



Examination Procedures

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Overview

Public examinations are the end-result of secondary education for most students. In addition other internal assessments and marked examinations take place in order to check student progress and prepare for public examinations.

At St Bernadette's we aim to help students do as well as they can in their examinations thus ensuring they can progress to the next stage of education or employment.

The purpose of this examination procedure document 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 process to read, understand and implement this procedure.

The examination procedure document will be reviewed annually by the Exams Officer.

Roles and responsibilities

Head of Centre:

Has overall responsibility for the school as an examination centre.



Exams Officer:

Manages the administration of public examinations and internal assessments and in doing so:

- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Learnings, subject teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as assessed by the various awarding bodies.
- Sets internal deadlines in order to meet examining body deadlines and communicates regularly with staff concerning these dates.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Makes entries for exams both for unit entries and 'cash-in' codes as requested by departments and students resits prior to the deadlines set by the exam boards.
- Provides Heads of Learnings with details of students entered for exams for checking.
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Despatches completed scripts in accordance with JCQ regulations.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditure relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Recruits, trains and monitors the invigilation team responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Ensures that exam rooms are set up in accordance with JCQ requirements.
- Liaises with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) regarding the needs of particular students.
- Liaises with the school Data Manager to ensure that all entries, remarks and tier changes are appropriately recorded on the school information management systems.
- Ensures that access arrangements have been applied for following the JCQ guidelines.

Lead invigilator(s) is/are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Sets out the exam room as necessary for the specific exam.
- Runs exam room in accordance with JCQ publication 'Instructions for conducting examinations'.
- Collection of all exam papers in correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.
- Removes all JCQ and other notices.

Special educational needs coordinator SENCO is responsible for:

- Identify and test candidates' requirements for access arrangements in advance of the exam season.
- Ensure that the Exams Officer has all the relevant documentation well before the entry deadline for each exam series to allow time to apply for the necessary access arrangements.
- Ensure that the required access arrangements follow the guidelines in 'Access Arrangements, reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration' with regard to entitlement, accommodation and supervision.



- Provide additional support – with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment - all to help candidates achieve their course aims.
- Liaise with the Exams Officer to ensure that arrangements are in place to meet students' requirements during exams/assessments.
- Provide additional support to pupils who have been subject to a recent injury.

Students:

- Check and understand entries.
- Must arrive at the correct exam room 10 minutes in advance of the exam start time.
- Are responsible for providing the correct equipment.
- Must read, understand and follow the JCQ rules. These are given to students in paper together with the entry/timetable statement before the beginning of each exam season.
- Students found to have cheated - whether through plagiarism or other means – will be reported to the Examination Board and withdrawn from the examination.
- A student who deliberately misses the deadlines for tasks in order to withdraw himself/herself from the examination will be charged the examination entry fee.
- Ensure that any requests for resits/enquiries about results/return of scripts are made ahead of the internal deadlines set by the exams officer and with correct payment.

Parents:

- St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School recognises the important role that parents have to play in helping their sons/daughters through such a difficult and demanding period of their school careers.
- Familiarise themselves with the various deadlines and encourage their children to plan and prepare in good time.
- Recognise the difficulties caused – both to the school and to their children – by taking their sons/daughters out of school during the examination period and plan accordingly.
- Understand that assessments/practical assessments are taken throughout the school year and as such taking students out of school at any time can cause difficulties.
- Responsible for informing the exams officer in advance of the exam of any accident/illness which prevents their son/daughter from attending an exam. A doctor's note/ note from parents will be required stating the circumstances.

Qualifications:

- The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Senior Leadership Team.
- The main qualifications offered are GCSE, BTEC, OCR Nationals.
- The subject offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published curriculum guides for that year. If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by 20th September annually.
- Informing the exams officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Heads of Learnings



Exam seasons:

- Written external exams are scheduled in November, May and June. Controlled assessments and coursework take place throughout the school year.
- Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.
- The Head of centre, Deputy Head Teacher and Heads of Learnings decide which exam series are used in the centre.
- On-demand assessments are to be scheduled in agreement with the exams officer.

Entries, entry details and late entries:

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Deputy Head, Heads of Learnings and Subject teachers.
- Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal but they first need to talk to the subject teacher and get an approval from Head of Learning whom will then seek approval using the correct documentation from the Deputy Head Teacher. Withdrawal from the exam is not normally permitted.
- Entries may be accepted from external candidates if they are former students and the same paper and board are available.
- Entry deadlines are circulated to the Heads of Learning via Email and Wednesday briefing meetings.
- Late entries and tier changes must be authorised by the Head of Learning and sent to the examinations officer using the specified form. These charges will be charged to faculties if made after the late entry fee date each year.
- Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with candidates, Heads of Learnings and Exams Officer as appropriate.

