



St Ursula's Convent School
A Humanities College and Teaching School

EXAMINATIONS POLICY
2018-19

Policy reviewed annually by:

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Purpose of the policy

St Ursula's Convent 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, supporting the exams contingency plan, and other relevant exams-related policies, procedures and plans are signposted to
- ▶ 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 exam/assessment system at all times
- ▶ exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure ways of working in the centre 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. Relevant information from this policy is communicated to candidates via the Candidate Handbook, the school website, the weekly school newsletter, general correspondence with parents/candidates and by running all Pre Public Examinations (PPEs) in accordance with JCQ rules and regulations.

Examination responsibilities

Head of Centre is responsible for:

- ▶ Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [General regulations for approved centres](#) (GR)
 - [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) (ICE)
 - [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) (AA)
 - [Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments](#) (SMEA)
 - [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments](#) (NEAs)
- ▶ Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements for exams and assessments
- ▶ Takes responsibility for responding to the National Centre Number Register annual update by the end of October each year. This confirms that the head of centre is both aware of, and are adhering to, the latest version of the JCQ regulations. The head of centre signs and returns the declaration which is then kept on file for inspection purposes within the JCQ inspection folder.
- ▶ Ensures the exams officer (EO) receives appropriate support from relevant centre staff, and enables them to attend 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 EO
- ▶ 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...”* [ICE 12]
- ▶ Ensures confidentiality and security within the examination process is compliant with and managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions including
 - ▶ the location of the centre’s secure storage facility in a secure room solely assigned to examinations for the purpose of administering secure examination materials
 - ▶ appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that confidential materials are only delivered to authorised members of centre staff
 - ▶ access to the secure room and secure storage facility is restricted to the authorised 2-4 key holders
 - ▶ 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
- ▶ Takes all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during the course of and after examinations have taken place)
- ▶ Ensures irregularities are investigated and informs the awarding bodies of any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, are reported to the awarding body immediately.
- ▶ Ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place (that allows the head of centre to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence). Please see the Exam Contingency Plan for more information. A hard copy is stored in the Exams Policy Folder (in the Exams Office), an electronic copy is available on the staff shared area.
- ▶ Ensures members of centre staff do **not** forward e-mails and letters from awarding body or JCQ personnel without prior consent to third parties or upload such correspondence onto social media sites such as Facebook
- ▶ Ensures members of centre staff do **not** advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly

Exams Officer (EO) is responsible for:

- ▶ Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [General regulations for approved centres](#)
 - [Instructions for conducting examinations](#)
 - [Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments](#)
 - [Post-results services](#) (PRS)

- ▶ Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- ▶ Ensures key tasks are undertaken and key dates and deadlines met. These include:
 - Exam, controlled assessment and non examined assessment administration
 - Production of exam timetable in which candidates will be involved
 - Provides estimated entries, final entries, amendments and withdrawals to the exam boards – liaises with key members of staff to ensure information is gathered
 - Identifies exam timetable clashes
 - Arranges for the dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forward, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests
- ▶ Recruits, arranges training for and deploys a team of internal/external invigilators; appoints lead invigilator(s), as required and keeps a record of the content of training provided to invigilators for the required period
- ▶ Supports the head of centre in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed of any declaration/conflict of interest involving candidates and relevant members of centre staff before the published deadline for entries
- ▶ Briefs other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirement for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials
- ▶ Provide information to the awarding bodies, before the published deadline for entries, of any members of centre staff who are either sitting examinations and assessments, or teaching and preparing members of their family, or household for examinations and assessments, or where members of their family will be sitting examinations and assessments within the centre
- ▶ Provide information to the awarding bodies, before the published deadline for entries, regarding any members of family (including step family, foster family and similar close relationships) or household of exams office staff being entered for examinations and assessments; whether by the centre itself or a different centre

Senior leaders (SLT) are responsible for:

- ▶ Are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct 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](#)
- ▶ Identifying candidates during registration of the pupils before an examination. *Name cards on desks ensure invigilators can identify the name of candidates once inside the exam hall. External candidates will be asked to bring photo ID to be shown before an examination.*

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- ▶ Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
[Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)
- ▶ Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')
- ▶ Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)
- ▶ If not the qualified access arrangements assessor, works with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and ensures the correct procedures are followed
- ▶ Working with the Exams Officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in the exam room(s)
- ▶ Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification

Heads of Department (HoD) are responsible for:

