

AXE VALLEY ACADEMY

POLICY



Examinations Policy & Procedure

Updated: April 2018

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Controlled Assessment Policy
Equality Policy
Quality Assurance Policy
SEND Policy
Visitors Policy

Contents

1. Examination responsibilities
2. Statutory tests and qualifications offered
3. Examination seasons and timetables
4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes
5. Examination charges/fees
6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements
7. Estimated grades
8. Managing invigilators and examination days
9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration
10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments
11. Malpractice and Maladministration
12. Exam Appeal Procedure
13. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)
14. Certificates

The purpose of this examination policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of all examinations within the centre (GCE, GCSE, BTECs , Nationals etc) is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates
- to ensure the operation of an efficient examination system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

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

1. Examination responsibilities

Headteacher

Overall responsibility for the Academy as an examination centre.

- Advises on appeals and re-marks.
- The Headteacher is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments.
- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.
- Review letters regarding examination re-takes.
- Consider any special considerations regarding waiver of examination retake fees.

Examinations Officer

Acts with the Headteacher's authority and manages the administration of public examinations and analysis of examination results.

- Advises the Headteacher, SLT, subject and class teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various examination boards.
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, parents/carers and candidates of an annual calendar for all examinations.
- Communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensures that candidates and their parents/carers are informed of those aspects of the examination timetable that will affect them.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Requests subject information at the start of the Autumn term, along with information regarding BTEC registrations and National entries and submits data to Exam Board.
- Monitors new students joining BTEC/National programme and register/enter as necessary.
- Requests entry information for all examinations from Curriculum Team Leaders and teaching staff to ensure that data is received by the examinations officer in order to meet examination board entry deadlines.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all examination papers and completed scripts.
- Assists SENCO or Assistant SENCO with access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations

regulations and guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations.

- Identifies and manages examination timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all examination costs/charges.
- Provides the Headteacher with details of candidates that have not paid retake fees by deadlines set.
- Organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of examination invigilators responsible for the conduct of examinations, and line manages them.
- Prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made.
- Submits candidates' controlled assessment/coursework marks, tracks dispatch and distributes returned coursework/controlled assessments to subject areas and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arranges for dissemination of examination results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/remark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their examinations.
- For BTECs and OCR nationals check examination certificates to ensure correct level of qualification awarded.

Subject Team Leaders

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about examination entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Ensures accurate completion of controlled assessment/coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the examinations officer.

Teaching Staff

- Completes examination entry request information in a timely manner and returns to the examinations officer within specified deadlines.
- Advise the examinations officer in writing of any changes to original entry, i.e. tier entries / special considerations / withdrawn from course.
- For teachers of OCR national courses unit result is entered online.
- On receipt of results, discuss with students and consider if retakes necessary/appropriate. If retakes are required then letter to be sent to parents advising

of retake cost and deadline for payment (See Section5) Headteacher to approve letter prior to sending. Copy of letter and list of students to be sent to the examinations officer.

- Advise examinations officer of any new students joining BTEC/National courses after official start of the course.
- Conduct controlled assessments as specified by Controlled Assessment Policy.

Lead Internal Verifier (BTECs)

- Ensure that there is an assessment and verification plan for the programmes in their subject which is fit for purpose and meets EdExcel's requirements.
- Sign off the plan and check that it is being followed at suitable points.
- Undertake some internal verification and/or assessment for individual units within at least one of the programmes.
- Ensure that records of assessment and samples of learner work are being retained for use with Standards Verification if necessary. Plan to set aside examples of work that has been verified to different levels and grades.
- Liaise with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place, if and when sampling is required.
- Liaise with examination officer regarding the submission of unit marks and overall subject grade.

SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements.
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Advises on the provision of additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages— to help candidates achieve their course aims.
- Liaises with the examinations officer to ensure access information held is accurate and up-to-date.

Invigilators

- Collection of examination papers and other material from the examinations officer before the start of the examination.
- Prepare the examination room prior to students arrival.
- Supervise the students during the examination and carry out the necessary administrative tasks i.e. attendance register.
- Collection of all examination papers in the correct order at the end of the examination and their return to the examinations officer.
- Act as scribes and readers during external examinations.