Exam fees:

Further details will be issued each year as to the later entry fee deadlines usually this is a date in the February of the awarding year.

Disability Discrimination Act:

- All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995(DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006.
- The DDA introduces measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.
 - “A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA 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”.
- The centre meets disability provisions under the DDA (or the Equality Act 2010), by ensuring that the exam centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of the centre, Deputy Head, Exams Officer and SENCO.



Access arrangements:

- In consultation with Heads of Learnings and subject teachers the SENCO will undertake the required testing to determine students' access requirements. These requirements can also be determined by a Doctor or Educational Psychologist/Specialist Teacher.
- Submitting completed access arrangement application to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO and the Exams Officer.
- Rooming for access arrangements will be arranged by the SENCO with the exams officer.
- Invigilation and support for the access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO and the exams officer.

Invigilators:

- External staff will be used to invigilate exams.
- These invigilators will be used for Internal and External exams.
- Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the exams officer in cooperation with the Head's PA. DBS fees are paid by the Centre.
- Invigilators are timetabled and managed by the exams officer.
- Invigilators rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

Exam days:

- The exams officer will provide the timetable and book exam rooms. This will include any necessary room changes.
- The exam officer will make the question papers, exam stationery and materials available for the invigilators.
- Site management in conjunction with the Exams Officer are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms where exam desks are required.
- The lead invigilator will start exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room/office until the following day. If required, a relevant teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions at start of the exam.
- Spare exam papers can be collected from the exams office the following day.
- In controlled assessments/practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Candidates:

- Candidates are responsible for arriving before the start of each exam, must wear school uniform unless they are external candidates.
- Candidates' personal belongings including mobile phones and other electronic devices remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- **Disruptive candidates** are dealt with in accordance with JCQ regulations. Please refer to the Inappropriate Candidate Behaviour Procedure available from the school website or from the exams officer.



- Candidates who arrive late must report to the main exam room. It is at the discretion of the centre whether they are allowed to sit the exam, but if they do should be given the full time for the exam. Candidates who arrive more than 1 hour after the start time of an exam lasting one hour or more, or 30 minutes after the start time of an exam lasting less than one hour may be allowed to sit the exam but is unlikely to have their work accepted by the awarding body. In all cases the Exams Officer will record the reason why the candidate was late.

Clash candidates:

- The exams officer is responsible for identifying clash candidates; ensure they are supervised during the day and arranging overnight accommodation as required.

Special consideration:

- 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 candidates' responsibility to alert the centre, the exams officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.
- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 3 days of the exam, for example by providing a doctor's note. The exams officer will then submit the electronic special consideration request to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the exam.

Results, enquires about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS):

- Candidates will receive individual result slips on result days, either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses, candidates to provide self-addressed envelope.
- Arrangements for the centre to be open on result days are made by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Results can only be given to the candidates themselves. Any request for results to be given to another person (family or friend) must be made as a written request.
- Results will not be given out over the phone.

EARs

- EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidates consent is required before any EAR is requested.
- If a result is queried, the exams officer, data manager, teaching staff and head of the centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.
- When the centre does not support a candidate's or parent's request for 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.
- Please find out the deadlines for submitting the EAR requests for each exams season on the relevant exam board website.

ATS

There are 2 different services available:

- **Priority Service – photocopied script.** This is only available for AS and A2 results and is not available where a priority 2 service above is being requested. It should be used in order to decide whether or not to apply for a remark.



- **Requesting original script.** Scripts are not available to be returned where they are subject to an enquiry about results. Where the script is to be used for teaching then the candidate must sign a consent form. GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned. A fee will be payable from subject departments, individuals or in some cases from the Exams budget.
- After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within the examination board deadlines. There may be an administrative charge payable.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The consent of candidates must be obtained.

Certificates:

- The centre will organise and invite students to attend a presentation of Certificates before the end of the autumn term.
- Certificates can be collected from the school and must be signed for. Those not collected will be filed in the secure exams office.
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been appropriately authorised to do so, this must include a signed permission letter.
- The school is obliged to retain any unclaimed certificates for 1 year, from the date of issue, after which they will be destroyed by a secure method.
- Replacement certificates can be obtained from each exam board however the standard fee will be applied.