



## Public Exams Administration and Appeal Policy

***This policy also applies to the Early Years' Foundation Stage and Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014***

The purpose of this exam policy is:

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

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

### Exam Responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre, and:

- Co-ordinates advice on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice are reported to the JCQ.

### Examinations Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams including:

- Advising the Senior Leadership Team, subject teachers and form tutors and relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Overseeing the production and distribution to staff and candidates of a timetable for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensuring that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them (in conjunction with Year 10/11 form tutors).
- Consulting with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessment (CA) is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Providing and confirming detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receiving, checking and storing securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Identifying and managing exam timetable clashes.
- Accounting for income and expenditure relating to all exam costs and charges.
- Submitting candidates' coursework or CA marks, tracking despatch and storing returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Preparing access arrangements for candidates to take exams.
- Arranging for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwarding, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals or re-mark requests.
- Maintaining systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

### The SENCO is responsible for:

- Administering access arrangements and making applications for special consideration in accordance with the JCQ's publication, *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*.



## Teachers are responsible for:

- Notification to the SENCO and Examinations Officer of any specific access requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course) for their subject.
- Submission of candidates' names to the Examinations Officer.
- Informing the Examinations Officer of changes to a syllabus or exam entry code.

## Invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the School Office before the start of the exam. The examinations are stored for safekeeping in the safe in the boiler room, or if there is an overflow, in an emergency some examinations may be stored in the Bursar's safe.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the Examinations Officer (or the Principal/Bursar if the Examinations Officer is not available).

## Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

## Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered are GCSEs and (where there is an individually arranged need) GCE A Levels. Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the pupil, her parents/carers and subject teachers. In the event of a dispute, the Principal's decision will be final. (For retakes, see Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries below).

## Exam Seasons

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in January and June (for KS3 Exams and KS4 Mocks in January). External exams and assessments are scheduled in November, January, March, May and June. Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

## Timetable

Once confirmed, the Examinations Officer will circulate the exam timetable for external exams. The internal exam timetable will be compiled and issued by the Deputy Head.

## Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the subject teachers.
- Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. Parental permission will always be sought before any request is granted, and requests will be evaluated by the subject teacher who will recommend whether it is a prudent move.
- Entry deadlines are circulated to subject teachers by pigeon holes or email by the Examinations Officer.
- Late entries must be authorised by the Principal and/or Examinations Officer.
- Retake entries will be made in consultation with candidates and subject teachers. Parents may request retakes but the ultimate decision will be that of the subject teacher (see section below on Retakes).

## Exam Fees

Candidates will not be charged for changes of tier.



GCSE entry exam fees and re-sit fees are charged to candidates' fee accounts. Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the School where it is the School that has been responsible for the late entry or amendment charge. Where the late entry is the result of a candidate notifying the School of their wish to be entered for an exam after the normal entry dates, the candidate's fee account will be charged.

## **Disability Discrimination Act**

St Margaret's Examinations Officer and Principal must ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006.

## **Access Arrangements**

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO, but may be recommended by an Educational Psychologist or a candidate's Specialist teacher. There are clear guidelines published each year by the JCQ which will determine whether or not a candidate qualifies for access arrangements, and the nature of these arrangements. 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 candidate can be granted during the course and in the exam.

The school will provide access arrangement support in a form that matches the candidate's normal working arrangements. For example, candidates wishing to use a laptop for their GCSE work will be granted the opportunity of using one for their examinations. Candidates who do not normally use a laptop will not be granted the opportunity of using specially one for their examinations.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO with the Examinations Officer. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the Examinations Officer.

## **Contingency Planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer and Principal.

## **Private Candidates**

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer. The Exams Officer will verify the identity of all students that they enter for examinations or assessments.

Invigilators must establish the identity of all candidates sitting examinations.

A private/external candidate or a transferred candidate who is not known to the school or college must show photographic documentary evidence to prove that he/she is the same person who entered/registered for the examination/assessment, e.g. passport or photographic driving licence.

Where it is impossible to identify a candidate due to the wearing of religious clothing, such as a veil, the candidate should be approached by a member of staff of the same gender and taken to a private room where they should be politely asked to remove the religious clothing for identification purposes. The Examinations Officer must inform candidates in advance of this procedure and well before their first examination.

*Once identification has been established, the candidate should replace, for example, their veil and proceed as normal to sit the examination.*



## Estimated Grades

The subject teacher is responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Examinations Officer when requested.

## Managing Invigilators

Teachers or part-time invigilators are used to invigilate both internal and external examinations.

## Malpractice

The Principal is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

## Exam Days

The Examinations 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.

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 subject teachers (and Heads of Department, where relevant) at the end of the exam session.

## Exam Rooms

The Examination Officer...

