



# EXAMS POLICY

Date Agreed by the Governing Body	June 2023
Date to be reviewed	June 2024
Date of last review	May 2023
Governors Committee accountable for review	Education
Senior Leadership Team accountable for review	JNE

### **The Purpose of this Exam Policy is:**

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

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the Centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy which will be reviewed annually by the Exams Officer and Assistant Headteacher in charge of the Exams Office.

### **Exam Responsibilities**

#### **Head of Centre/Headmaster**

Overall responsibility for the School as an Exam Centre:

- Ensures that the centre is compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations and assessments
- The Head of Centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document '*Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures*'

#### **Exams Officer**

- Manages the administration of public exams, including the booking and set-up of exam rooms
- Advises the Senior Team, Subject and Class Tutors and other relevant Support Staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Notifies Candidates of the regulations governing public examinations
- Oversees the production and distribution to Staff, Governors and Candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which Candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensures that Candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary Coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Oversees the dates for the completion and submission of Controlled Assessments
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts, including scripts used for generating teacher assessed grades
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and *A guide to the special consideration process*
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manages the Exam Invigilators, organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of Exam Invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams, including remote assessments

- Submits Candidates' Coursework/NEA (non-exam assessment) marks, tracks secure despatch and stores Coursework/NEA and any other material required by the appropriate Awarding Bodies correctly and on schedule
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to Candidates and forwards, in consultation with the Senior Team, any appeals/re-mark requests
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of Candidates for their exams
- Notifies access arrangements
- Administers access arrangements
- Administers all exam materials to and from the exam venues and ensures the security of exam papers from their arrival at the school to their distribution in the exam rooms
- Oversees the submission of teacher assessment grades to exam boards if public exams are cancelled

#### **Assistant Heads – Curriculum Support Team**

- Organisation of teaching and learning
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4/Post-16
- Analysis of exam results
- In case of cancellation of public exams, oversees the process of generating and moderating teacher assessment grades in line with guidance from Ofqual and exam boards

#### **Subject Leaders**

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of Candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- Accurate completion of Coursework/NEA marksheets and declaration sheets
- Accurate submission of entry and all other mark sheets within deadlines as set by the Exams Officer, to the Exams Office
- In case of cancellation of public exams, ensure consistent and accurate generation of teacher assessment grades, and oversee the recording of evidence used to generate grades within their departments

#### **Head of Careers**

- Guidance and careers information

#### **SENCO/SEN Manager**

- Identification and testing of Candidates' requirements for access arrangements
- Provision of additional support as appropriate, depending on the needs of a pupil and their approved access arrangements in liaison with the Exams Officer, to help Candidates achieve their course aims
- Liaison (either in person or through SEN staff) with the Exams Officer and her invigilators to ensure Candidates receive the appropriate access arrangements
- In case of teacher assessed grades, liaison with the Assistant Head in charge of the grading process to moderate the grades of SEN students to ensure they are a fair and accurate reflection of the students' skills and knowledge

## **Candidates**

- Confirmation and signing of entries
- Understanding Coursework/NEA regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the Coursework/NEA as their own

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

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Head of Centre and the Senior Team.

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

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Centre's published prospectus for that year.

- **Key Stage 4**  
All Candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external Awarding Body.
- **Post-16**  
It is expected that all Post-16 examinations will be taken in Year 13. An exception will be made for boys who wish to take the BTEC Extended Certificate at the end of Year 12.

## **Exam Seasons and Timetables**

### **Exam Seasons**

- Internal exams are scheduled in January and June
- Public exams are scheduled in May and June
- If public exams are cancelled, the School may set up additional assessment series as part of the process of generating teacher assessed grades
- All internal exams are held under external exam conditions
- The exam series used in the Centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Assistant Head and the Senior Team

### **Timetables**

- The Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams once confirmed

### **Religious Festivals and Exam Seasons**

- For public exams, the School is not able to adjust timetables to take account of holy days or religious festivals. If the performance of a candidate risks being affected by observance of a religious festival (for example, by fasting during the period of public exams), we strongly recommend that this is communicated to the Exams Officer prior to the start of the exam season.
- For internal exams, the School will strive to make reasonable adjustment to the timetables of individual students so that they can participate in religious festivals and

holy days. All leave of absence requests during the exam period must be made in advance so that alternative times can be arranged for the exams to take place.

