

Exams Policy 2024-25

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance

Approved/reviewed by:
SLT:
Exams Officer: Thomas Shallcross

Date of next review: 01/10/2025

Contents

1. Introduction

Gordano School believes that the education of students is enhanced by a broad and balanced curriculum. In the Personalised Stage this allows students to progress at the pace that is right for them on the courses that are most appropriate for them.

2. Purpose

The centre is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently. This exam policy will ensure that:

- the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates
- all centre staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- all exams and assessments are conducted in accordance with JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions
- exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsible for the integrity of the exams system with reference to the General Regulations for Approved Centres
- is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is compliant with the published JCQ requirements and signing and returning the head of centre's declaration
- ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts
- ensures a named member of staff acts as the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice
- risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes are undertaken and a written exam contingency plan is in place
- ensures the exams office receives appropriate support from relevant centre staff and enables the EO to attend appropriate training and other events in order to facilitate the effective delivery of exams and assessments within the centre.

The Examinations Manager:

- manages the administration of external exams and internal exams
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- ensures key tasks are undertaken and key dates and deadlines met with the support of heads of departments
- will recruit, train and deploy a team of internal/external invigilators
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams, including BTEC and other vocational courses as appropriate
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as the guidelines dictate
- actions access arrangements
- makes applications for special consideration as instructed by Directors of Key Stage
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes (only applying overnight supervision arrangements in rare and exceptional circumstances and as a last resort)
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs and charges
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests

Heads of Faculty:

- will provide accurate and timely information of syllabus including Board and appropriate entry codes through a 'survey of intention'
- ensures teaching staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the Examinations Manager and SENCo
- delivers accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Examinations Manager
- will aid decisions on post-results requests
- informs the Examinations Manager of any amendments and/or withdrawals in advance of the published deadlines

Invigilators:

- must attend training, updates, briefing and review sessions as required
- provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate
- keep exam papers secure at all times to protect the integrity of the exams process
- assist the Examinations Manager in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations
- collect exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- collect all exam papers and sort in the correct order at the end of the exam and package ready for dispatch and ensure their safe return to the exams office

SENCo:

- will work with the specialist assessor to identify and test candidates for access arrangements
- will work with the Examinations Manager to provide access arrangements (including reader pens) as required by candidates in their exam rooms in a timely manner
- will liaise with teaching staff to gather evidence of normal way of working of an affected candidate
- will ensure that applications for approval through Access arrangements online are undertaken
- will ensure criteria for candidates granted separate invigilation within the centre is clear, meets JCQ regulations and best meets the needs of individual candidates and remaining candidates in main exam rooms
- will present, when requested by a JCQ inspector, evidence of the specialist assessor's qualification
- will complete JCQ form 8 in collaboration with the specialist assessor

Candidates:

- ensure they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations. Students must make themselves fully aware of these guidelines, copies of which are available on the school website.
- must not have a mobile phone, smart watch, watch, ipod, earpods, smart glasses or any such communication device in their possession. Cases of such will be reported to the exam board and students can expect to be disqualified from at least that subject. Any items should be SWITCHED OFF and left in student's bags. **PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SCHOOL WILL NOT ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SECURITY OF ANY PHONE/WATCH ANYWHERE ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES AT ANY TIME. THEY ARE BROUGHT INTO SCHOOL ENTIRELY AT THE RISK OF THE OWNER.**
- ensure they confirm their statements of entry available online and query any anomalies before the given deadline.
- should check their latest timetable and arrive promptly at the correct exam venue no less than 15 minutes before the listed start time.
- It is expected that students in years 7 - 11 wear normal school uniform. No other clothing will be permitted in the exam rooms (except for students with a uniform adjustment). Sixth form students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner.
- Students are required to equip themselves with all they need for the exam, including BLACK PENS. All equipment must be in a transparent pencil case.
- Food is not allowed in the examination room. Water is allowed in a clear transparent bottle with no writing or label on it.

