



# WEDNESFIELD HIGH SPECIALIST ENGINEERING ACADEMY

## EXAMINATIONS POLICY

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Signed by the Chair of the LAB:		Print:	

## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this Examinations Policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of examinations and external assessment procedures are conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient examination system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

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

This Examinations Policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Examinations Officer.

## **2. Examination Responsibilities**

Head of centre/Deputy Headteacher

Overall responsibility for the academy as an examination 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 document 'Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments'.

Examinations Office Manager/Examinations Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal examinations and analysis of examination results:

- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual examination timetables and application procedures as set by the various examination boards.
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, Governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all examinations in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concern imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the examination timetable that will affect them.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all examination 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'.
- Identified and manages examination timetable clashes.

- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all examination costs/charges.
- Line manages the Senior Examinations Invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of examinations invigilators responsible for the conduct of examinations.
- Submits candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned work and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arranges for dissemination of examination 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 examinations.

#### Deputy Headteacher

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4/Post-16.

#### Heads of Department

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

#### Prospects/Careers Officer

- Guidance and careers information.

#### Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to Heads of Department.
- Maintain accurate records of marks etc. as necessary.

#### 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 Invigilators/Invigilators

- Collection of Examination papers and other materials from the examinations office before the start of the examination.
- Ensure an accurate attendance record is completed.
- Collection of all examination papers in the correct order at the end of the examination and their return to the examinations office.
- Oversee examinations in line with national and examination board regulations.

#### Candidates

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

#### Administrative Staff

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

### **3. The Statutory Tests and Qualifications Offered**

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Deputy Headteacher, Heads of Department and the Senior Leadership Team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, GCE/'A' Levels, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technical Qualifications.

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 examinations office must be informed by October of the academic year.

#### 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.

### **4. Examination Seasons and Timetables**

#### 4.1 Examination seasons

External examinations are scheduled in November, January, March and June.

All internal examinations and controlled assessments are held under external examination conditions.

Which examination series used in the centre is decided by the Senior Leadership Team.

#### 4.2 Timetables

The Examinations Officer will circulate the examinations timetable for both external and internal examinations once these are confirmed.

### 5. Entries, Entry Details, Late Entries and Retakes

#### 5.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for the examination entries by the heads of subject, Heads of Department and the subject teachers.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

#### 5.2 Late Entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Head of Department via email.

Late entries are authorised by the Examinations Officer.

#### 5.3 Retakes

Candidates are allowed two retakes per subject in GCSE.

Candidates are allowed one retake per subject in AS.

Candidates are allowed one retake per subject in A2.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers, head of Post-16, Examinations Officer and the Heads of Department.

(See also Section 6 Examination Fees)

### 6. Examination Fees

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

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

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

Late entry or amendment fees may have to be 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 examination or meet the necessary coursework requirements.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the centre. (See also section 5.3: 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 12.2: Enquiries about results (EARs)).

## **7. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements**

### **7.1 DDA**

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

### **7.2 Special Needs**

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO, doctor and the educational psychologist/specialist teacher.

The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an examination, and the date of that examination. The SENCO can then inform individual staff to any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the examination.

### **7.3 Access Arrangements**

Making special arrangements for candidates to take examinations is the responsibility of the SENCO and the Examinations Officer.

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

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

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the Examinations Officer.

## **8. Estimated Grades No Longer Needed as of 2015**

### **Estimated Grades**

The Heads of Department will submit estimated grades to the Examinations Officer when requested by the Examinations Officer.

## **9. Managing Invigilators and Examination Days**

### **9.1 Managing invigilators**

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the senior leaders.

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

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

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examinations Office.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

### **9.2 Examination Days**

The Examinations Officer will book all examination rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other examination stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The lead invigilator will start all examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be invited to be present at the start of the examination to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted and must leave before the papers are opened.

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

Examination papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the examination room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Department at the end of the examination session.

## **10. Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration**

### **10.1 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.

Candidates may leave the examination room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the examination room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.

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

### **10.2 Clash Candidates**

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

### 10.3 Special Consideration

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

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

The Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the examination.

## 11. Coursework and Appeals Against Internal Assessments

### 11.1 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 and controlled assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time and the Examinations Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the examinations office by the Heads of Department.

### 11.2 Appeals Against Internal Assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the examinations 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 Examinations Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

## 12. Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

### 12.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre/by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide SAE).

Arrangements for the academy to open on results days are made by the Examinations Officer.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

The centre aggregates at the end of Year 13 for AS grades, not at the end of Year 12.

### 12.2 Enquiries About Results (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 6: Exam Fees).

### 12.3 Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

If a result is queried, the Examinations 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.

## 13. Certificates

Certificates are collected in person only and signed for.

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 at least six years.

## 14. Arrangements for Internal Appeals About Internal Assessment Decisions and Enquiries about Results

Wednesfield High Specialist Engineering Academy as a centre offering examinations on behalf of the Awarding Bodies should have a published appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions which are made widely available and accessible to all candidates, teaching staff, parents and Governors.

We should have a formal codified procedure for handling disputes when a candidate or parent/carer disagrees with a decision by the centre not to support an enquiry and ensure that

procedures are widely available and accessible to all candidates and their parents/carers. The code of practice for the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) asks Awarding Bodies to ensure that centres meet these requirements.

As an academy we are inspected at least once per year. The checking of this documentation is to be part of this check from 2006.

