INSIGHT
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

CHANGE CONTROL

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30/06/2017	0.b	Updated following review by Trustees
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AUTHORISATION

Approved at Board Meeting on 14th June 2023

Signed:

14-6-23

Chair of Board **Date**

Examinations Policy & Procedure

Introduction

The aim of the policy is to ensure that all examinations that take place within Insight Multi-Academy Trust (IMAT) are within JCQ regulations..

This policy pertains to all employees and, as appropriate, Governors, Trustees, Members, contractors, visitors and volunteers connected to Insight Multi-Academy Trust (IMAT).

Aim

The purpose of this exams policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates;
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exams system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.
- to ensure internal and external assessments take place within JCQ regulations.

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

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:
Appeals Procedure
The Business Continuity Plan (BCP)
The Data protection Policy
The Equalities Policy
The Exam's Officer Absence Contingency Plan
Management Policy for Controlled Assessment
The Safeguarding Policy
Whistleblowing Policy Cyber Response Plan

Key Elements

Exam Responsibilities

The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

Exams Support Officer

- manages the administration of internal exams and external exams
- manages the administration of BTEC learner registration and certification
- 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.
- oversees the production and distribution, to all centre staff 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 parent/carerss are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- maintains appropriate operational procedures for the timely and accurate registration of learners on all BTEC provision
- checks that BTEC registration is correct
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, 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 SLT, any post results service requests.

- checks BTEC certification whilst verifying against assessment records

Makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process

Heads of Faculty & Lead Teachers (or equivalent) are responsible for:

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post-results procedures.

Teachers are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer.
- tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

administers access arrangements following the regulations in the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the exams office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- confirmation and checking of entries.
- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at each centre are decided by the Head of Centre and approved by the IMAT.

The types of qualifications offered are GCE, Functional skills, GCSE, BTEC, OCR Cambridge Nationals and Entry level.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by June of the previous year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, member of Leadership Group in charge of exams, Heads of faculty and Heads of department.

The default will be that all candidates will be entered for every course that they are undertaking. A decision on a tier where appropriate will be taken by heads of department/curriculum in consultation with the subject teacher. A decision on removing a candidate from an exam can only be taken by the Deputy Headteacher.

Exam Series

Pre-public and external exams are scheduled throughout the year.

Pre-public exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Leadership Group member in charge of exams and Heads of Faculty decide which exam series are used in the centre.

Exam Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for pre-public and public exams at a specified date before each series begins.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

The default will be that all candidates will be entered for every course that they are undertaking. Candidates exam entries are confirmed by the Head of sixth form and Heads of Department/Curriculum as appropriate. Any decisions on not entering a candidate can only be taken by the Deputy Headteacher or equivalent.

Candidates or parents/carers can appeal a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal by appealing to the Head of Centre in writing with evidence and the Head of Centre will decide on the appeal and notify parents/carers within 7 days

The centre considers entries from private candidates.

The centre acts as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department/curriculum via email, briefing meetings, internal post/pigeon hole.
Heads of department/curriculum will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of LG Faculty Link.

Re-sit decisions will be made by Heads of Faculty in consultation with the member of Leadership Group in charge of examinations.

Exam Fees

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.

The exams officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

AS entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

A level entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Principal Learning entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Functional skills entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the department/schools.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates:

- if they fail to sit an exam

Re-sit fees are paid by the candidates except in the case where the school requests the re-sit to take place.

Equality Legislation

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the member of Leadership Group in charge of examinations.

Access Arrangements and adjustments

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangement, and/or adjustment is determined by the SENCo.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of SENCo.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCo.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Support Officer in consultation with SENCO and member of Leadership Group in charge of exams.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Examination Support Officer.

Word Processing Policy

This will be reviewed and updated, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

This policy details how we manage and administer the use of word processors (including laptops
and tablets) in examinations and assessments.

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and ICE to JCQ

Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

Using a word processor

The MAT complies with AA guidance regarding the use of word processors:

- "Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check

facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) and with access to the internet disabled to a where it is their normal way of working within the centre. For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand." (AA, 5.8.1)

- A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.
- The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- The school will consider allowing a student to use a word processor as part of their normal way of working in a number of situations, including the following:
- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;
    - a medical condition;

  - a physical disability;
  - a sensory impairment;
  - planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;
  - poor handwriting.

This list is not exhaustive (it is taken from AA, 5.8.4).