- ▶ Ensures teaching staff undertake key tasks, within the exams process, and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- ▶ Ensures teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- ▶ Ensures teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events
- ▶ Ensuring correct exam entry codes are provided to the EO
- ▶ Accurate completion of SIMs final entry marksheets and adherence to deadlines as set by EO
- ▶ Accurate completion of SIMs non examination assessment marksheets and declaration sheets
- ▶ Provide candidates with centre assessed marks, and a deadline for a request for a review, before submission of centre assessed marks to the exam board
- ▶ Providing non examination assessment marks to the exam board, alongside the EO, by exam board deadlines
- ▶ Providing samples of non examination assessments to the EO to be sent to the exam board moderator
- ▶ Decisions on post results procedures e.g. to advise on and support a review of marking for their subject

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- ▶ Undertaking key tasks, within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- ▶ Keep updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- ▶ Attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Exam Staff (Lead Invigilator / Invigilators) are responsible for:

- ▶ Attend training, update, briefing and review sessions as required. Lead Invigilator to lead training sessions for new and experienced invigilators.
- ▶ Complete the online training certificate to confirm full understanding of their duties
- ▶ Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate
- ▶ Sign a confidentiality and security agreement and confirm whether they have any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions applied to them
- ▶ Provide information to the EO regarding any members of family (including step family, foster family and similar close relationships) or household being entered for examinations and assessments; whether by the centre itself or a different centre

Reception staff are responsible for:

- ▶ Support the EO in the receipt and despatch of confidential exam materials and follow the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials

Site/Premises staff are responsible for:

- ▶ Support the EO in relevant matters relating to exam rooms, secure storage room and facility and resources

Candidates are responsible for:

- ▶ Confirmation of entries
- ▶ Understanding non examination assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates their submitted work as their own
- ▶ Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to JCQ regulations

Where applicable in this policy, the term 'candidates' refers to candidates and/or their parents/carers.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at St Ursula's Convent School are decided by the Head of Centre, Senior Leadership Team, the Head of Curriculum and Heads of Department.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSE, Entry Level and Functional Skills

Informing the Exams Officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of Department.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Head of Department in consultation with the Head of Centre, parents/carers and candidate.

Exam Entries

The Exams Officer will:

- ▶ Request estimated or early entry information, where this may be required by awarding bodies, from HoDs in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- ▶ Requests final entry information from HoDs in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- ▶ Ask candidates to confirm their full legal name is correct on entry/GCSE certificate information
- ▶ Provide candidates with statements of entry for checking
- ▶ Make candidates aware of the [JCQ Information for Candidates – Privacy Notice](#) at the start of a vocational qualification or when entries are being processed for a general qualification
- ▶ Informs HoDs of subsequent deadlines for making changes to final entry information without charge
- ▶ Confirms with HoDs 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

Heads of Department will:

- ▶ Provides information requested by the EO to the internal deadlines for estimated and final entries
- ▶ Informs the EO 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 EO and confirms information is correct

Candidates will:

- ▶ Confirm their full legal name, and date of birth are correct, prior to final entries being made
- ▶ Confirm entry information is correct or notify the EO of any discrepancies

Entry and Examination fees

Entry fees are taken from the exams budget. Any late or amendment fees will be charged to departmental budgets if deadlines are missed or information initially provided by HODs was incorrect. St Ursula's will be reimbursed for any fees from candidates that miss exams unless a medical certificate is produced within three days. Re-sit fees from candidates that have left the school will also be reimbursed by the candidate.

Equality and Diversity

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

The Centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, the Senior Leadership Team and the Governors.

Access arrangements

Head of Centre

- ▶ Ensures there is a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of the appointed assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

SENCo

- ▶ Assesses candidates (or works with the appropriately qualified assessor as appointed by the head of centre) to identify access arrangements
- ▶ Gathers evidence to support the need for access arrangements for a candidate
- ▶ Liaises with teaching staff to gather evidence of normal way of working of an affected candidate
- ▶ Determines candidate eligibility for arrangements or adjustments that are centre delegated
- ▶ Applies for approval, with the support of the EO, through Access Arrangements Online (AAO) via the Centre Admin Portal (CAP), where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- ▶ Keeps relevant paperwork and evidence on file for JCQ inspection purposes
- ▶ Employs good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010
- ▶ Ensures exam information (JCQ information for candidates information, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- ▶ Liaises with the EO regarding exam time arrangements for access arrangement candidates
- ▶ Allocates appropriately trained centre staff to facilitate access arrangements for candidates in exams and assessments (ensuring that the facilitator appointed meets JCQ requirements and fully understands the rule of the particular access arrangement). Keeps a record of the content of this training.
- ▶ Provides and annually reviews a centre policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments
- ▶ Where relevant, ensures the necessary and appropriate steps are undertaken to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate (including distance learners and home educated candidates) and that the candidate is assessed by the centre's appointed assessor

