

St Richard's Catholic College

EXAMINATIONS POLICY



The Policy was approved by the Governing Body: January 2018

Chair of Governors: *Alina Horan*

The Governing Body will review the policy in: January 2019

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.
- All exams and external assessment processes are conducted in accordance with national and examining body regulations and specifically the Joint Council for Qualifications (“JCQ”) Instructions for Conducting Examinations “ICE”.

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

St Richard’s Catholic College is committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity in everything that it does and to ensuring that differences between all of our learners and staff are valued and respected.

This exam policy will be reviewed annually.

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1. Exam responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school as an Exam Centre. Delegated responsibilities to Exams Officer to:

- Advise on appeals and re-marks.
- Report all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams Officer

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

- Advise the Head of Centre, Leadership and Management Team, Subject Leaders and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various Awarding Organisations.
- Produce and distribute to staff, and candidates an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicate regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensure that candidates and their parents or carers are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- Consult with Subject Leaders to ensure that they are aware of the deadlines for completion of coursework/controlled assessment and that it is completed in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Submit estimated entries, as completed by the departments, to the relevant exam boards.
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams together with the recording of any achievement.
- Receive, check and store securely all pre-release material, exam papers and completed scripts according to JCQ requirements.
- Work with SENCo to administer access arrangements and make 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*.
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes.
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Line manage the invigilation team; their recruitment and training. Monitor the whole invigilation team responsible for the conduct of exams.
- report all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice and follow the procedures contained in the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments – Policies and Procedures*
- Ensure candidates' coursework marks are submitted, track despatch and store returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding organisations correctly and on schedule.
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forward appeals/re-mark requests.
- Reviews examination procedures annually and make recommendations for changes (if appropriate)
- Facilitates the annual inspection by the JCQ inspector and report the outcome of the inspection to line manager
- Implement this policy in accordance with all other school policies, procedures and regulations on Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, Quality Assurance, financial matters and Data Protection Act.
- To support the invigilation team by being available to invigilate.

Leadership and Management Team/Subject Leaders

- Liaises with the Exams Officer and inform them of any new qualifications being considered or offered and any changes to specifications
- Comply with Awarding Organisation and specification requirements. Provide details of additions or removals from candidate lists.
- Return completed Exams documentation to the Exams Office in order to meet the internal deadlines to avoid Awarding Organisation penalty fees.
- Ensures they and all relevant members of their department are familiar with the relevant assessment framework and objectives for all relevant examinations
- Ensures all relevant teaching staff are made aware of the Instructions for the conduct of Controlled Assessment and Instructions for the Conduct of Coursework annually
- Ensures secure storage of controlled assessment material and coursework as required by the JCQ instructions and subject specification
- Provides guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Provide direction to candidates on post-results procedures.
- Ensures that all examination entries and coursework/controlled assessment procedures are administered in a timely and efficient manner by
 - Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
 - Accurate completion of entry forms and all other mark sheets
 - Adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer
- Arranges dispatch of coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Store returned coursework until deadline for release
- Reports any issues regarding coursework e.g. plagiarism to the Examinations Officer who will advise what action is required
- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- Analyses exam performance of subjects taught within their faculty and reviews practice as directed by Head of Centre

Teaching Staff

- Allow the pupils use of notified access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course) during lessons and assessment including keeping a record for inspection purposes
- Submit candidates' names to Subject Leaders for entries, amendments, coursework and controlled assessment
- Maintain accurate records of pupil's progress enabling accurate prediction of results

SENCo

- Oversee identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Liaise with Exams Officer to organise exam access arrangements.
- Submit online access arrangements applications in accordance with JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.
- Provide additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to assist candidates in achieving their course aims.
- Ensure files are maintained for each pupil requiring access arrangements and that these can be made available to JCQ inspectors.

Invigilators

- Check the examination room prior to the arrival of candidates to ensure that:

- Heating, lighting, ventilation and levels of extraneous noise are acceptable.
 - Ensure materials that might be helpful to candidates are visible.
 - A reliable clock of readable size is visible to each candidate.
 - Ensure notices are displayed in accordance with JCQ regulations.
 - The seating arrangements prevent candidates, intentionally or otherwise, from overseeing the work of others.
- Be fully aware of the regulations according to “The Instructions for Conducting Examinations”.
 - Ensure that a signed record is kept of the seating and invigilation arrangements for any examination session that they participate in.
 - Carry out checks on the identity of candidates on their arrival.
 - Take all reasonable steps to ensure that:
 - The official examination stationery is issued to candidates and that no other stationery, including paper for rough work, is provided.
 - Candidates take into the examination room only those articles, instruments or materials which are expressly permitted.
 - Candidates have all the necessary material provided by the Awarding Organisation to enable them to complete the examination.
 - Open the packet of examination papers and issue the papers to candidates.
 - Give clear instructions to candidates about the conduct of the examination to ensure that they fully understand what they are required to do.
 - Supervise the candidates throughout the whole time the examination is in progress and give complete attention at all times to this duty.
 - Complete the Attendance Register during the examination and inform the Exams Officer of any absentees.
 - Know the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency such as an emergency evacuation.
 - At the end of the examination, to collate all scripts in candidate number order and ensure that they are handed to the correct person.
 - Collect all unused stationery in the examination room and return it to the Exams Officer.
 - Ensure that the room is left in a tidy condition.
 - Work to promote and apply the college’s safeguarding policy and procedures.

