



SHENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

EXAMS POLICY

Approved by:	Governing Board	Date: 16 th January 2024
Last reviewed on:	10 th September 2025	
Next review due by:	September 2026	

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1. Introduction and aims

Our school is committed to ensuring that exams are managed and administered effectively.

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- The planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- Our system of exams administration is efficient and clear, and staff and pupils understand what is required and expected of them
- We comply with requirements and guidance set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding bodies

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Everyone

Everyone involved in our exam processes, including staff and pupils, must read, understand and implement this policy.

2.2 Head of centre

The head of centre:

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on [malpractice in examinations and assessments](#)
- must ensure that relevant members of staff respond promptly to requests and/or actions raised by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.
- To ensure the SENco, centre appointed access arrangements assessor, and the examinations officer undertake regular CPD such as attending an annual update course.
- has a responsibility to ensure the relevant policies are in place to meet JCQ requirements, that they are reviewed and updated annually and communicated within the centre

Our Head of Centre is Jane Martin deputising for Clare Costello.

2.3 Exams officer

The exams officer is responsible for the administration of exams. They:

- Manage the administration of internal and external exams
- Advise the senior leadership team (SLT), subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by awarding bodies
- Oversee the production and distribution of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicate regularly with staff about imminent deadlines and events. This calendar must be provided to all staff and candidates
- Ensure that candidates and their parents/carers are informed of, and understand, aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them
- Check with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Receive, check, download and print (where necessary) and securely store all exam papers and completed scripts, and ensure that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines

- Ensure any unused question papers are held securely and not released to staff until after 24 hours following the published end time of the exam (or later if candidates are yet to sit the paper due to a timetable clash)
- Administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ guidance on the special consideration process
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manage the invigilators and organise the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Ensure candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks are submitted correctly and on schedule, along with any other material required by the awarding bodies
- Track, dispatch and store returned coursework/controlled assessments
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates, and forward, in consultation with the SLT, any post-results service requests
- Report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, in line with the JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Advise on post results services.

Our exams officer is Toni Harmer

2.4 Team Leaders and Heads of Subject

Team Leaders and Heads of Subject are responsible for:

- Advising the exams officer of any changes to syllabus or assessment details for their subjects
- Advising the exams officer of entries for their subjects
- Guidance and pastoral care for candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries
- Accurately completing entry and mark sheets, and adhering to deadlines as set by the exams officer
- Accurately completing coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Decisions on post-results procedures

2.5 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supplying information about entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Team Leader and/or the exams officer
- Notifying Learning Support of possible access arrangements required (as soon as possible after the start of the course).

2.6 Special educational needs coordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they can put exam day arrangements in place
- Processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)
- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms

Our SENCO is Liz La Riviere.

2.7 Lead invigilator(s)

The lead invigilator(s) are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer to run exams efficiently, according to JCQ regulations
- Collecting exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam and completing the necessary checks and forms when opening exam materials in venue, in line with JCQ guidelines
- Collecting all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring they are returned to the exams office
- Complete and return the required paperwork such as signed seating plans and registers, in line with JCQ guidelines
- Invigilators who are also parents of students may not invigilate in a room where their child is sitting an examination
- Invigilators with other conflicts of interest (i.e. close family friend/more distant relative) may not be the sole invigilator where that child is sitting an exam

2.8 Candidates

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirming and signing entries
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations, and signing a declaration that confirms the coursework to be their own
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations

3. Qualifications offered

The SLT decides the qualifications we offer.

- The qualifications we offer are published each year in our KS4 and KS5 prospectuses. In addition, other qualifications may be offered on an individual basis either where there is a particular aptitude e.g. first language exam other than English or where the qualification has been followed as a specific intervention e.g. an ASDAN qualification.
- Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Team Leader or Head of Subject. This decision has to be taken in consultation with the Senior line manager.
- Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Deputy Headteacher for Quality of Education (Jane Martin) in consultation with the Head of centre.

4. Exam series

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled annually and included on the school calendar.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in accordance with the JCQ and examining bodies' time frame and schedules.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions. Internal exam papers are retained until students are certificated.