Security of exam materials

Exams officer

- ▶ Has a process in place to demonstrate the receipt, secure movement and secure storage and confidential exam materials within in the centre
- ▶ Ensures a log is kept at the initial point of delivery recording confidential materials received and signed for by authorised staff within the centre and that appropriate arrangements are in place for confidential materials to be placed in the secure storage facility
- ▶ Ensures the secure storage facility contains only current and live confidential material
- ▶ Ensures live confidential exam stationary provided by the awarding body is stored within the secure storage room

Reception staff

- ▶ Follow the process to log confidential materials delivered to/received by the centre to the point materials are issued to authorised staff for placing in the secure storage facility

Heads of Department and Teaching staff

- ▶ Adhere to the process to record the secure movement of confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, the Senior Leadership Team Member responsible for Exams and the Exams Officer.

Contingency plans are available on the staff shared area, in the Exams Officer / Data Manager's office and in the secure Examinations Office.

Conduct of Examinations – The Exam Room

Head of Centre

- ▶ Ensures venues used for conducting exams meet the requirements of JCQ and awarding bodies
- ▶ Ensures that only authorised centre staff are present in the exam rooms

Exams Officer

- ▶ Ensures exam rooms are set up and exams conducted according to JCQ and awarding body instructions
- ▶ Ensures invigilators are provided with the appropriate knowledge and training. Also that invigilators have an appropriate means of summoning assistance

Senior Leaders (SLT)

- ▶ 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

Conduct of Examinations – Food and Drink

Food is not allowed in the exam room. Candidates may bring a small bottle of water only. This bottle must be uncoloured, completely clear and all labels removed. Candidates are informed of this in their Candidate Handbook and also during PPEs in November and February.

Conduct of Examinations – Managing Behaviour

The Head of Centre has the authority to remove a candidate from the examination room, but should do so if the candidate would disrupt others by remaining in the room. Candidates are advised of expected behaviour in their Candidate Handbook, during PPEs in November and February and in briefings by their Head of Year and SLT Lead for Examinations.

Candidate Late Arrival / Very Late Arrival

Candidates are advised of their exams dates and times through a variety of methods in the lead up to their examinations. This includes the publication of a common GCSE timetable on the school website, a paper copy of this timetable to parents and students, individual timetables of entries and examinations, reminders in assembly and in the school newsletter etc. Candidates are advised of the procedure to follow if they are late in their Candidate Handbook. This is provided to each candidate/parent/carer in a hard copy and on the school website.

Candidates are registered by a member of SLT outside the main examination room before the published exam start time. This member of SLT must inform the School Attendance Officer and the Examinations Officer of any absences. The School Attendance Officer will contact the parent/carer immediately to advise that their child is currently absent. The Examinations Officer will inform the invigilators of any potential late/absent candidates as early as possible.

SLT, the Examinations Officer and the Attendance Officer will keep in regular contact until the candidate has either arrived for their examination or to confirm that this candidate will be absent.

- Late candidates are those who are in supervised, exam conditions **within 1 hour of the published start time** e.g. arriving before 10am for AM exams or before 2.30pm for PM exams
- Very late candidates are those who are in supervised, exam conditions **over 1 hour of the published start time** e.g. arriving before 10am for AM exams or before 2.30pm for PM exams

Any candidate that is late will be given time to sit their examination for the full duration. It is at the school's discretion whether any candidate that is very late will be allowed to sit their examination.

Late candidates will be admitted to the examination room, or another separate suitable room, and the time/reason logged on the examination room log, and no further action needs to be taken.

