



ST MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL, NEWRY

External Examination Policy

Revised June 2021

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that the planning and management of external examinations and portfolio assessments/controlled assessments are conducted efficiently and meet the regulations of the Joint Council for Qualifications and relevant Awarding Organisations
- To ensure the operation of an efficient examination system with clear guidelines provided to all relevant stakeholders
- To ensure all students have equality of opportunity in relation to all external examinations and internal assessments

Exam Responsibilities

Head of Centre – Miss Crawley (Principal)

Miss Crawley (Principal) as Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the school as an examination centre, this role involves ensuring:

- examination related policies, procedures and plans are in place and regularly reviewed in line with JCQ and Awarding Organisation regulations
- all Key Stage 4/Post 16 courses are fully approved for delivery, on the DE Entitlement Framework
- the National Centre Number Register is updated if necessary each year
- staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- relevant staff have appropriate training and support in order to facilitate the effective delivery and administration of all examinations and assessments
- centre staff undertake key tasks within the exam process and meet deadlines set by Awarding Organisations
- the effective administration, collation and distribution of all GCSE and Post 16 results including non edi entries.
- confidentiality and security within the examination process compliant with JCQ regulations especially in relation to the receipt, movement and storage of examination papers and confidential material. Awarding Bodies are immediately informed if there are any breaches of such security
- staff act in a professional and ethical manner to avoid cases of malpractice and maladministration. Any cases are fully investigated and Awarding Organisations are informed regarding alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration involving students or members of staff

- steps are taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of qualifications ensuring Awarding Organisations are informed of any conflict of interests declared by members of staff
- a designated member of staff fulfils the roles of Examinations Officers, Quality Nominee and Learning Support Co-ordinator
- effective and accurate collation and distribution of results and certificates to candidates
- risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management/contingency plans are in place as outlined in the Examinations Contingency Policy
- internal appeals procedures are in place and applied equally – Internal Appeals Policy
- every student who has additional needs or a disability will be supported through every examination series, ensuring equality of opportunity for all students – SEN and Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- complaints and appeals procedures are in place regarding the delivery and administration of qualifications – Appeals Policy
- the centre complies with all Data Protection Regulations – GDPR Data Protection Policy.

Senior Examinations Officer - Mr Fitzpatrick (Vice Principal)

Mr Fitzpatrick (Vice Principal) as Deputy Head of Centre has day to day responsibility for the school as an examination centre, this role involves:

- annually review of updated information from JCQ and Awarding Organisations on administration procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- review and amendments to examination policies to ensure compliance with JCQ and awarding organisation regulations
- external validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4/ Post-16
- acting as Quality Nominee to ensure consistent high standards of Internal Verification for BTEC/OCN/Cambridge Technical courses
- effective administration, collation and distribution of all GCSE and Post 16 results
- leading whole school exam analysis and target setting procedures
- providing information to the Board of Governors, Principal, Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Department and Class Teachers in relation to all examinations and results achieved.
- reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice to the Head of Centre
- ensuring that a teacher who teaches a subject is not an invigilator during external exams
- registration of all Consortium Arrangements between partner schools
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- prepare and present reports showing results achieved including examination data in the annual Board of Governors Report.

Examinations Officers

- ✚ Key Stage 4 - Mr Mc Auley
- ✚ Key Stage 5 - Mr Fitzpatrick

Each examination officer is responsible for the effective administration, implementation, and monitoring of all examination procedures for their allocated Key Stage, both external examinations and internal portfolios/controlled assessments. Examination Officers:

