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EXAMS POLICY

2025 to 2026

JCQ - Good Practice 1a to 1h

Policy by: Karen Bane - Exam Officer

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Contents

1 - Policies/ procedures relating to the conduct of exams

1a - Alternative Rooming Arrangements

1b - Candidate Absence Policy

1c - Candidate Late Policy

1d - Food and drink Policy (Exams)

1e - Leaving the Examination Room

1f - Managing Behaviour Policy

1g - Overnight Supervision Arrangements Policy

1h - Private Candidate Policy

1- Policies/ procedures relating to the conduct of exams.

Purpose of the policy

Southlands High School is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently.

This exam policy will ensure that:

- all aspects of the centre's exam process is documented.
- the workforce is well informed and supported
- 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, thus ensuring that

"... the integrity and security of the examination/assessment system is maintained at all times and is not brought into disrepute."

JCQ - General Regulations for Approved Centres

- exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure ways of working in Southlands High School are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance.

This policy will be communicated to all relevant centre staff.

Roles and responsibilities overview

"The Head of Centre / Head of School is responsible to the awarding bodies for making sure all examinations/assessments are conducted according to awarding body and JCQ instructions, and the qualification specifications issued by the awarding bodies.

The head of centre may not appoint themselves as the examinations officer."

Head of Centre/ Head of School

Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:

General regulations for approved centres

Instructions for conducting examinations

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments

Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (NEA)

{and the instructions for conducting controlled assessment and coursework}

- Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught.
- Ensures the National Centre Number Register Annual Update is responded to by the end of October confirming they are both aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ regulations and instructions for conducting examinations and approves the Head of Centre/ Head of School formal declaration.

- Ensures the Exams Manager (EM) attends appropriate training events offered by awarding bodies, MIS providers and other external providers to enable the exam process to be effectively managed and administered
- Ensures a named member of staff acts as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo).
- Ensures centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process
- Ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EM
- Ensures *"that a teacher who teaches the subject being examined, or a senior member of teaching staff who has had overall responsibility for the candidates preparation for the examination, is not an invigilator during the timetabled written examination or on-screen test..."*
- Ensures security within the examination process is managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions including the location of the centre's secure storage unit is in an area solely assigned to examinations the relevant awarding body is immediately informed if the security of question papers or confidential supporting instructions is put at risk that arrangements are in place to check that the correct question paper packets are opened by authorised members of centre staff
- Ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place (that allows the HoD to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence).

The exam cycle

The exams management and administration process that needs to be undertaken for each **exam series** is often referred to as the **exam cycle** and relevant tasks required within this grouped into the following stages:

- ▶ planning
- ▶ entries
- ▶ pre-exams
- ▶ exam time
- ▶ results and post-results

This policy identifies roles and responsibilities of centre staff within this cycle.

Planning: roles and responsibilities

Information sharing

Exams Manager

- Emails the Head of Centre with all new JCQ documentation.
- Emails all SLT with the relevant JCQ documentation.
- Emails all HOD with the relevant JCQ documentation.
- Emails all candidates doing a terminal exam that academic year with the relevant JCQ documentation.
- Ensures that all relevant staff have access to their exam board website.

- Undertakes an annual information gathering exercise in preparation for each new academic year to ensure data about all qualifications being delivered is up to date and correct
- Collates all information gathered into one central point of reference
- Researches awarding body guidance to identify administrative processes, key tasks, key dates and deadlines for all relevant qualifications
- Produces an annual exams plan of key tasks and key dates to ensure all external deadlines can be effectively met; informs key centre staff of internal deadlines
- Collects information on internal exams to enable preparation for planning.

Head of Department

- Responds (or ensures teaching staff respond) to requests from the EM on information gathering
- Meets the internal deadline for the return of information
- Informs the EM of any changes to information in a timely manner, minimising the risk of late or other penalty fees being incurred by an awarding body
- Notes the internal deadlines in the annual exams plan and directs teaching staff to meet these.

Estimated entries

Exams Manager

Requests estimated or early entry information, where this may be required by awarding bodies, from HOD in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met.

Head of Department

- Provides information requested by the EM to the internal deadline
- Informs the EM immediately of any subsequent changes to information.

Final entries

Exams Manager

- Requests final entry information from HoD in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- Informs HoD of subsequent deadlines for making changes to final entry information without charge
- Confirms with HoD final entry information that has been submitted to awarding bodies
- Ensures as far as possible that entry processes minimise the risk of entries or registrations being missed reducing the potential for late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies.