It is at the school's discretion as to whether very late candidates are allowed to sit their examination. If they are, then candidates will be given time to sit their examination for the full duration. Very late candidates will be admitted to the examination room, or a separate suitable room, and the time/reason logged on the examination room log. The following steps must take place when admitting very late candidates to an examination:

- The school must warn the candidate that the awarding body may not accept their script
- The full time for the examination must be given.
- Completed Examination Scripts are packed, and sent back to the awarding body, with the rest of the cohort in the usual way without any reference to the very late arrival.
- A full report, along with statements from the candidate, anyone accompanying the candidate to the examination, the Examination Officer and the Attendance Officer, must be submitted to JCQ and/or the exam board. Please see the [JCQ website](#) for more information.
- The Very Late Form (<https://www.accessarrangementsonline.org.uk/CAP>) must be completed within 7 days of the examination to inform JCQ of the Very Late Arrival

The school is not responsible for the decision as to whether the completed examination script is accepted by the awarding body.

Candidate Absence

Candidates are advised of their exams dates and times through a variety of methods in the lead up to their examinations. This includes the publication of a common GCSE timetable on the school website, a paper copy of this timetable to parents and students, individual timetables of entries and examinations, reminders in assembly and in the school newsletter etc. Candidates are advised of the procedure to follow if they are late in their Candidate Handbook. This is provided to each candidate/parent/carer in a hard copy and on the school website.

Candidates are reminded that examinations must be attended. Candidates and parents are advised that they must inform the school at the earliest opportunity before an examination if a candidate is unable to attend.

Where possible candidates will always be advised to attend examinations. Where a candidate attends, but is late or very late (please see above) then this procedure will be followed.

Candidates/parents will be advised to seek a medical certificate from a qualified medical professional if special consideration should be applied if a candidate is unwell, injured or if an emergency has occurred. Candidates and parents will be asked to put in writing reasons for being late/absent.

Where a candidate is absent a full investigation by the school will take place. A full report will be produced to include candidate/parent statement(s), statements from any school staff where appropriate, evidence from a medical professional and any other reason as to why the candidate has been absent.

The candidate will be marked as absent on the attendance register that goes to the awarding body with completed exam scripts.

A special consideration request will be submitted by the Examination Officer if the school supports this application. This will depend on the circumstances surround the absence. The school is not responsible for the decision as to whether the special consideration is applied by the awarding body.

Where medical evidence cannot be supplied to support the absence of a candidate the full entry fee for the missed examination will be charged directly to the candidate/parent/carer by the school.

Malpractice

The Head of Centre, in consultation with the Exams Officer, is responsible for investigating all suspected malpractice in line with the school's Malpractice Policy for Candidates and Malpractice Policy for Staff (available on the school website).

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 Head of Centre, a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Exams Officer or the Exam Invigilator to that effect.

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

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within ten days of the exam.

Internal Assessment / Non-Examination Assessment

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

Marks for all centre assessed work are provided to the candidate by the Head of Department and/or Subject Teacher prior to submission to the exam board. Candidates are provided with a deadline by the Head of Department by which they must ask for a review of marking. The Exams Officer will inform the Head of Department of any appeals against internal assessments. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the Centre's Internal Appeals Policy.

Results

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days in person.

Results will not be given out via telephone or email.

The results slip will be in the form of a Centre produced document.

Candidates who are unable to pick up results, must provide written confirmation to the Exams Officer of who will be picking up results on their behalf. This written confirmation must be provided well in advance of results day. The nominated person must bring photographic ID with them.

Post-results services

Head of centre

- ▶ 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 officer

- ▶ Provides information to candidates (including private candidates) and staff on the services provided by awarding bodies and the fees charged
- ▶ 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

Heads of Department and Teaching staff

- ▶ Meet internal deadlines to request the services and gain relevant candidate informed consent
- ▶ Identify the budget to which fees should be charged

Candidates

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

Certificates

Certificates are provided to centres by awarding bodies after results have been confirmed.

Certificates are issued to candidates at a Certificate Evening usually held in November. Candidates will be invited to attend this evening to collect their certificates. Any candidates that are unable to attend can collect their certificates, in person, from the school reception after Certificate Evening. If the candidate is unable to collect then they must nominate a responsible person, and provide written consent, that this person may collect their results. This nominated person must present this written consent and ID to reception staff.

After Certificate Evening (usually November) uncollected certificates are kept at in the locked filing cabinet at the school reception. The school will contact candidates to inform them that they may collect their certificate from reception. At the end of the academic year any uncollected certificates will be filed in the secure exams office. As per [JCQ guidelines](#) the school may destroy any unclaimed certificates by a secure method (for example shredding or incineration) after holding them for a period of 12 months from the date of issue. A record of all certificates that are destroyed by the centre will be kept for a further period of 4 years from the date of their destruction.