- Ensures that when a room is 'designated' as an exam room it is not used for any purpose other than conducting external exams during the examination period.
- Ensures only approved centre staff (who have not taught the subject being examined) are present in exam rooms to perform permitted tasks.
- Ensures the centre's policy relating to food and drink that may be allowed in exam rooms is clearly communicated to candidates.
- Ensures the centre's policy on candidates leaving the exam room temporarily is clearly communicated to candidates.

## Candidates

- St Margaret's rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other electronic devices apply at all times.
- 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 Officer or Principal.
- Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.
- Water in a sealable container without any writing, labelling or images on it, maybe brought into the examination room. Any candidates wishing to bring in a snack must seek the invigilator's approval for their particular snack prior to entering the exam room.
- The Examinations Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.
- For clash candidates, the supervision of escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.
- 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 candidate's responsibility to alert the School, the Examinations Officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.



- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor.
- The Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.
- **Candidates will be issued with the JCQ's warnings and guidance sheets in advance of the start of the GCSE/GCE examination period.**

## Unauthorised Items

In the examination room candidates must not have access to items other than those stated in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list or the specification for that subject. Potential technological/web enabled sources of information such as smart watches are not permitted.

- All unauthorised items should be left outside of the examination room.
- Any pencil cases taken into the examination room must be see-through.
- Any unauthorised items that have been taken into the examination room must be placed out of reach of the candidates (and not under their desks) before the examination starts. This would normally be at the front of the examination room or a similar arrangement that enables the invigilator to control access to the items.
- If candidates have access to unauthorised items in the examination room this may be considered as malpractice. They could be subject to penalties in accordance with the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures*.
- Prior to the examination starting, the invigilator must ensure that candidates have removed their wrist watches, placing them on their desks.
- The invigilator, if he/she so wishes, prohibit candidates bringing a wrist watch into the examination room. In this case candidates would be required to leave their watches outside of the examination room.

## Candidate Absences

If candidate is absent at the published start time of an exam or assessment, the school office will endeavour to contact the pupil or a parent.

*Should the candidate arrive late*, then the Invigilator and Examinations Officer should consult the Late Arrivals documentation where they will need to record the information and follow the appropriate procedure. This is outlined elsewhere in this policy, and also materials relating to the procedure are in the main folder on the invigilator's desk.

*Should the candidate be absent for the examination*, the appropriate code should be entered on the register for that examination, and the candidate and/or their parent should be informed that this has happened.

Should the candidate be absent for an internally organised assessment (e.g. a GCSE language oral) due to unavoidable circumstances or being unwell, as long as there is sufficient time to reorganise the assessment, this will be undertaken.

## Late Arrivals to Examinations

More detailed procedural instructions are maintained for the invigilator in this circumstance. Candidates arriving within 30 minutes of the published start time will be given sufficient additional time after the other candidates have finished to complete the allowed time for the examination. Candidates arriving later than 30 minutes after the published start time may be allowed to complete the examination (at the discretion of the invigilator and/or the Examinations Officer).



In both circumstances the invigilator must inform the Examinations Officer, recording the arrival time on the appropriate documentation, and where required, the Examinations Officer must report this to the appropriate body.

## **Persistent Lateness**

Where a candidate is persistently late the invigilator is not obliged to give that candidate extra time to complete their examination.

## **Internal/Controlled Assessment**

It is the duty of the subject teacher to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The Examinations Officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

## **Marks and Appeals**

### **Appeals against Internal Assessments**

*Please note that marks cannot be appealed against. However, girls/parents of any girl wishing to appeal against the process may do so following the procedures below.*

The procedure for managing appeals against internal assessments is straightforward. The parent of any girl wishing to appeal should submit in writing their request, specifying the subject, the assessment title and (brief) reasons why they would like the work reassessed. Please note that as controlled assessments are usually externally moderated the request may be denied. For more details, see 'Internal Assessments Procedure - Appeals' below.

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

Candidates will receive individual result slips on GCSE results' day, either in person at the School or by post to their home if they do not appear at School on exams results day.

Arrangements for the School to be open on results days are made by the Principal. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Principal.

## **Certificates**

Certificates are presented in person or posted by hand where possible. Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so.

## **Post-Results: Remarks, Return of Scripts, Re-moderations**

After the release of results, candidates may ask the examinations officer to organise a remark, a return of scripts, or other post-results service (a list of which can be found on the examination boards' websites). There is a deadline for submission of requests which can be found on the same websites.

Pearson: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>

AQA: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

OCR: [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

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



## Remarks (EAR)

Pupil/Parent Instigated

A parent or pupil may wish to ask for a paper to be re-marked where the total marks are very close to a grade boundary (e.g. within one or two marks), or if the pupil is **convinced** that they should have scored higher marks than they were given for one or more papers. It is worth noting that most remarked papers do *not* result in an increase in marks.

## Cost of Remarks

There is a sliding scale (available on the exam boards' websites, [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk), <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>, [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) – search for re-mark charges) depending on whether the re-mark is a priority (i.e. needs to be done quickly, such as when needing to meet an entry deadline for a Sixth Form), whether the candidate wants a photocopy of the paper etc). Re-remarks cannot be requested *after* a paper has been returned to a candidate.