Head of Department

- Provides information requested by the EM to the internal deadline
- Informs the EM immediately, or at the very least prior to the deadlines, of any subsequent changes to final entry information, which includes
 - ▶ changes to candidate personal details
 - ▶ amendments to existing entries
 - ▶ withdrawals of existing entries
- Checks final entry submission information provided by the EM and confirms information is correct.

Late entries

Exams Manager

Has clear entry procedures in place to minimise the risk of late entries.

Head of Department

- Minimises the risk of late entries by
 - ▶ following procedures identified by the EM in relation to making final entries on time
 - ▶ meeting internal deadlines identified by the EM for making final entries.

Pre-exams: roles and responsibilities

Briefing candidates

Exams Manager

- Issues individual exam timetable information to candidates
- Prior to exams issues relevant JCQ information for candidates documents
- Where relevant, issues relevant awarding body information to candidates
- Issues centre exam information to candidates including information on:
 - ▶ exam clashes
 - ▶ arriving late for an exam
 - ▶ absence or illness during exams
 - ▶ what equipment is/is not provided by the centre
 - ▶ food and drink in exam rooms
 - ▶ wrist watches in exam rooms
 - ▶ when and how results will be issued and the staff that will be available
 - ▶ the post-results services and how the centre deals with requests from candidates
 - ▶ when and how certificates will be issued.

Access to the secure exams storeroom and secure storage.

EM~ exams storeroom & secure storage.

Deputy Head ~ exams storeroom & secure storage, stand in if EM absent.

Facilities Manager~ exams storeroom & secure storage.

Senior Invigilator~ exams storeroom.

Dispatch of exam scripts

Exams Manager

Identifies and confirms arrangements for the dispatch of candidate exam scripts with the DfE 'yellow label service' or the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of the service.

JCQ inspection visit

Exams Manager

Will accompany the Inspector throughout the visit

"A senior member of staff or a member of the exams office must be available to accompany the Inspector throughout the course of his or her centre visit, including inspection of the centre's secure storage facility."

Seating and identifying candidates in exam rooms

Exams Manager

- ▶ Ensures a procedure is in place to verify candidates
- ▶ Ensures invigilators are aware of the procedure
- ▶ Provides seating plans for exam rooms according to JCQ and awarding body requirements.

Invigilators

- ▶ Follow the procedure for verifying candidate identity provided by the EM
- ▶ Seat candidates in exam rooms as instructed by the seating plan.

Security of exam materials

Exams Manager

- ▶ Has a process in place to record confidential materials delivered to the centre and issued to authorised staff
- ▶ Has in place a recording system to track confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential
- ▶ Receives, checks and securely stores question papers and other exam materials according to JCQ and awarding body requirements.

Reception Staff

Follow the process to record confidential materials delivered to the centre and issued to authorised staff.

Teaching staff

Adhere to the recording system to track confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential.

Timetabling and rooming

Exams Manager

- Produces a master centre exam timetable for each exam series
- Identifies and resolves candidate exam clashes (only applying overnight supervision arrangements in rare and exceptional circumstances and as a last resort)
- Identifies exam rooms and specialist equipment requirements
- Allocates invigilators to exam rooms (or where supervising candidates due to a timetable variation) according to required ratios
- Liaises with site staff to ensure exam rooms are set up according to JCQ and awarding body requirements
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates.

SENCo

- Liaises with the EM regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

Site Staff

Liaise with the EM to ensure exam rooms are set up according to JCQ and awarding body requirements.

Alternative site arrangements

Exams Manager

- Ensures question papers will only be taken to an alternative site where the published criteria for an alternative site arrangement has been met
- Will inform the JCQ Centre Inspection Service using the JCQ *Alternative Site* form of any alternative sites that will be used to conduct timetabled examination components of the qualifications listed in the JCQ regulations.

Transferred candidate arrangements

Exams Manager

- Liaises with the host or entering centre, as required
- Processes requests to the awarding body deadline
- Where relevant (for an internal candidate) informs the candidate of the arrangements that have been made for their transferred candidate arrangements.

Internal exams

Exams Manager

- Prepares for the conduct of internal exams under external conditions
- Provides a centre exam timetable of subjects and rooms
- Provides seating plans for exam rooms
- Requests internal exam papers from teaching staff
- Arranges invigilation.

SENCo

Liaises with EO to make appropriate arrangements for access arrangement candidates.

Teaching Staff

Provide exam papers and materials to reprographics who will then copy and pass to the EM.