### **Entries, Entry Details, Late Entries and Retakes**

#### **Entries**

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Leaders and the subject teachers.
- The Centre will register each candidate within the awarding body requirements and provide a mechanism for Subject Leaders to check the accuracy of entries.
- For BTEC: the Centre will make each candidate aware of their registration status.
- The Centre will inform the awarding bodies of withdrawals, transfers or changes to candidate details.
- Candidates or parents can only request a change of exam level or withdrawal after consultation with the Head of Year
- The Centre accepts entries from external Candidates in certain circumstances, such as when Year 14 students are retaking A levels or when students have been prepared for examination by staff at the School

#### **Late Entries**

- Entry deadlines are circulated to Subject Leaders via the Exams notice board
- Late entries are authorised by the Exams Officer and Assistant Head

#### **Additional Entries**

- Candidates can only take examinations at RGS if they have been prepared for those exams by teachers at the school as part of the normal curriculum.
- Candidates who wish to take additional examinations at RGS – for example, an exam for which they have received tuition outside normal lessons – must apply to the Exams Officer at the earliest opportunity and no later than the last day of the Autumn Term.
- The decision on whether to allow a candidate to take an additional exam at RGS will be made by the Exams Officer in consultation with teachers and Subject Leaders.

#### **Retakes**

- Candidates are not allowed retakes in GCSE (exceptional circumstances will be considered in Maths and English – for example, if a certain grade in Maths is required for entry to a candidate's chosen university course)
- Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the Candidates, subject teachers and the Subject Leaders. (See also 'Exam Fees'.)

### **Exam Fees**

- GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.
- A Level and BTEC initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.
- Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Candidates.

- 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.
- Candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary Coursework/NEA requirements may be required to reimburse the School for the costs.
- The fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to Candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and Post-16 courses.
- Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the Candidates. (See also 'Retakes')
- Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result.

## **The Equality Act, Special Needs and Access Arrangements**

### **The Equality Act**

The Equality Act 2010 covers exams set by education providers. Exam Centres are expected to make 'reasonable adjustments' to examination procedures in order to make them more accessible to students with impairments or learning difficulties. This could include, for example, application of extra time, use of a laptop, special rooming arrangements or provision of a scribe. All Exam Centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

### **Special Needs**

A Candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCo, Doctor, Educational Psychologist/specialist Teacher and the Exams Officer.

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of Candidates with Special Educational Needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual Candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

### **Access Arrangements**

The Exams Officer is responsible for:

- Making special arrangements for Candidates to take exams
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the Awarding Bodies
- Rooming for access arrangement Candidates
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement Candidates

## **Managing Invigilators and Exam Days**

### **Managing Invigilators**

- External invigilators will be used for exam supervision.
- They will be used for external exams and internal mock examinations.
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

- Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR Department.
- 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 Administration.

### **Exam Days**

- The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.
- The Estates Manager is responsible for setting up the exam venues ie, Queens Hall and Upper Library.
- The Exams Officer and/or appointed person will start and finish all exams.
- In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Department/faculty at the end of the exam session.

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

### **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 exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.
- The Exams Officer will attempt to contact any Candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

### **Clash Candidates**

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying these Candidates and notifying parents or carers of the procedures and regulations governing exam clashes.

### **Special Consideration and Absence from Exams**

- Should a Candidate experience a temporary illness, injury or some other event outside their control (such as bereavement) at the time of an exam, it is the Candidate's responsibility to alert the Exams Officer to that effect.
- If the Candidate sits the exam, the Exams Officer will submit a special consideration form to the relevant Awarding Body within seven days of the exam.
- If the temporary illness, injury or other trauma means that the Candidate is unable to sit the exam, the Candidate and their Parent/Guardian/Carer must complete a self-certification form (JCQ Form 14) and return it to the Exams Officer within five days of the exam. The Exams Officer will use this Form to apply for an aegrotat grade on

behalf of the Candidate, providing the Candidate has completed the minimum assessment necessary to apply for a grade.