#### Rationale

- i. Our arrangements should be introduced in the interests of natural justice.
- ii. The formal appeals mechanism should be available for candidates and carers to use.
- iii. The procedures should ensure that we are accessible and allow disputes to be resolved openly and effectively.
- iv. They should be of benefit to candidates and parents/carers because concerns can be explored through a formal and independent process.
- v. The procedure will benefit the academy and staff as it is a formal process to allow us to set out our position.
- vi. The procedure will only come into action when all other mechanisms at the academy have failed to resolve the matter.
- vii. Initially there should be discussion between candidates/parents/carers and subject staff/Heads of Department.
- viii. It is the final stage of the normal process of considering and resolving a dispute.
- ix. It is expected that it will only be used in exceptional circumstance.
- x. As a centre we are expected to produce documentation relating to procedures for hearing appeals against internal assessment decisions or enquiries about results.
- xi. Written records of any appeals are also required they will be inspected by the Awarding Body but would not be judging either the appeals process or the decisions reached. Details of the appeal must be made available to the Awarding Body on request.

#### Normal Procedures for Coursework

- i. Staff within a department should set a coursework task according to the requirements of the course they decide to offer for examination.
- ii. If the coursework task is provided by the examination board staff should use the examination board mark scheme.
- iii. If the coursework exercise is generated by the department staff this should include a mark scheme and should be agreed by the Head of Department and staff whom are teaching and marking the exercise.
- iv. There should be evidence within the department that the exercise has been accepted by the Awarding Body. (Coursework moderators are appointed by the Awarding Body to oversee this task. If staff do not know how to contact their moderator they should contact staff in the examinations office.
- v. When a coursework task is set students need to be aware of the date that the task has to be handed in for internal marking and moderation.
- vi. As students complete the task staff will need to collect evidence of appropriate supervision and ensure that students sign the required authentication documentation. Staff are also expected to sign examination board documentation.
- vii. Heads of Department and/or second in charge of departments should arrange a moderation exercise within the department before finalising the award of coursework marks. Evidence from this exercise should be available in case of appeals by students.
- viii. Awarding Bodies offer coursework training and marking days each year. Departments need to be sure that a member of staff attends for each subject that the department offers.

- ix. When internal moderation has taken place the department can decide whether or not to inform students of marks awarded. If this is done it must be based on the proviso that the marks can be altered by the Awarding Body external moderation procedures.
- x. The Data Protection Act 1998 allows students to request access to centre marks. This can give rise to misunderstanding. We should treat the marks as confidential (unless explicitly requested by the students) until after the external moderation procedure has taken place and marks reported back to the academy, together with the additional feedback contained in the academy report. If students are informed of the mark awarded by centre staff before moderation, it must be on the understanding that the marks are only provisional. Only when moderation has taken place will we then have all the information to advise students and parents/carers properly.

### **Appeals Procedure**

- i. If a student or parent/carer wants to appeal against an internal coursework mark or appeal concerning a result, the member of staff in charge of examination entry will manage the appeal.
- ii. They will be responsible for disseminating information to all candidates and their parents/carers about the appeals procedure and to inform the Headteacher about the existence and outcome of all such appeals.
- iii. When a student or parent/carer wishes to make an appeal initially the member of staff in charge of examinations will discuss verbally the nature of the appeal. If this discussion fails to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned, the appeal will be taken to the next level.
- iv. The student/parent/carer will then be invited to formalise the appeal in writing within one working week. In this they will be aided by members of staff in charge of examinations.
- v. Upon receipt of the written appeal the Head of Department, member of staff in charge of examinations and member of staff responsible for the award of the mark will meet to discuss the appeal. The member of staff in charge of examinations will also meet students concerned to discuss the mark awarded. If parents wish to be present they will be invited by the member of staff in charge of examinations.
- vi. The results of the meetings will be reported verbally to parents/carers within two days of the meeting and by writing within one week.
- vii. If the issue has not been resolved the parent/carer can appeal to the academy Governing Body directly or via Parent Governors. The Governing Body will then appoint a group of Governors to investigate the appeal. The group appointed by the Governors will include the Headteacher.
- viii. The group will review the evidence already submitted, they will have the capacity to listen to department responses and parent/carer concerns. Any decision will be transmitted to parents within one week by letter.

### **Appeals by Students/Parents/Carers Post Results**

- i. Appeals against results must be made within the timescales set out in the appropriate documentation supplied by examination boards.
- ii. Examination Boards acknowledge receipt of appeals within five days and process appeals to conclusion within 10 weeks of receipt.
- iii. The academy will generally pay for all Enquiries About Results (EARs).
- iv. When parents/carers approach the academy concerning an EAR they should be referred to the Examination Officer. The Examination Officer will then take details and contact the department. At this stage the Examinations Officer will inform parents/carers of the timescale involved in the remark process.

- v. If the department feel a remark is appropriate the Head of Department will supply the student with a form for consent to go ahead (at this stage the student and parents/carers would need to be made aware that the mark could go down and that they have to accept the lower grade should this happen).
- vi. If the department do not feel a remark is suitable the Examinations Officer will contact the parent/carer by telephone and explain reasons for the academy not wanting to go ahead. These reasons will be confirmed in writing within three days. Parents/carers will again be notified of the possibility of grades going down as well as up and that if a remark goes ahead they must accept the result of the remark.
- vii. If parents still want to go ahead with a remark the Examinations Officer will process the remark upon receipt of the consent form signed by the student. A letter will be sent to parents by the Examinations Officer detailing the steps taken by the academy in the remark process.

All appeals post results are completed under the rules and procedures set out in the examination board documentation. A copy of these are available from the examination board websites or from Examination staff at the academy.

The final word on all appeals resides with the Appeals Committee of each examination board, excepting that appeals against results in General Qualifications may be taken to the Independent Examination Appeals Board.