Candidates

- Check personal exam entries on receipt of timetable and inform the Exams Officer of any discrepancies.
- Understand coursework regulations and sign the relevant declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Take responsibility for compliance with Awarding Organisation and JCQ regulations with respect to coursework, controlled assessment, written examinations, and online tests.
- Pay for any re-sits in the specified period.
- Attend all timetabled assessments.

2. The qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Head of Centre and Leadership and Management Team.

The subjects offered in any academic year may be found in the Centre’s published prospectus for that year and on the College website. If there has been a change of syllabus/specification from the previous year course information must be changed with Pupil Records and the Exams Officer must be informed by the 1st October for all qualifications.

3. Exam seasons, timetables and clashes

3.1 Exam seasons

Subject Leaders/Pastoral Leaders have responsibility for giving the Exams Officer the appropriate notice period for scheduling of internal exams which contribute to summative assessment. Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in accordance with the school calendar and the normal expectation is that each year group will have an internal assessment at least once each year.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions. Internal examinations may be held at the same time as external examinations but may NOT take place in the same exam rooms as external examinations.

External exams are scheduled in May and June by the Examinations Boards with the appropriate notice adhered to. Subject Leaders must liaise with the Leadership and Management Team to oversee and plan the scheduling of exams for their area. Subject Leaders must inform the Exams Officer of decisions on exams series.

3.2 Timetables

The Exams Officer will display timetables of all external exams on their notice boards. The Exams Officer will issue seating plans and room details. Allocation of Invigilators will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and re-sits

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Leaders. All candidates will be entered for qualifications on all courses on which they are registered, unless the Exams Officer is notified by the Subject Leader.

In order for Entries to be made efficiently and in a timely manner, the Exams Officer will send mark sheets for each Departments entries based on the specification information provided by the Department and the class information on SIMS. The Subject Leader will check:-

- The correct specification has been selected
- The correct class/es has/have been selected
- That all the pupils in each class are included on the mark sheet
- That there are no extra pupils included on the mark sheet
- Will not just count the number of pupils in the class but will check each name.

The Department will then re-check the second marksheet sent once the exam entries have been made and will again carry out the checks above.

A candidate, parent or carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. If made after the relevant entry deadline, the late fee will be payable by the candidate, parent or carer.

4.2 Entry details

All individual candidate statements of entry will be sent to the candidates.

The Exams Officer will accept withdrawals, amendments and changes of tier up to the dates set by the Awarding Organisations. These deadlines are available from the Exams Officer or the Awarding Organisation websites.

4.3 Late entries

Late entries are authorised by the Subject Leaders and candidates.

The deadlines for late entries are available from the Exams Officer or the Awarding Organisation websites.

Under extreme circumstances very late entries will be accepted but these will be subject to a fee levied by the Awarding Organisation.

4.4 Re-sits

Re-sit decisions are made in consultation with the Subject Leader, Exams Officer and the candidate.

5. Exam fees

Normal registration and exam fees for the first sitting are paid by the Centre for fully funded candidates with an active enrolment.

Reimbursement of fees will be sought from candidates who do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or proof of other mitigating circumstances. The Exams Officer will charge a standard non-attendance fee for any timetabled exam or assessment missed without supporting evidence. If the Principle has concerns regarding a pupil's attendance and or behaviour, she reserves the right to ask Parents/Carers to provide a post-dated cheque for the exam season. This cheque will be returned if the pupil concerned attends each examination and completes at least part of the examination paper.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by whoever is responsible for the need to make the change.

Re-sit fees are paid by the candidates. This also applies to candidates re-sitting a year already taken and taking units that they sat previously.

(See also section 4.4: Re-sits)

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not request or support the enquiry and the candidate insists on pursuing the enquiry.

6. The Disability and Equality Act, special needs and access arrangements

6.1 Disability and Equality Act

The Disability and Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA to general qualifications. All Exam Centre staff must ensure that access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

6.2 Special needs

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

The SENCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access arrangements

Candidates who may require access arrangements are identified during the admissions process or enrolment or when a need becomes apparent.

Teaching staff identifying candidates who may require access arrangements after the start of the course should contact the SENCo at the earliest opportunity. It is the Teaching Staff's responsibility to ensure arrangements are made as soon as possible after the start of the course. Teachers should ensure that in any assessment contributing to the final grade candidates are given their access arrangement. So far as is possible this arrangement should also be available in lessons. Teachers should record when candidates use their access arrangement so that evidence of their normal way of working is available.

The SENCO and the Exams Officer will collaborate to monitor the use of access arrangements in mock exams, controlled assessments and external exams and will consult parents before any decision to revoke an access arrangement is made.

Rooming and invigilation for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCo in consultation with the Exams Officer.