The Head of Centre decides which exam series are used in the centre in consultation with Team Leaders and SLT line managers.

The centre only offers assessments on an on-demand basis for entry level qualifications such as Functional Skills

5. Exam timetables

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

6. Entries (including entry details and late entries)

Candidates or parents/carers can request subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. However, such requests are not automatically granted but are considered in light of all available relevant information and taking into account the professional judgement of the team leader and/or head of subject.

We do not accept entries from private candidates.

We do not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to team leaders and heads of subject via email, briefings and notices.

Team Leaders and Heads of Subject 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 require authorisation, in writing, by the Deputy Headteacher for Quality of Education.

6.1 Re-sits

- Candidates are allowed Maths and English GCSE and BTEC unit resits at the advice and discretion of their teachers.
- Where the candidate electively opts to take a resit, they are expected to pay the exam board fees.
- Resit decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, Team Leaders/Course Leaders, Assistant Headteacher 6th Form, Exams Officer (also see Section 7 Exam Fees) and Head of Centre.
- Parents' consent will be sought for all resits.

7. 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 actions well in advance of each exams series.

Candidates may be charged for the following within an external examination series:

- Private exam entries
- Late changes to an exam entry beyond the published JCQ deadline
- Elective resits i.e. at candidates request with parental authorisation
- Missed examinations without medical or other extenuating circumstances
- Enquiries about results (EARs)
- Access to scripts (ATS)

We may waive these fees in certain circumstances. Any request for waiving relevant fees, needs to go to the Exams Officer in the first instance.

8. Equalities

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

We will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that we provide to candidates in accordance with the requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Head of centre, the SENCo and the Exams officer

9. Access arrangements

The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs (SEN) 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.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCo, specialist LSA and the exams officer.

Room arrangements for candidates using access arrangements will be organised by the exams officer and the Learning Support team.

Invigilation and support for candidates using access arrangements, as defined in the [JCQ access arrangements regulations](#), will be organised by the exams officer.

9.1 Use of word processors

We may allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate as part of access arrangements or as a reasonable adjustment where appropriate, including but not limited to:

- When it is their normal way of working, i.e. where the curriculum is delivered electronically, and word processors are provided to all candidates
- If they need support with handwriting
- If they have a:
 - Physical disability
 - Learning difficulty that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
 - Medical condition
 - Sensory impairment

The SENCO will use their judgement, in collaboration with relevant members of staff where necessary, to make decisions about when a word processor is appropriate outside the specific listed examples above.

More details with regards to the use of Word processors in exams is outlined in the separate 'EAA Word Processor Policy'.

10. Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of centre and exams officer.

Contingency plans are available via email, briefings and notices and are in line with the [guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ](#) and awarding organisations.

Reference further information in the school's 'Exams Contingency Plan'

10.1 Cyber Security

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:

- a) ensuring that all members of centre staff who access awarding bodies' online systems undertake annual cyber security training including:
 - creating strong, unique passwords for all accounts;
 - keeping all account details strictly confidential;
 - the critical role of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) in protecting against unauthorised access;
 - properly setting up and using MFA for both centre and awarding bodies' systems;
 - an awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts
- ensuring staff quickly reporting any suspicious activity, events, incidents and encouraging a safe and supportive reporting culture.

- making sure all certificates of completed staff cyber training are downloaded and held on file for inspection.

b) developing and maintaining a comprehensive cyber security policy for the centre.

c) implementing and enforcing robust security measures, including:

- mandatory MFA for all accounts and systems containing exam-related information, including those that interface between awarding body and centre systems, to enhance security and protect sensitive data;
- regularly reviewing and updating security settings to align with current best practices;

d) updating any passwords that may have been exposed;

e) setting up secure account recovery options;

f) reviewing and managing connected applications;

g) monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required;

h) ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document Guidance for centres on cyber security:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements.

i) reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body.

Reference further information in the school's 'Online Safety Policy' and Cyber Security Policy

11. Estimated grades

Team Leaders and/or Heads of Subject are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested.