Conducting exams

Head of Centre / Head of School

Ensures venues used for conducting exams meet the requirements of JCQ and awarding bodies.

Exams Manager

- Ensures exams are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body instructions
- Uses an *exam day checklist* to ensure each exam session is fully prepared for, unplanned events can be dealt with and associated follow-up is completed.

Dispatch of exam scripts

Exams Manager

- Dispatches scripts as instructed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- Keeps appropriate records to track dispatch.

Exam papers and materials

Exams Manager

- Organises exam question papers and associated confidential resources in date order in secure storage
- Attaches erratum notices received to relevant exam question paper packets
- Collates attendance registers and examiner details in date order
- Regularly checks mail or inbox for updates from awarding bodies
- In order to avoid potential breaches of security, ensures prior to question paper packets being opened that another member of staff or an invigilator checks the time, date and paper details
- Where allowed by the awarding body, only releases exam papers and materials to teaching departments for teaching and learning purposes after the published finishing time of the exam, or until any clash candidates have completed the exam.

Exam rooms

Head of Centre/ Head of School

- Ensures that prior to exams commencing, revision or coaching sessions for candidates will not be held in the designated exam room(s)
- Ensures only authorised centre staff are present in exam rooms
- Ensures information relating to food and drink that may be allowed in exam rooms is clearly communicated to candidates
- Only water in a clear container will be allowed in the exam room, no food is allowed.

Exams Manager

- Ensures exam rooms are set up and conducted as required in the regulations
- Provides invigilators with appropriate resources to effectively conduct exams
- Briefs invigilators on exams to be conducted on a session by session basis (including the arrangements in place for any transferred candidates)
- Ensures sole invigilators have an appropriate means of summoning assistance
- Ensures invigilators understand how to deal with candidates who may need to leave the exam room temporarily
- Provides authorised exam materials which candidates are not expected to provide themselves
- Ensures invigilators and candidates are aware of the emergency evacuation procedure
- Ensures invigilators are aware of arrangements in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance if an exam room is evacuated.

Senior Leaders

- Ensure a documented emergency evacuation procedure for exam rooms is in place
- Ensure arrangements are in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance if an exam room is evacuated.

Irregularities

Head of Centre/ Head of School

- Ensures any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration before, during or after examinations/assessments (by centre staff, candidates, invigilators) are investigated and reported to the awarding body **immediately**, by completing the appropriate documentation.

Senior Leaders

- Ensure support is provided for the EM and invigilators when dealing with disruptive candidates in exam rooms
- Ensure that internal disciplinary procedures relating to candidate behaviour are instigated, when appropriate.

Exams Manager

- Provides an exam room incident log in all exam rooms for recording any incidents or irregularities
- Actions any required follow-up and reports to awarding bodies as soon as practically possible after the exam has taken place.

Invigilators

Record any incidents or irregularities on the exam room incident log (for example, late/very late arrival, candidate or centre staff suspected malpractice, candidate illness, disruption or disturbance in the exam room, emergency evacuation).

Managing results day

Senior Leaders

- Identify centre staff who will be involved in the main summer results day(s) and their role
- Ensures senior members of staff are accessible to candidates after the publication of results so that results may be discussed and decisions made on the submission of enquiries and ensures candidates are informed of the periods during which centre staff will be available so that they may plan accordingly.

Exams Manager

- Works with senior leaders to ensure procedures for managing the main summer results day(s) (a results day programme) are in place
- Examination results are available from 9.30am for current Year 11 students and 10.30am for all other candidates on the official GCSE results day in August each year. There will be Senior Leaders to discuss the results and offer advice.

Site Staff

Ensure the centre is open and accessible to centre staff and candidates, as required.

Accessing results

Exams Manager

- Informs candidates in advance of when and how results will be released to them
- Accesses results from awarding bodies under restricted release of results, where this is provided by the awarding body
- Resolves any missing or incomplete results with awarding bodies
- Issues statements of results to candidates on issue of results date
- Provides summaries of results for relevant centre staff on issue of results date.

Post-results services

Head of Centre/ Head of School

- Ensures an **internal appeals procedure** is available where candidates disagree with any centre decision not to support a clerical check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal
- Understands that in the event of an awarding body initiating an *extended review of marking*, candidates' marks and subject grades may be lowered, confirmed or raised.