### **Coursework/Controlled Assessments and Appeals against Internal Assessments**

The Royal Grammar School is committed to ensuring that all assessments are carried out in a fair and equitable way that allows candidates to perform to the best of their abilities within the regulations laid down by the awarding bodies. To achieve this, Subject Leaders and subject teachers will:

- Ensure that candidates are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose and enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment
- Produce a clear assessment plan at the start of the academic year, including clear and reasonable timeframes for the production of assessed work and deadlines for completion.
- Assess candidates' work using only the published assessment and grading criteria
- Ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable.
- Not limit or 'cap' a candidate's achievement if work is submitted late.
- Develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for malpractice.
- Maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions.
- Maintain a robust and rigorous moderation or internal verification process, including the appointment of a Lead Internal Verifier for BTEC qualifications, who is registered with the awarding body, has undergone appropriate training and can brief/train other staff in the requirements of the Internal Verification process.
- Provide samples for external moderation as required by the awarding bodies.
- Monitor standards verification reports and reports on moderation and undertake any remedial action as required.
- Share good practice between departments within the Centre and in other Centres.
- Ensure that assessment methodology and the role of the assessor is understood by all staff involved in the process.
- Provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately.

### **Malpractice**

#### **Definition of Malpractice by Learners**

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the Centre at its discretion.

- Plagiarism of any nature.
- Misuse of AI.
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as the work of an individual.
- Copying (including the use of IT to aid copying).
- Deliberate destruction of another candidate's work.
- Fabrication of results or evidence.
- A false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.



- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another candidate or by arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment or examination.

### **Definition of Malpractice by Centre Staff**

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the Centre at its discretion.

- Improper assistance to candidates.
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work, where there is insufficient evidence of the candidate's achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made.
- Failure to keep candidate coursework/evidence for assessment secure.
- Fraudulent claims for certificates.
- Inappropriate retention of certificates.
- Producing falsified witness statements – for example, for evidence the candidate has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by staff not to be the candidate's own, to be included in their assignment/coursework.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements – for example, where a candidate is permitted support such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point at which the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
- Falsifying records/certificates – for example, by alteration, substitution or by fraud.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, such as claiming for a certificate prior to the candidate completing all the requirements of an assessment.

### **Avoiding Malpractice**

The Centre, Subject Leaders and subject teachers will:

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by informing candidates of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- Inform learners of the appropriate way to record cited texts and other materials or sources of information.
- **Make students aware of the appropriate and inappropriate use of AI, the risks of using AI, and the possible consequences of using AI inappropriately in a qualification assessment.**
- Ask candidates to confirm that the work submitted is their own.
- Investigate any allegations of malpractice. Such an investigation will be supported by the Head of Centre and all staff linked to the allegation. It will proceed according to the guidance laid out in the JCQ booklet "Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures".
- Make the candidate aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Give the candidate the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Inform the candidate of the avenues for appealing against any judgement made.

- Document all stages of an investigation.

Where malpractice is proven, the Centre will apply penalties and sanctions as stated in “Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures”.

### **Completion of Coursework and Controlled Assessments**

- Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or Centre-defined deadline.
- Heads of Department will ensure all Coursework/NEA samples are ready for despatch at the correct time and the Exams Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.
- Marks for all Coursework/NEA are provided to the Exams Office by the Heads of Department.

### **Appeals Against Internal Marking of Coursework and NEA**

An appeal against the result of internal marking of a non-examination unit such as coursework can be made by requesting a review of marking. The Centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject (see Appendix 1).

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

### **Results**

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the Centre
- Arrangements for the School to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of Centre

### **EARs**

- Following the issue of results, Awarding Bodies make post-results services available. Full details of these services, internal deadlines for requesting a service and fees charged are provided by the Exams Officer.
- The service Enquiries About Results (EARs) may be suggested by Centre Staff but can only be actioned by Candidates or their parents/carers if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking or – in the case of teacher assessed grades – an error in the process of generating the grade
- Before they submit a request for a review of marking, Candidates will be made aware of the fact that marks can and do go down as well as up. They will also be responsible for the cost
- A request for a review of marking of externally moderated coursework is not available to individual Candidates
- A request for a review of marking of externally moderated coursework can only be made on the basis of a whole cohort and the request must be made by the School

### **ATS**

- After the release of results, Candidates may request the return of papers. They will be responsible for the costs

- If a cohort result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking 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 by the Subject Leader. Departments will be responsible for the costs of these scripts
- When the Centre advises against requesting a review of marking, the Candidate must pay the appropriate fee, and a request will be made to the Awarding Body on the Candidate's behalf.