*The cost of re-marks is always recharged to parents unless the remark has been instigated by a teacher (see below) for a cohort of pupils*

If a re-mark results in an increase in a candidate's marks, there is no charge.

## Procedure

As mentioned above, there is a time limit for most re-marks so the school's Examinations Officer or Principal or Deputy should ideally be informed of a candidate's desire to have a paper re-marked within 7 working days of the relevant results day.

The Examinations Officer will check how close the candidate is to the grade boundaries above and below their current score. If the request seems excessively optimistic, the candidate and/or their parent will be advised as such.

If a decision is made to proceed, the Exams officer will instigate the re-mark, and inform the candidate of the result of the re-mark as soon as it is available.

[NB Candidates who order their post-results service directly with the examination board clearly will work on their own timescale, but will need to observe the deadlines for submissions].

## Teacher Instigated

If a teacher feels that one or more candidates' marks appear to be unlikely, he/she should

- (i) Check whether the candidates' marks are far enough *above* the grade boundary that it would be very unlikely that a re-mark would result in a *lower* grade;
- (ii) Inform the Principal of his/her suggestion that they be re-marked and ask for his permission to proceed;
- (iii) If permission is granted, they should inform the candidate(s) parents of his/her suggestion that they be re-marked (and the possibility of a lower grade, however unlikely), and ask for their permission to proceed;
- (iv) The teacher should then ask the Examinations Officer to action the re-mark request.

The above should be commenced within 3 working days of results day.



## Retakes

If a candidate wishes to retake a unit or entire GCSE exam, they should first discuss the matter with the subject teacher who will advise them of the following:

- i) Whether the retake is advisable taking into account the contribution it is likely to make to the candidate achieving a higher grade overall;
- ii) Whether the retake is advisable taking into account other exams being taken at the time;
- iii) No retake can be asked for without prior parental consent which should be given to the Examinations Officer;
- iv) Although a parent or candidate can insist on a retake against the advice of the teacher, they are strongly advised not to;
- v) Retakes must be requested within 7 working days of notice of results. In some cases, 'cashing-in' may need to be undone.

## Internal Assessment Procedure – Appeals

Any appeal will be considered by the teacher who marked the assessment, the Principal and an experienced member of the teaching staff. A pupil will be allowed to be accompanied in the presentation of her case by a parent or guardian. Presentation of the reasons for appeal can be done in person or in writing.

A written record of all Appeals will be held by the Examinations Officer. This will include a record of the outcome, including the reasons for that outcome. A copy will be sent to the pupil's home address.

All Appeals will include a review of the procedure used at St Margaret's School to award marks for internal assessments to ensure that this complies with the requirements of the Awarding Body, and the published Code of Practice.

A candidate must inform the Examinations Officer or the Principal of a decision to appeal within two weeks of being given an internal assessment mark.

The appeal will be investigated and a decision made within 10 working days of this date. If relevant, St Margaret's School will inform the Awarding Body of the outcome of any Appeal.

## Internal Appeals Procedure

### Internal Appeals about Internal Assessments

Sometimes a candidate will not agree with the coursework marks awarded by a teacher. If the disagreement cannot be resolved by discussion between the teacher and candidate concerned then the candidate may appeal to the Examinations Officer or Principal, who will put into action the agreed appeals process. This will be the final stage in the normal process of considering and resolving disputes. It is expected that it will be used only in exceptional circumstances.

1. The Examinations Officer is in overall charge of managing appeals relating to internal assessments.
2. If a student wishes to appeal about his/her internal assessment marks then the following procedures should be followed:



- (a) The appeal should be made in writing or in person to the Principal stating the details of the complaint and the reasons for the appeal. The Principal will liaise with the Exams officer.
- (b) The appeal must be submitted within two weeks of a candidate being awarded a mark/grade by the teacher.
- 3. The teacher(s) concerned in marking the assessment which is the subject of the appeal will respond to the appeal in writing to the Examinations Officer; a copy will be given to the candidate.
- 4. If the candidate is not happy with the written response they have received then they can request a personal hearing before an appeals panel.  
The request for a personal hearing must be made in writing within two days of receipt of the written reply to the initial appeal.
  - (a) The candidate will be given at least two days' notice of the hearing date.
  - (b) A breakdown of the marks awarded will be given to the candidate in advance of the appeal with the relevant mark scheme highlighted.
  - (c) The candidate may bring a parent/guardian to the hearing.
  - (d) The teacher(s) involved will be present at the hearing.
- 5.
  - (a) The Examinations Officer will convey the outcome of an appeal and the reasons for that outcome in writing to the candidate.
  - (b) The school will maintain a written record of all appeals.
  - (c) The school will inform the Awarding Bodies (Examining Boards) of any change to an internally assessed mark as a result of an appeal where relevant.