Exams Manager

- Provides information to candidates and staff on the services provided by awarding bodies and the fees charged (see also above *Briefing candidates* and *Access to scripts, enquiries about results and appeals procedures*)
- Publishes internal deadlines for requesting the services to ensure the external deadlines can be effectively met
- Provides a process to record requests for services and collect candidate informed consent (**after** the publication of results) and fees where relevant
- Submits requests to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline
- Tracks requests to conclusion and informs candidates and relevant centre staff of outcomes
- Updates centre results information, where applicable.

Teaching Staff

Meet internal deadlines to request the services and gain relevant candidate informed consent.

Candidates

- Meet internal deadlines to request the services
- Provide informed consent and fees, where relevant.

Analysis of results

Data Manager/ Exams Manager

- Provides analysis of results to appropriate centre staff
- Provides results information to external organisations where required
- Undertakes the secondary school and college (key stage 4) performance tables September checking exercise.

1a - Separate Invigilation within the Centre

The schools internal policy is that only candidates that have an educational /medical need can access separate invigilation.

Head of Centre/ Head of School

Ensures relevant support is provided to the Exams Manager and SENCo in recruiting, training and deploying a team of invigilators.

Exams Manager/ SENCo

- Recruits additional invigilators where required to effectively cover all exam periods/series' throughout the academic year
- Collects information on new recruits to identify if they have invigilated previously and if any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions are applied to them
- Provides an annual training event for new invigilators and an update event for invigilators on the conduct of exams

- Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates understand their role (and the role of a facilitator who may be supporting a candidate) and the rules and regulations of the access arrangement(s)
- Ensures invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Collects evaluation of training to inform future events
- Specialist training is provided for Invigilators working with candidates that have a Reader or Scribe
- Before the main Summer season, a briefing session is held with all invigilators to ensure they are fully prepared
- All invigilators are provided with an invigilation handbook.

Ib - Candidate Absence Policy

The school has a clear procedure in place for absent candidates.

Exam Manager

All candidate have an exam's assembly detailing all issues relating to exams before the exam season starts. The exams manager will do the attendance at the start of every exam.

Head of Year/ Deputy Head on Duty

The Exams Manager will pass the name(s) of any missing candidates on to be rang to chase their absence. They will liaise with the Attendance Manager.

Head of Year

Once it has been established that the candidate will be absent from the exams the Head of Year will telephone the candidates parents/ guardian to advise them on what to do. Evidence of their child's absence needs to be handed into school, for example a Doctor's note.

Exam Manager

The exams Manager will inform the candidate and Parents/ Guardians if there is any further information from the exam board. The Exams Manager will keep the SLT Link for exams and the Head of School updated.

Ie - Candidate Late Policy

The school has a clear procedure in place for late candidates.

Exam Manager

All candidate have an exam's assembly detailing all issues relating to exams before the exam season starts. The exams manager will do the attendance at the start of every exam.

Head of Year/ Deputy Head on Duty

The Exams Manager will pass the name(s) of any missing candidates on to be rang to chase their absence. They will liaise with the Attendance Manager. If needs be arrangements will be made to collect the candidate.

Exams Manager

Once the candidate arrives on site and as long as the exam has not officially finished, the Exams Manager will place the candidate in the appropriate room to do the exam. The Exams Manager will then refer to the JCQ ICE booklet to assess which procedure needs to follow next. If needs be inform the exam board.

Head of Year

The Head of Year will speak to the candidate after the exam has finished, discussing why they were late and if the school can assist in anyway. Parents/ Guardians will be contacted.

Exam Manager

The Exams Manager will inform the candidate and Parents/ Guardians if there is any further information from the exam board. The Exams Manager will keep the SLT Link for exams and the Head of School updated.

Id - Food and drink Policy (Exams)

Exam Manager

Drinks

All candidates have an exam's assembly detailing all issues relating to exams before the exam season starts. Candidates are allowed a bottle of water in the exam room as long as it has a sports cap bottle with no label on. If the water bottle does not meet those standards invigilators will remove the bottle to the back of the exam hall.

Exam Manager/ Head of Year

Food

All candidate have an exam's assembly detailing all issues relating to exams before the exam season starts. Candidates are **NOT** allowed any type of food in the exam hall. Discretion may be used depending on certain medical conditions.

Ib - Leaving the Examination Room

Reasons for leaving the examination room:

Toilet

Unwell

Medical

Behaviour

Toilet

Candidates are permitted to leave the exam room if they need the toilet, although they are encouraged to go to the toilet before the exam starts. Candidates need to raise their hand, an invigilator will escort them out of the exam room to the nearest toilet. Each exam room has a designated toilet to use. **If** the invigilator feels that, the candidate was out of the exam room for longer than a standard toilet break they will call for the Exams Manager.