- annually reviews updated information from JCQ and Awarding Organisations on administration procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- liaise with Heads of Department and class teacher to ensure the correct administration of examination entries for each examination season
- manage and train both internal and external invigilators to ensure high standards in the conduct of all examinations including those personnel involved in supporting Access Arrangements
- accurate registration of learners for BTEC/OCN/Cambridge Technical programmes
- provide and confirms detailed data on estimated entries and forecast grades to individual examination bodies
- consult with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/portfolios are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- receive, check and store securely all exam papers, confidential exam materials and completed scripts in accordance with JCQ requirements. All scripts are stored in the secure examinations inner store.
- instructs other centre staff who are involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of exam materials
- liaise with the Learning Support Co-ordinator to administer access arrangements and applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access Arrangements and Special Considerations Regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for special considerations and/or adjustments in examinations
- identify and manage exam timetables clashes in accordance with JCQ regulations
- line manage the exam invigilators, providing relevant training, guidance in accordance with JCQ regulations. The examination officers will also monitor the conduct of all invigilators and ensure they have relevant Access NI clearance.
- advise the Senior Leadership Team, subject and class teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- liaise with the Learning Support Co-ordinator to ensure that all access arrangements are in place in accordance with JCQ regulations
- liaise with all exam invigilators to ensure that all examinations are conducted in accordance with JCQ regulations and necessary paperwork completed.
- report any incident of malpractice to the Head of Centre
- ensure that all exam scripts are stored correctly and dispatched to the relevant awarding body or marker in accordance with JCQ regulations

- submit controlled assessment/coursework marks, track dispatch and store returned material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- ensure all examination rooms are appropriate in accordance with JCQ regulations and the necessary equipment is available to candidates
- arrange for the dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and administer, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- distribute relevant examination data to SLT and teachers
- check and distribute examination certificates
- ensure all students and parents receive accurate information in-relation to examination timetables and entries

Heads of Department

- ensure teaching staff undertake key tasks within the exam process and meet internal deadlines as set by the Examinations Officers
- ensure department staff are updated with Awarding Organisation subject and teacher specific information to ensure the effective delivery and assessment of qualifications including attendance at training and support events
- are aware of examination season entries, subject, module and cash-in codes
- provide guidance to candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- accurately complete coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets
- accurately complete candidate entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer
- ensure that portfolio assessments/controlled assessments are completed in accordance with JCQ regulations and are available for collection by the relevant examinations officer by the set date
- investigate all cases of malpractice in consultation with the Head of Centre
- provide relevant information required for any appeals procedures as outlined in the relevant policy
- ensure a consistent department approach to all internal portfolios/controlled assessments, carryout internal verification/standardisation in accordance with awarding body requirements.
- identify candidates who would benefit from repeats and remarks, offering advice to students.
- act as a subject specific Lead Internal Verifier and nominate an appropriate substitute internal verifier within own department of vocational courses
- apply for department approval for BTEC/OCN/Cambridge Technical qualifications.
- lead the internal appeals procedures within the department

Teachers/Assessors

- undertake key tasks within the exam process and meet internal deadlines set by the Examinations Officers
- keep updated with Awarding Organisation subject and teacher specific information to ensure the effective delivery and assessment of qualifications including attendance at training and subject support events
- identify students who require access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course) and refer to the Learning Support Co-ordinator
- submit candidates' names and details to Heads of Department in relation to examination entries
- complete all necessary paperwork in relation to forecast grades, candidate entries and controlled assessment/portfolio marks
- ensure all candidates in their teaching groups are entered for the correct examination or controlled assessment/coursework units
- conduct all portfolios and controlled assessments in relation to awarding body and JCQ requirements
- ensure all candidates are aware of the rules for completion of portfolios/coursework
- be vigilant to cases of malpractice and report suspicions to the Head of Department
- mark all controlled assessments/portfolios consistently to set guidance from awarding bodies using the set grading criteria. Take part in all internal verification/standardisation practices
- ensure all coursework/portfolios are completed, marked and available for collection by the Head of Department to be forwarded to the examinations officer by the declared deadline
- take part in any internal appeals procedures when necessary
- provide guidance to candidates in relation to enquiries about results.
- identify students who would benefit from repeats and remarks, offering advice to students.
- submit assignment briefs for internal verification of tasks
- in relation to BTEC/OCN/ Cambridge Technical qualifications, display the appeals procedures and pupil tracking sheet in the classroom.
- provide additional student support when necessary in preparation for external examinations and internal assessments/portfolios