Reception Staff:

- Support the Examinations Officer in dealing with exam-related deliveries and dispatches with due regard to the security of confidential materials.
- Instruct the Exams Officer as soon as a delivery arrives, log the package and keep this secure until the Exams Officer collects the package.

Site Staff:

- Support the Examinations Manager in relevant matters relating to the set-up of exam rooms and resources

IT:

- Support the Examinations Manager in relevant matters relating to online and IT support for exam rooms.

4. Entries

The Examinations Manager will:

- request final entry information from Heads of Faculty in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- ask Heads of Faculty to check that students are being entered for the correct entry code
- inform Heads of Faculty of subsequent deadlines for making changes to this entry information so as not to invoke penalty charges
- endeavour to minimise the risk of entries or registrations being missed and reduce the potential for late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies
- charge any late or other penalty fees to the subject department responsible

Late entries can only be authorised by the Assistant Headteacher/Examinations Manager.

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

5. Exam Fees

GCSE, A-level and Vocational are paid for by the school for students who are sitting these exams / assessments as per their curriculum timetable.

Private entry fees and unit re-sits are paid for by the candidates via the Examinations Manager (please see below). GCSE resits in Maths / English for students who have continued at Gordano sixth and did not achieve a GCSE grade 4 pass will be paid for by Gordano school. Students who **did** achieve a GCSE grade 4 pass but wish to be entered to improve their grade will pay the entry fee plus a £30 additional administration fee.

6. Private Candidates

- Gordano School accepts a limited number of entries from private candidates, and only if students have previously studied at Gordano School and only for those

specifications which are already offered by the school. Applications for private entries are at the discretion of Gordano School.

- The decision to accept external candidates may be reviewed and withdrawn if necessary.
- External candidates will need to complete the appropriate documentation (available from the exams team) and provide payment by the deadline date specified. Entries will not be made without upfront payment of fees.
- Private candidates will be charged the exam board fee plus a £30 additional administration fee. If no other students are sitting this exam, or the designated exam room capacity is full, then candidates would need to cover the additional costs of invigilation.
- Language exams - for students who have been approved by the school to sit **additional** exams in Modern Foreign Languages, the written exam fees for GCSE's will be covered by Gordano however the cost to facilitate the speaking element for languages that are not delivered by Gordano will need to be paid directly by the student / parent to the speaking examiner. Gordano will make the necessary arrangements for the examiner and instruct the candidate of the fees before proceeding.
- A level student wishing to take an additional language will be charged the full exam fee and an administration fee plus the cost of the speaking examiner to facilitate the exam where the language is not delivered by Gordano School.

7. Internal Policies

Broadly there are two areas where clear policies regarding the provision and administration of public examinations need to be in one place.

- Internal policies for the benefit of teaching and non-teaching staff and invigilators
- Policies for candidates and parents.

8. Choice of specification and Awarding Body

- It is at the professional discretion of subject departments to choose which exam board offers the most appropriate specification designed to meet overall curriculum requirements.
- Any changes in specifications must be approved by the Deputy Head Curriculum and notified to the Examinations Officer by the Head of Department as soon as they are known. This process applies equally to a change of board where revised intentions to enter /estimated entry numbers are often required eighteen months ahead of exams being sat.
- Entries for the following year must be completed by Heads of Faculties through the survey of intention issued at the end of term 6 for the following academic year.

9. Examination Seasons

GCSE

- GCSE examinations will be available to all candidates for the June series. GCSE retakes for English and Maths are available in November for students who have continued their studies at Gordano School.
- Students studying vocational subjects at L1/2 may be required to sit exams in the January exam series with retakes often available in the June series depending on the course requirements.

A Level / AS Levels

- A levels are available in the June series
- Students studying vocational subjects at Level 3 may be required to sit exams in the January exam series, with retakes often available in the June series depending on the course requirements.

10. Malpractice

The Senior Leadership Team in consultation with the Examinations Manager is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

All cases of malpractice will be reported to the awarding body who will issue an appropriate sanction.