Candidates

- Check entry information provided by the examinations officer and advise class teacher if any concerns.
- Arrive for examinations 10 minutes before the published start time and fully prepared with necessary equipment/materials.
- Understanding controlled assessment/coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the controlled assessment/coursework as their own.

Receptionist

- Posting of examination papers.
- Telephone parents/carers on request by the examinations officer when candidates are absent and centre not been notified.

Site Staff

- Responsible for setting up the examinations room.

IT Technicians

- Set up digital clock in sports hall
- Assist with computer based examinations

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are GCSE, A levels, BTECs , OCR Nationals and other vocational qualifications i.e. ASDAN or ECDL qualifications in IT Applications via the BCS Chartered Institute for IT.

Curriculum and qualifications are regularly reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team, in response to local and national requirements.

3. Examination seasons and timetables

Examination seasons

- External examinations are scheduled in May and June
- The Headteacher decides which examination series is used in the centre.

Timetables

- The examinations officer will publish examination timetables for external examinations once these are confirmed. Timetables will be posted on the Academy website as soon as available.
- The Assistant Head for Assessment is responsible for all internal examinations.

4. Registrations, Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

Registrations (Edexcel BTEC/OCR Nationals)

- Edexcel BTEC / OCR Nationals courses commence, and registration made in September of Year 10.
- Exams office will send out a class list at the start of the Autumn term to confirm candidate registration details prior to registering the students.
- The Examination officer will send out a list of candidates registered at the start of the following Spring term to ensure that candidate list still accurate and will withdraw any candidates by the 31st January deadline in order to get refund of registration fee.

Entries

- Candidates are identified for examination entry by the subject staff.
- A candidate or parent/carer can discuss with the subject teacher a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.
- The examination officer will only accept exam entry information from subject teachers/Curriculum Team Leaders in writing.
- The centre will consider private entries on request.

Late entries

- Entry deadlines are circulated by the exams office to Curriculum Team Leaders/subject teacher via written entry request form and followed up by email.

Retakes

- Retake decisions at GCSE, AS and A2 will be made in consultation with the candidates and the subject teachers. (See also section 5: Exam fees)

5. Exam fees

- All first time entry exam fees are paid by the centre, in respect of exams studied as part of a students agreed curriculum.
- Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments, unless exceptional circumstances agreed by Examination Officer.

- Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations provided these are made within the deadlines set by the examination officer.
- The Academy reserves the right to seek reimbursement from candidates who fail to sit an examination or fails to meet the necessary coursework requirements.
- The decision will be made by the Headteacher The examination charges policy will be communicated via the website to candidates and parents/carers.
- Retake charges for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates. (See also section 4.3: Retakes).
- Request will be made in writing to parents by the subject area Candidates must pay the charge for a result enquiry, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry. (See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements

DDA

- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. 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
- 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 via the electronic Student Services Handbook on the 'O' drive.

Access arrangements

- Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO and the exams officer.
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO and the exams office.
- Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams office with the assistance of the SENCO.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the exams office.

7. Estimated grades

- The heads of subject will submit estimated grades to the examination officer when required.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

Managing invigilators

- External invigilators will be used for external examination supervision and/or where an examination does not take place in a classroom.
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the examination officer.
- Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the examination officer.
- DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the examination officer.
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Headteacher.

Examination days

- The examination officer will book all examination rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.
- Site management is responsible for preparing the allocated rooms.
- The lead invigilator will start all examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not look at the contents of the examination papers or advise on which questions are to be attempted. Examination papers must not be removed from the examination room.
- In practical examinations invigilators are employed where the exams are taking place outside of normal lesson time. Subject teachers/technicians will be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- Papers will be distributed by the examination officer to subject areas 24 hours after the examination has finished.

9. 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 examination room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the examination room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.
- The examinations officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an examination and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Clash candidates

- The examinations officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

Special consideration

- Should a candidate be too ill to sit an examination, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the examination itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the examination invigilator, to that effect.
- Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the examination, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor / self-certificate form.
- The examinations office will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the examination.

10. Controlled Assessment/Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

Controlled Assessment/Coursework

- Candidates who have to prepare controlled assessment/coursework should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined dates.
- Curriculum Team Leaders/heads of subject will ensure all controlled assessment/coursework is ready for dispatch at the correct time and the examinations officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

- Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the examinations officer by subject teachers.