Learning Support Co-ordinator/Specialist Teacher – Mrs Mc Cloy

- annually review updated information from JCQ and Awarding Organisations relating to Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- lead the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment process including application for access arrangements using the secure website, collection of supporting documentation to support the request for access arrangements, allocation of readers and examination rooms
- assess students and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities

- present when required by a JCQ Centre Inspector evidence of the assessors qualifications and supporting evidence to support access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for students

Lead invigilator/invigilators

- collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- effective supervision of external examinations in relation to JCQ requirements
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office
- completion of necessary paperwork e.g. examination rolls, seating plans
- report any concerns regarding malpractice to the examinations officer

Candidates

- understand controlled assessment/coursework regulations and sign the declaration that authenticates the work as their own
- completing all portfolios/controlled assessments independently and to the regulations outlined by JCQ and the school
- attend all external examinations on time with the correct equipment and in full school uniform
- follow all examination rules regarding mobile telephones, smart watches, web enabled devices of any kind, use of calculators
- if not satisfied with coursework/portfolio marks to take part in the appeals procedures.

With regards to BTEC/OCN/Cambridge Technical qualifications there are additional roles and responsibilities outlined;

Appendix 1	Role of Examination Officer
Appendix 2	Role of Lead Internal Verifier
Appendix 3	Role of Quality Nominee

Statutory Tests and Qualifications Offered

Qualifications offered by St Mary's are outlined in the Curriculum Pathways for Key Stage 4 and Post 16 and are all on the Entitlement Framework as approved Department of Education qualifications.

Entry Details, Late Entries and Fees

The relevant examination officer will ensure that all Heads of Department are provided with the relevant information in relation to entry codes and entry lists to allow them to make accurate entries for their subject. Candidates are selected for their exam entries by class teachers and checked by Heads of Department. All entry documentation is returned to the Examinations Officer by the deadline set.

Candidates, or parents/guardians, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The examination officer for each Key Stage is responsible for BTEC/OCN/Cambridge Technical annual registration, candidate entries, administration of results and checking of certificates.

Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to all Heads of Department, late entries are authorised by the Principal, Vice Principal or Head of Centre.

Exam Fees

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates. Candidates are also required to pay for any enquiries about results.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends to all general qualifications. All examination 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 Learning Support Co-ordinator. The Learning Support Co-ordinator 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 Learning Support Co-ordinator will then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

Access Arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates is the responsibility of the Learning Support Co-ordinator. Liaising with the relevant examinations officer the Learning Support Co-ordinator will complete necessary access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Learning Support Co-ordinator with the relevant Exams Officer.

Identity Check

A senior member of staff will check the identity of candidates before entering the examination hall. Any external candidates will be required to provide photographic evidence of identity.

Forecast Grades

The relevant examination officer will distribute relevant documentation to Heads of Department in relation to the completion of forecast grades for awarding organisations. Heads of Department will ensure that all estimations are consistent and reflect the pupil's ability. Once completed they will be submitted to the examination officer then forwarded to the relevant awarding body.

Controlled Assessments/Portfolio Marks

The relevant examination officer will distribute necessary documentation and information to Heads of Department in relation to the completion of controlled assessment/coursework marks. Heads of Department will ensure that all marks are correctly entered after internal verification/standardisation has taken place. It is the Head of Departments responsibility to ensure that accurate and consistent verification/standardisation takes place in relation to the requirements outlined by individual awarding organisation. All work must be accurately and consistently marked. The Head of Department must retain copies of all mark sheets together with the outcome of the verification/standardisation process.

The Head of Department will submit required documents to the relevant examination officer by the defined date to be forwarded to the relevant awarding body.

Electronic Candidate Record Sheet (eCRS)

The relevant examinations officer is responsible for the accurate registration of lead teachers and components for each subject involved in eCRS. Support will be given by the examinations officer to class teachers involved in the process. The lead teacher for each subject is responsible for the accurate completion of the Electronic Candidate Record Sheets by the required deadline.

Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

External examinations will be supervised by both external invigilators appointed by awarding bodies together with centre staff (teaching and non-teaching).

The recruitment of external invigilators is the responsibility of the Head of Centre. Securing the necessary Criminal clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of centre administration.

All Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examination Officers. External Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

Exam Procedures

- 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.
- Exams will not take place in the classroom where they are taught in. All rooms will be appropriate for the conduct of external examinations and display the necessary notices and warnings to candidates.
- The lead invigilator will start all exams 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 advise on which questions are to be attempted.
- In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Spare papers will be distributed to Heads of Department at the end of the exam session.
- A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject – specific instructions and start the exam, if required.
- A Teacher who teaches a subject will not be an invigilator during external exams for that subject.

Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration

Candidates

The centre's 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.

For exams longer than one hour, candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until at least one hour after the published starting time. Once a candidate leaves the examination room they will not be able to return. Candidates wishing to use the bathroom will be escorted to the toilet room by a member of staff and will have no contact with other students or have access to any learning resources.

The exams officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Clash Candidates

The exam officer is responsible for making necessary arrangements to accommodate candidates who have examination clashes, implementing JCQ requirements at all times.

Special Consideration

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 centre, the exams officer, or the exam invigilator, to that affect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor. The candidate or their parent/carer must notify the Examinations Officer within 2 days of an examination which they completed if

they wish to apply for Special Consideration, applications can only be made after this request has been made.

The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body as soon as possible.

Use of a word processor for written examinations

A word processor for use in written examinations can only be authorised if it is the candidate's normal way of working within their normal learning environment (excluding use of a word processor to complete coursework). Authorisation can only be applied in the case of a candidate with a learning, physical or medical difficulty which has a proven substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write.

Appeals against Internal Assessments

Candidates who have to prepare portfolio/controlled assessments should do so by the deadline set by the class teacher/assessor. All work must be original and completed independently.

Heads of Department will ensure all internal assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent, when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by the Heads of Department. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to keep a record/duplicate copy of estimate grade sheets and portfolio marks.

Appeals against Internal Assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the Head of Centre.

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

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the centre or by post to their home address. Arrangement for the school to be open on results days are made by the exams officer. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of Centre. Results can only be given to candidates or their parent/guardian.

Enquiry about Results

EARs may be requested by candidates in consultation with their subject teacher, if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. Before a request is made candidates must pay the required amount and sign the declaration sheet.

Access to Scripts

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' after scrutiny of the results. 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 a script has been returned.

Certificates

Certificates are presented to candidates at the annual Presentation Evening. Candidates may request their scripts before this date. Any Scripts not collected will be retained by the centre. Certificates may not be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party.

If past students want replacement certificates they must do so by contacting the examination body independently.

Internal assessments must be securely retained by each department for one year after certification. Candidates can request their coursework within this time from their class teacher.

Related School Policies:

This policy is set within the broader school context and as such should be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- ✚ Curriculum Policy
- ✚ Learning and Teaching Policy
- ✚ Examination Appeals Policy
- ✚ Examination Contingency Policy
- ✚ Internal Assessment and Internal Verification Policy
- ✚ SEN Policy
- ✚ Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- ✚ Complaints Policy
- ✚ GDPR Data Protection Policy

Dissemination of the Policy:

Examination Policies are available on the school's website

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Vice Principal, Mr Fitzpatrick is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the implementation of the Examination Policy to ensure:

- ✚ the effective implementation of this policy;
- ✚ the policy is updated in light of new developments/requirements from JCQ and Awarding Organisations
- ✚ the implementation of the policy is reviewed and advise the Principal and SLT on a regular basis.