11. Exam Days

- The Examinations Manager will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilators.
- 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 are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Examinations Manager.
- Candidates may only leave the exam room where necessary or where supervised rest breaks have been granted by the SENCo. Candidates will be accompanied by a member of the exam team at all times.
- Toilet breaks will not be permitted in the first 30 minutes and the final 15 minutes of an exam. The time taken for a toilet break is not added to the exam time. Students are encouraged to use the toilet facilities prior to entering the exam room.
- Exam attendance will be reported to the Attendance Officer. The Attendance Officer will contact where possible any absent students. Those students who then arrive late

will be permitted into the examination at the discretion of the Examinations Manager, following JCQ advice.

- Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the Examinations Manager to that effect.
- Unauthorised absences during exams will not qualify for special consideration and the exam board will be notified accordingly. In such cases, any associated exam fees will be invoiced to the parent/guardian.
- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor / hospital note. The Examinations Manager will then complete the on-line special consideration form for the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.
- After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to the relevant awarding bodies.
- Spare exam papers will be distributed to the appropriate Heads of Department when deemed appropriate by the Examinations Manager.

12. Dispatch of Scripts

The Examinations Manager will dispatch all scripts in accordance with JCQ regulations. Appropriate records will be kept for tracking purposes along with a list of absences.

13. Results

- Candidates will receive individual results slips in person on results days. They may be collected by another person if requested by candidate in writing in advance - the authorised person must bring identification.
- The results slip will be in the form of a centre-produced document.
- Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre.
- The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

14. Enquiries about Results (EARs) - Post Results Services

- EARs may be requested by the candidate following the release of results. A request for a review of marking or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate.
- EARs requested by candidates must be paid for by the candidate and the appropriate forms completed before the request is processed.

- EARs requested by centre staff will be charged to the relevant department budget.
- All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Examinations Manager.
- The candidate must be made aware that in the event of an awarding body initiating a review of marking, candidates' marks and subject grades may be lowered, confirmed or raised.
- All information regarding including fees and deadlines for EARs will be included in student's results envelopes. Copies will also be available on the Gordano School website - Student Exam Centre page.

15. Access to Scripts

- After the release of results, candidates may request the return of written exam papers soon after the receipt of results. Before the application is processed, candidates must pay the relevant fee and complete the relevant form, and request within the specified deadline date with the Exams Office.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. Where fees are charged, these are cross charged to the relevant department budget. An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

16. Certificates

- Certificates are provided to centres by awarding bodies after results have been confirmed.
- Certificates collection will be arranged to take place after the deadline for issue of certificates by awarding bodies. Alternatively, candidates may arrange for certificates to be collected on their behalf by providing the Examinations Manager with written or email permission/authorisation; authorised persons must provide ID evidence on collection of certificates.
- Unclaimed certificates are kept in secure storage for a minimum of one year from the date the certificates were issued. After 2 years uncollected certificates will be securely disposed of by Gordano School and a record of the certificates destroyed will be kept.
- A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

17. Coursework / Non-Examination Assessments

Please see separate 'Non-examination Assessment Policy'

Internally Assessed

- In all cases Heads of Department are responsible for collating coursework/NEA marks.
- Heads of Department ensure they comply with the internal appeals procedure by providing candidates with their internally assessed mark within the deadlines set.
- Heads of Department will assist with any appeal against internally assessed marks in line with the internal appeals procedure.
- All coursework/NEA marks will be submitted electronically to the exam boards by Heads of Department.
- External moderation of internally assessed work will be requested and should be sent directly to the moderators by the Head of Department, keeping proof of postage.

Externally Assessed

- Departments should arrange for coursework / NEA to be sent to the marker in good time before the advised cut-off date.
- All paperwork including Candidate Record Forms and Centre declaration sheets need to be completed by departments and included with work sent to the boards or moderators.
- Returned coursework will be distributed to departments by the exams office. All coursework must be retained securely by departments until all dates for possible recall or appeal against marks awarded have passed. In practical terms this means holding on to coursework at least until certificates have been issued to students.

18. Equality Legislation

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Disability & Equality Act 2010.

A person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

19. Review

The exams policy will be reviewed every year.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre, Assistant Head and Examinations Manager.

Next review: 01/10/2025