Reviews of marking - Centre assessed marks

(GCSE controlled assessments, GCE coursework, GCE and GCSE non-examination assessments)

Axe Valley Academy is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff mark candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. Axe Valley Academy is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

- Axe Valley Academy will discuss and issue a copy of their subject's mark schemes to candidates. Teachers will issue students with a copy of their Centre Mark Declaration sheet which will be signed and dated by both parties. Once issued students have 5 days to request a review of marking via the Examinations Officer.
- Axe Valley Academy will inform candidates that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment and, having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate. Candidates will be provided with sufficient time in order to allow them to review copies of materials under supervision and reach a decision.
- Axe Valley Academy will allow time for 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.
- Axe Valley Academy 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. The reviewer will ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
- The candidate 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.

- All paperwork will be given to the Examinations Officer and will be kept until results days in August.

Once 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 Axe Valley Academy and is not covered by this procedure.

11. Exam Appeal Procedure

Procedures are in place for the conduct of external qualifications in accordance with the Code of Practice produced by QCA. These procedures are as follows:

- Candidates' work will be authenticated in accordance with regulations laid down by the JCQ
- Only staff who have the appropriate skills and understanding will carry out internal assessments
- Curriculum areas ensure consistency of internal assessment
- Internal standardisation is only carried out by staff who have necessary experience

The following procedure has been put in place for appeals against decisions made by awarding bodies, and for internal assessments made by the Academy:

- Appeals can only be made against the procedure used in arriving at internal assessment decisions not against the grade or mark allocated.
- The parent/carer of the candidate must make the appeal in writing to the Academy's Examinations Officer at least two weeks prior to the last externally assessed paper of the series.
- The internal process will be led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team in conjunction with the Examination Officer. The member of SLT involved must not have been involved in the original internal assessment procedure.
- The investigation will consider whether the procedures laid down by the Awarding Body and the 'Code of Practice' were adhered to. The investigation will be completed within 10 school days.

The criteria for the internal assessment of work is specified by the awarding body who must moderate the assessment and make the final decision of marks awarded.

The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal.

If the appellant is able to appeal against a decision taken by the centre but it must first of all go through the centre's appeals process before bringing the matter to the awarding body. The awarding body may charge for an appeal.

12. Malpractice and Maladministration

Student Malpractice

The Headteacher will:

- Report to the appropriate awarding body at the earliest opportunity all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice.
- If the irregularity is discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication form, investigate any alleged malpractice internally and record the outcome on the authentication form supplied by the awarding body, this initial investigation should take place within 5 days.
- If an irregularity is identified after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, the Headteacher will submit full details of the case to the relevant awarding body at the earliest opportunity, but definitely within 10 days.
- Supervise all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice.
- Ensure that where an investigation has been delegated to a member of staff, the member of staff chosen is independent to the subject involved.
- Respond speedily and openly to all requests for an investigation into an allegation of any malpractice.

Staff Maladministration

- Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with the examination body administrative regulations and requirements.
- The Academy will carry out an initial investigation where it is suspected or a case of actual maladministration has taken place. The investigation should be carried out within 2 days of initial notification.
- If after the initial investigation it is felt that maladministration is suspected then the awarding body must be notified immediately.
- Where malpractice is established the disciplinary policy of the Academy will be enforced and the Awarding Body notified accordingly.

13. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

Results

- Candidates receive individual results slips in person on results days arranged by the centre.
- Arrangements for the Academy to be open on results days are made by the examinations officer in consultation with the Headteacher.
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the examinations officer.
- The centre aggregates at the end of year 12 for AS grades.

Enquiries about Results (EARs)

- EARs may be requested in writing by centre staff if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. This must be made within the timescales laid down by the Awarding Body concerned.
- When the centre does not uphold 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. (See section 5: Exam fees)

Access to Scripts (ATS)

- After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within the exam board deadlines.
- If a result is queried, the exams office, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark 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.
- Re-marks cannot be applied for once the original script has been returned.

14. Certificates

- Certificates are presented in person at the Academy certificate event.
- Certificates may not be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party.
- Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees until the fee is paid in full. Any uncollected certificates will be sent out by recorded delivery.
- Any certificates returned will be retained by the Academy for 12 months and then destroyed.
- A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the admin cost incurred.