Applications for emergency applications for access arrangements e.g. due to temporary injury will be made by the Exams Officer but any Subject Leader or Pastoral Leader who is aware of a pupil with any injury should make the Exams Officer aware of this as soon as the need for assistance is known.

Applying for access arrangements via the JCQ AAO tool is the responsibility of the SENCo.

7. Managing Invigilators and exam days

7.1 Managing Invigilators

External Invigilators will be used for all exams apart from some internally assessed components/controlled assessment.

The 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 and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Centre.

7.2 Exam days

The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users. The Gymnasium and Dance Studio will be the main examination venues. Other rooms may be used if circumstances dictate in consultation with the main users of those other rooms.

The Facilities Team are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Exams Officer or Lead Invigilator (identified by the Exams Officer) will start all exams in accordance with JCQ regulations. All exams will be run in accordance with JCQ regulations.

The Exams Officer is responsible for ensuring each exam venue complies with JCQ regulations and in particular that each venue has a means of summoning help for the invigilator. Fire regulations have

been drawn up for each room covering the exit arrangements from exam venues during exams. Evacuation procedures would be carried out in accordance with JCQ regulations.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not look at the exam papers or communicate with candidates inside the exam room.

In practical exams Subject Teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by Teaching Staff or removed from the exam room before the end of the session. Papers will be distributed to Subject Leaders the following day.

8. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

8.1 Candidates

JCQ rules on candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

Normal Centre rules on dress and behaviour apply.

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

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until the published finishing time. Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose such as a toilet break or if feeling unwell. They must be accompanied at all times. No additional time will be allowed for toilet breaks but will be allowed for genuine medical reasons.

The Exams Officer or member of staff 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.

Pupils are personally responsible for providing their own equipment for their exams. The Exams Officer provides a minimal amount of 'spare' equipment in each venue but this will only be available to pupils who have a problem with their own equipment (e.g. breakages during the exam).

8.2 Clash candidates

The Exams Officer will identify wherever timetabled exam clashes occur and notify candidates how the exam clash will be resolved. In simple clash situations this may be by timetabling one exam after the other and giving the candidate the timetable in the usual way.

Candidates also have responsibility to review their dated statement of entry and exam timetable. Where they believe their exams will clash with any form of assessment not on the timetable such as a practical exam organised directly by the department they should bring this to the attention of the Exams Officer, who will resolve the clash in accordance with JCQ regulations.

The supervision of candidates between exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer and Invigilators.

In cases of overnight supervision candidates need to complete the appropriate documentation in accordance with JCQ regulations.

8.3 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 School, Exams Officer or the Exam Invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within seven days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

If the college supports the application the Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant Awarding Organisation within the JCQ's recommended deadlines.

9. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

9.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the required date.

The Subject Leaders will ensure all coursework is marked and internally verified in line with Awarding Organisation requirements. The Leadership and Management team have the responsibility to ensure that appropriate quality assurance procedures are followed to include internal verification of assessed work. Subject Leaders will ensure that all internal verification is completed by internal deadlines. The Exams Officer will ensure that the work is despatched at the correct time and that a record of what has been sent, when and to whom is maintained.

9.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The Centre is obliged to publish a separate policy on this subject, which is available from the Exams Officer or the college website.

The main points are:

- Candidates are allowed to request a review of centre marking before marks are submitted to the Awarding Body, if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification.
- In the first instance the pupil should raise any concerns about the assessment process with the teacher.
- If the pupil remains concerned having spoken to their teacher, they should contact their Personal Tutor or a nominated person
- The tutor or nominated person will ask the pupil to complete an internal appeals form, which will be submitted to the relevant member of the Leadership and Management team. The grounds for the appeal must be clearly stated.
- The findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Head of Centre and recorded for Awarding Organisation inspection.

10. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

10.1 The Exams Officer will ensure candidates receive individual results slips on results days to be collected in person at the centre and will arrange staff for this task.

10.2 EARs and ATS

These will be undertaken by the Exams Officer in accordance with the procedures set out in the JCQ Post Results Services document.

Subject staff will be consulted where they are available on results day but in the absence of such staff, any decision will be made by the designated senior staff member.

Fees

- If a department wishes to request an EAR or ATS, the expenditure must be approved by the Head of Centre.
- Any request made by a pupil is payable in advance by the pupil or his/her parent/carer.

10.3 Enquiries About Results

EARs for General Qualifications may be requested by Centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The Awarding Organisation's fee is payable by either the candidate or the subject department depending on who has requested the EAR.

10.4 Access To Scripts (applicable to General Qualifications only)

After the release of results of General Qualifications, candidates may request the return of papers within the Awarding Organisations' stated deadlines.

Where an Awarding Organisation supplies the requested script electronically, the Exams Officer will send the document to the candidate.

If a result is queried, the Exams Officer in conjunction with the Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the subject areas' expense. Otherwise the candidate will pay for the remark themselves. If there is a change in unit grade the candidate will receive a refund from the Exams Officer.

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

(See also Section 5: Exam fees)

11. Certificates

Certificates are collected in person at the annual Certificate and Prize Evening in November.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised in writing to do so, and provide their own identification.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The Centre retains certificates for three years.