**Head of centre**

---

**Exams officer**

---

**Date**

The policy is next due for review on 19/08/2010.

### Appendix A

#### Examination appeals procedure

The school is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assess students' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments should be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. Students' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the examination board. Where a set of work is divided between staff, consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation. If students believe that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this appeals procedure. **Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade.**

The existence of this procedure is made known to students by reference in a letter and at the start of examinations courses and in this examinations policy, which is available for inspection on request.

1. Appeals should be made as soon as possible, and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examinations series.

2. Appeals should be made in writing to the examinations officer who will investigate the appeal. If the examinations officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, he/she will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise if the examination officer is not able to conduct the investigation for any other reason.
3. The person conducting the investigation will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed with the requirements of the awarding body and examination code of practice of the OCA. This will be done before the end of the series.
4. The result of the appeal will be made known in writing to the parties concerned, together with any correspondence with the awarding body, any changes made to the assessment of the piece of work in question and any changes made for the future.
5. A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their 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. That is outside the control of the school and it not covered by this procedure.** Details of the appeals procedure for the relevant awarding body are available from the examination officer.