Unwell

If a candidate is unwell, the invigilator is to escort them out of the exam room. The invigilator needs to make a note of the time the candidate left the room. There is a chair outside each exam room for the candidate to sit on. This chair could be placed outside/ near an exit if the candidate required some fresh air. There are disposable cups at the back of each exam room. The invigilator may offer the candidate some water. The invigilator must call for the Exam Manager straight away. Once the Exams Manager is present, they will take over the situation. Only the Exams Manager/ SLT can decide if the students' need is to seek medical attention or be sent home.

Medical

Some candidates need to exit the exam room for medical conditions. For example, Diabetes. The candidate may need to check their blood sugar levels or check their pump. The Exams Manager needs to be called for if the candidate has been out of the exams room for longer than a standard toilet break.

1f - Managing Behaviour Policy

On arrival to the exam hall

Head of Departments will be outside the exam hall to remind candidates of,

Equipment needed for the exam

Uniform

No food or drink (water allowed - clear bottle, no label & sports cap)

No electronic devices/ check pockets.

Within the exam hall at the back a member of SLT is present to monitor behaviour.

The Exams Manager is present at the start of all exams in the main room. The Exams Manager will remind students of the rules & regulations of the exam room.

During the exam

If an invigilator has to give two warnings to a candidate and their behaviour does not improve the invigilator needs to call for the Exams Manager. The Exams Manager will address the candidate. If the situation cannot be resolved, the candidate will be removed from that exam room and placed with SLT for the remainder of the exam. The Head of Year/ Head of Centre will speak to the candidate and Parents/ Guardians if necessary.

At the end of the exam

The Exams Manager is present at the end of all exams in the main room. The Exams Manager will officially end the exams and remind the candidates that they are still under exam conditions until they leave the room. Then candidates will be dismissed one row at a time only once all the papers have been collected in. The Exams Manager will deal with any behaviour issues during this time and if required call for SLT.

Ig - Overnight Supervision Arrangements Policy

Overnight supervision arrangements will only be applied as a last resort once all other options have been exhausted.

Candidates timetabled for three or more examinations on the same day with a total duration of more than five and a half hours for GCSE or A-Level examinations, inclusive of approved extra time allowances and/or

rest breaks may, at the centre's discretion, be allowed to take one of these examinations the next morning (including weekends).

Candidates will not be allowed to sit one of these examinations on an earlier day than that scheduled on the timetable.

The supervision of a candidate on journeys to and from the centre and overnight may be undertaken by the candidate's parent/carer or centre staff. The centre must determine a method of supervision which ensures the candidates well-being.

The overnight supervision arrangements will ensure that the candidate does not have advance warning of the content of the examination which has been deferred to the following morning. This means that the candidate must not meet or communicate with anyone who may have knowledge of the content. This includes any form of electronic communication/storage device, e.g. telephone (both landline and mobile), e-mail, Internet and social media. It even extends to television and radio, which could report key details of the day's examinations.

Head of Centre

- Must be satisfied that the arrangements maintain the integrity and security of the examination
- Must inform the relevant awarding body immediately of any known or suspected contravention of the arrangements for overnight supervision of a candidate
- Accepts full responsibility for the security of the examination throughout
- After an agreement has been made with the candidate and supervisor, the head of centre must complete a timetable variation and confidentiality declaration for overnight supervision form.

Exams Manager

- Must appoint an invigilator or member of centre staff to supervise the candidate at all times while s/he is on the premises taking examinations
- Must inform the parties involved that any infringement of the conditions governing overnight supervision arrangements may lead to the awarding body being unable to accept the script and/or the application of sanctions/penalties, as detailed in the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures
- Must keep all forms available in the centre for inspection until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later. Forms may be stored electronically or in hard copy paper format and must not be sent to an awarding body unless specifically requested.

Invigilator

- Must ensure that the candidate is under centre supervision from 30 minutes after the awarding body's published starting time for the delayed examination
- Must ensure there is no contact with other candidates
- Must ensure that the candidate has no contact with anyone who may have knowledge of the content of the examination. This includes any form of form electronic communication/storage device, e.g. telephone (both landline and mobile}, e-mail, Internet and social media. It even extends to television and radio, which could report key details of the day's examinations
- Must sign a declaration agreeing to supervise the candidate at all times and prevent contact via any means listed above.
- Before the main Summer season a briefing session is held with all invigilators to ensure they are fully prepared
- All invigilators are provided with an Invigilation handbook.

Ih - Private Candidate Policy

The school does not accept private candidates.