Signed by Chair of Governors: _____

Date: _____

Signed by Principal: _____

Date: _____

Date of Review: __September 2024_____

Appendix 1

Role of Examination Officer

The Key Stage 4 examinations officer is responsible for the correct administration of:

- Edexcel/Pearson BTEC qualifications. This officer acts as the administrator for Edexcel Online.
- OCN NI qualifications. This officer acts as the administrator for QuartzWeb.
- OCR Cambridge Technical qualifications. This officer acts as the administrator for OCR Interchange.
- CCEA Occupational studies. This officer acts as the administrator for CCEA Central Login and acts as an intermediary where appropriate between the school (admin centre) and the teaching centre, if pupils are attending courses off site.

Responsibilities

- Liaise with programme leaders to maintain information on which programmes are running and when they start and finish
- Register learners by 1 November (for programmes starting in September) or within one month of enrolment (for other start times)
- Register learners for the correct programmes, checking that these are the specific titles and versions that learners are following

- Check registrations carefully to ensure that all data is correct and follow correct procedures if amendments are required.
- For relevant programmes, give Edexcel Online access to Lead IVs so that they can register on to the OSCA2 system. Ensure that the access granted is appropriate; that is, it should not normally include access to registration or certification of learners.
- For relevant programmes, remind relevant teachers to register as Assessors or Internal Verifiers with OCN NI.
- For relevant programmes, and where appropriate, remind relevant teachers to register as Assessors or Internal Verifiers with OCR.

Appendix 2

Role of Lead Internal Verifiers

The Lead Internal Verifier (Lead IV) is the person designated by the centre to sign-off the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject.

For Edexcel/Pearson BTEC qualifications, the Lead IV has access to accreditation and is registered through the online standardisation system, OSCA2.

For OCN NI qualifications, the Lead IV has access to accreditation and is registered through the online standardisation system, QuartzWeb.

For OCR Cambridge Technical qualifications, the Lead IV has access to accreditation and is registered through the online standardisation system, OCR Interchange.

The Lead IV is:

- Someone with the authority to oversee assessment outcomes. Ideally this would be the Programme Leader, as this would normally be a key part of their role.
- Directly involved in the assessment and delivery of a programme, so that they understand the units
- Able to coordinate across assessors and other internal verifiers for a Principal Subject Area

Responsibilities

- Register with Edexcel through OSCA2; OCN NI through QuartzWeb; Cambridge Technicals through OCR Interchange and confirm registration every year
- Undertake induction training through booking on to an event (you'll only need to do this once)
- Complete the accreditation process: practice exercise and assessment exercise (normally only once every three years)
- Make other assessors and verifiers aware of the practice exercise, for example through a team development event
- Ensure that there is an assessment and verification plan for the programmes in the sector which is fit for purpose and meets Edexcel-Pearson/OCN NI/OCR 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
- Make arrangements for handover to a deputy or replacement if unable to carry out the role

Appendix 3

Role of Quality Nominee

The Vice Principal is the Quality Nominee for BTEC/OCN/ Cambridge Technical provision in St Mary's High School. This person is the main point of contact for information related to quality assurance.

The Quality Nominee will share with relevant staff in their centre necessary information from the awarding bodies and ensure that quality is maintained in relation to all internal assessments, monitoring and supporting staff.

Responsibilities

The Quality Nominee ensures that BTEC/OCN/ Cambridge Technical programmes are managed effectively, and actively encourage and promote good practice in the centre. The nominee is involved with Quality Review and Development in the centre and will liaise directly with the Centre Quality Reviewer.

They will liaise with the appropriate centre and Awarding Organisation staff to ensure that:

- All programmes are approved and registrations are accurate and up to date
- All staff are aware of Awarding Organisation requirements
- Complete the Centre Engagement Document in consultation with the Head of Department prior to External Quality visit.
- There is an accredited Lead Internal Verifier in place for each Principal Subject Area, where required
- Assessment and internal verification is effective on all Edexcel BTEC/OCN/ Cambridge Technical and vocational programmes
- Standards Verification is completed successfully
- Awarding Organisation approval conditions and policy requirements are being implemented consistently and effectively.