### **Appeals Procedure Following the Outcome of an Enquiry about Results**

- Where the Head of Centre remains dissatisfied after receiving the outcome of an EAR, an appeal will be made to the Awarding Body, following the guidance in the JCQ publications *Post-results services* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/post-results-services> and *A guide to the Awarding Bodies' appeals processes* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/appeals>
- Where the Head of Centre is satisfied after receiving the outcome of an EAR, but the Candidate and/or their parent/carer is not satisfied, they may make a further representation to the Head of Centre. Following this, the Head of Centre's decision as to whether to proceed with an appeal will be based upon the Centre's internal appeals arrangements and the Exam Board regulations governing the appeals process. Candidates or parents/carers are not permitted to make direct representations to an Awarding Body.
- An appeal should be submitted to the Centre as soon as possible to allow the Centre to process and submit the appeal to the Awarding Body within the required **14 calendar days** of receipt of EAR outcome. Awarding Body fees which may be charged for the appeal must be paid by the appellant on submission. If the appeal is upheld by the Awarding Body, this fee will be refunded by the Awarding Body and repaid to the appellant by the Centre.

### **Certificates**

- The Centre will ensure that certificate claims are timely and audit certificates received from the awarding bodies to ensure accuracy and completeness.
- Certificates will be presented in person and must be collected 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 are not withheld from Candidates who owe fees.
- In accordance with the guidance of the Joint Council for Qualifications, the School retains the right to destroy any certificates that remain unclaimed after holding them for a period of 12 months.

## APPENDIX 1



### **Review of Centre Assessed Marking Policy**

#### **(Relating to Coursework and Non-Examination Assessments for External Qualifications)**

This procedure confirms Royal Grammar School's compliance with JCQ's *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2021-22, section 5.7* that the centre has in place "a written internal appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions and to ensure that details of this procedure are communicated, made widely available and accessible to all candidates" and that before submitting marks to the awarding body the centre must "inform candidates of their centre assessed marks and allow a candidate to request a review of the centre's marking".

Certain components of GCSE and A level qualifications (A level and BTEC coursework, GCSE and A level non-examination assessments) that contribute to the final grade of the qualification are internally assessed (marked) by the subject teacher. The marks awarded (the internal assessment decisions) are then submitted by the deadline set by the awarding body for external moderation.

On being informed of their centre assessed marks, if a candidate believes that the above procedures were not followed in relation to the marking of his/her work, or that the assessor has not properly applied the mark scheme to his marking, then he may make use of this appeals procedure to consider whether to request a review of the centre's marking.

As part of this process RGS will undertake that:

- Internal assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, expertise, understanding and skills
- Assessment evidence provided by the candidate is produced and authenticated according to the requirement of the relevant specifications for each subject
- Consistency of internal assessment is assured through internal standardisation as set out by the Awarding Bodies
- Staff responsible for internal standardisation and/or assessment attend any compulsory training sessions

#### **Review of marking procedure**

- RGS will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.

- RGS will inform candidates that they may request copies of their assessed work to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.
- RGS will, having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate.
- RGS will provide candidates with sufficient time in order to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision.
- Requests for reviews of marking must be made in writing by the deadline provided and by completing the Review Request form.
- RGS will allow sufficient time the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline.
- RGS will ensure that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review.
- RGS will instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the Exam Board mark scheme.
- The candidate and the parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.
- The outcome of the review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the review of the centre's marking bring any irregularity in procedures to light, the awarding body will be informed immediately.
- Marks may go up or down or stay the same. The mark post appeal is the final mark. The candidate cannot choose the higher mark.
- No further appeal can be requested.
- RGS will make a charge of £50 for each appeal. This charge is non-refundable irrespective of the outcome of the review.
- After candidates' work has been internally assessed, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. The moderation process

may lead to mark changes. This process is outside the control of RGS and is not covered by this procedure.