12. Managing invigilators

- External staff will be used to invigilate examinations.
- These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.
- Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams officer and the school's HR Manager
- If invigilators require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, the HR Manager is responsible for obtaining these.
- DBS fees paid by the centre.
- Invigilators rates of pay are set by the Chief Finance and Operations Officer
- Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer

13. Malpractice

The head of centre, in consultation with the Deputy Headteacher for Quality of Education is responsible for ensuring that suspected malpractice is thoroughly investigated.

Reference further information in the school's 'Exams – Malpractice Policy'

14. Exam days

- The exams officer will:
 - Book all exam rooms (after liaising with other relevant users)
 - Make question papers, exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator
- Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and will be advised of requirements by the exams officer.
- The invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with [JCQ guidelines](#).
- Subject staff and senior 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 in the exam room 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 team leaders and/or heads of subject in accordance with JCQ's recommendations.
- After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed exam scripts to awarding bodies.

15. Candidates

- The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series.
- Our published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and we accept 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.
- This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic devices with text or digital facilities.
- Any precluded items must not be taken into the 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 Exams Officer.
- Candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.
- The exams officer or designated senior member of staff is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

15.1 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible for making arrangements for clash candidates, including:

- Supervising escorts
- Identifying a secure venue
- Overnight supervision arrangements as a last resort and in line with JCQ requirements

16. Special consideration

- Exams officer and all relevant staff will adhere to the [JCQ Special Consideration](#)
- If a candidate is unable to attend an exam because of illness, bereavement, or other trauma, or if a candidate becomes ill or otherwise disadvantaged during an exam, they are responsible for alerting the exams officer or head of centre to that effect.
- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within five days of

the exam.

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

17. GCE, GCSE and VTQ non-examination assessments

- Teaching staff who deliver non-examination assessments will follow the correct specifications and the specification and instructions provided by the awarding body, or JCQ instructions for conducting non-examination assessments if appropriate.
- It is the duty of team leaders and/or heads of subject to ensure that all non-examination assessments are ready for dispatched/uploaded 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 internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by team leaders or heads of subject. The exams officer will inform staff of the deadline date for appeals against internal assessments.
- Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with our internal appeals procedure document which is available on request.

Reference Non-Exam Assessment policy

17.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini. Shenfield High School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Pupils **may not** use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
- To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

Pupils **may** use AI tools:

- As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas
- When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed

Where a pupil uses an AI tool, the pupil should retain a copy of the question(s) asked and the AI-generated responses. Pupils must submit this along with the assessment.

Staff should:

- Be aware that AI tools are still being developed and should use such tools with caution as they may provide inaccurate, inappropriate or biased content
- Make students aware of the risks of using AI tools and that they need to appropriately reference AI as a source of information to maintain the integrity of assessments

For more information on AI misuse, see [guidance from JCQ on AI use in assessments](#). Any misuse of AI tools may be treated as malpractice.

18. Results and certificates

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the Centre or by post to their home address. Results will also be emailed to the candidate's school email account on results day
- Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Chief Finance and Operations Officer and the Estates Manager
- The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the exams officer and head of centre

- Dates of results days each year will be publicised for all candidates through the school website, email and newsletter
- Certificates for students still on roll are given to them and signed for.
- Certificates for leavers will be collected from reception during a given period, with students being given the option to have them posted if necessary.
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, if they have evidencable authorisation.
- Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

18.1 Enquiries about results (EARs)

- EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results.
- A request for a review of marking 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 a group of candidates.
- The cost of EARs is set out in section 7 of this policy ('Exam fees').
- All decisions about whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Deputy Headteacher for Quality of Education
- If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal, and we will respond by following the process in our internal appeals procedure document.
- All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the exams officer, following the JCQ guidance.

18.2 Access to scripts (ATS)

- After the release of results, candidates may ask the exams office to request the copies of written exam papers in line with the post result deadlines
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. Consent from candidates must be obtained beforehand
- The exams officer is responsible for processing requests for ATS.
- The cost of ATS is set out in section 7 of this policy ('Exam fees').

19. Monitoring and review

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every three years unless there are changes to:

- The exams systems and/or processes
- JCQ guidance
- Our curriculum offer

when the review will be brought forward.