- 'Normal way of working' is defined as support given to the candidate in school for one or more of the following (see AA, 4.2.5):
  - in the classroom (where appropriate);
  - working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
  - literacy support lessons;
  - literacy intervention strategies;
  - in internal school tests/examinations;
  - mock examinations.

In all cases, a "normal way of working" necessarily entails the candidate having used a word processor for the mock examination of the qualification in question. The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment.

- "The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification." (AA, 5.8.2)
- It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers. N.B. Examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and computer screen. (AA, 5.8.3)
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification (AA, 4.2.3).

As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis in discussion with the SENDCo and Examinations Officer, with the final decision taken by the SENDCo. Parent/carers or students may appeal to the Headteacher who will then investigate to check that an appropriate process was carried out prior to the decision being taken.

A word processor:

- must be used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- must have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick must not be used by a candidate. Where required, the centre must provide a memory stick to the candidate, which is cleared of any previously stored data;
- must be in good working order at the time of the examination;
- must be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. Where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated in another room, a separate invigilator will be required;
- must either be connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. This must be done after the examination is over.

The candidate must be present to verify that the work printed is his or her own. Word processed scripts must be attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers;

- must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused;
- must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- must not be connected to an intranet or any other means of communication;
- must not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc;
- must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- must not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using speech recognition technology (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking;
- must not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader;
- must not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software;
- must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.
- Candidates are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own and sign it.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Candidates using word processors are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- in a separate room or in the main hall towards the side and rear.

Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include the following:

- on completion of the examination an invigilator will remind the student to save all work onto the memory stick provided;
- the invigilator will accompany the student, the laptop and the memory stick to the printer for the work to be printed off and verified.

On completion of the exam:

- when all work is printed and verified, it will be enclosed inside the student's examination script for submission to the awarding body with a completed word processor cover sheet;
- the memory stick and word processor will be cleared of all work.

Appeals Procedure

All appeals with regards to internal assessment decisions, post-results services and appeals, and centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special considerations will be sent to the Head of Centre by parents/carers in writing with supporting evidence. Parents/carers will be notified of the outcome within 7 days of receipt.

Private Candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Examination Support Officer in conjunction with the member of Leadership Group in charge of examinations.

Estimated Grades

Heads of Faculty & Lead teachers (or equivalent) are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

Managing Invigilators

Internal teaching staff will not be used to invigilate examinations.

Exam invigilators are employed on a casual basis and are used for pre-public and public examinations.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the member of Leadership Group in charge of examinations in conjunction with Examination Support Officer.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Leadership Group PA and Business Manager
DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the member of Leadership Group in charge of examinations and the Business Manager.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Examinations Support Officer.

Malpractice

The Head of Centre in consultation with Exam Support Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

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.

Site management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements 4 weeks in advance, where possible.
The Lead Invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam in the dining hall but are not allowed into the examination room. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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 in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 24 hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the exams secretary will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies.

Candidates

The member of Leadership Group in charge of exams in conjunction with Examinations Support Officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by members of LG.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

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 Support Officer and Senior Invigilator.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Examinations Support Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

Clash Candidates

The Examinations Support Officer will be responsible for the supervision of candidates with a timetable clash.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's Examinations Support Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 3 days of the exam.

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 5 days of the exam.

Internal Assessment

It is the duty of heads of department (or equivalent) to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time.

Teachers submit internal assessment marks electronically to exam board.

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days:

- in person at the centre
- by post to their home address if they are not collected on the day
- for another party to be able to collect results the student must provide written confirmation

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 member of Leadership Group in charge of examinations.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the member of Leadership Group in charge of examinations.

Post results services (PRS)

Candidates and parents/carers are made aware of the PRS process via letters which are sent with the exam timetables.

PRSs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

The cost of PRSs will be paid by the centre where the centre feels it is beneficial and by the student where there is no direct recommendation by the centre.

All decisions on whether to make an application for a PRS by the school will be made by Head of Centre in conjunction with member of Leadership Group in charge of examinations.

All processing of PRSs will be the responsibility of the Examinations Support Officer following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 30 days of the receipt of results.

Exam boards are allowing access to scripts online which can be accessed prior to a review of marking.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

The cost of access to scripts will be paid by the centre or candidate (depending upon who makes the request).

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of Exams Support Officer.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates:

- in person at the centre collected and signed for

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre retains certificates for 4 years.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Staffing & Standard Sub-Committee of the MAT Board will formally review this policy according to the policy review schedule or more frequently if circumstances or legislation suggest it is appropriate.