

NAME OF POLICY: School Examinations Policy

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Governing Body committee responsible for the policy/procedure:
Curriculum & Standards

Staff member responsible for writing, reviewing and updating the
policy/procedure: Exams Officer and Mr H Goodson Assistant Headteacher

Person responsible for monitoring implementation of the policy / procedure:
Assistant Headteacher

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Aims:

The school aim is to provide an efficient system for disseminating information to departments from examination boards and from students and departments to examination boards. The school aims to ensure that external and internal examinations are run in such a way as to uphold the integrity of the examinations system. The key principles of the examinations system are:

- The system is transparent and accountable in the way the process operates.
- It should be cost effective with procedures to minimise waste.
- The system will be fair and will support the maximisation of opportunity and tie into the vision of the school within “aspirations for all”.
- The system should allow for the provision of accurate and up-to-date information to departments, parents, the LEA, and other interested parties.

General responsibilities

Examinations Officer

The Examinations Officer has the responsibility to ensure candidates are entered for the appropriate examinations in the appropriate series. Associated with this, there is also a responsibility to ensure that information is passed to departments quickly and efficiently. Departments will be notified of any deadlines associated with the examination season and they will be provided with up-to-date information about their entries. During examinations, the school will ensure that the legal requirements for conducting examinations are met and that the integrity of the system is upheld. Following a series of examinations, information about results will be provided and any enquiries about results initiated. A nominated member of the Leadership team will have an overview of the examinations system (HG).

Departments

Heads of Department have the overall responsibility for syllabuses within their department. Information will be passed to the Heads of Department who has a responsibility to forward information to the examinations department by the appropriate deadline. Heads of Department should ensure that the examinations department is kept up to date with developments and changes in their syllabuses. When tiers of entry of differentiated syllabus options are offered within a department, it is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure the entry details are checked carefully and the examinations department informed of any changes.

Entering candidates

(i) Initial entries

Heads of Department will be provided with the exam information sheet in September. Marksheets will be generated and issued to Curriculum Leaders. Marksheets will need to be completed as follows:

Examination season	Marksheets completion deadline
November	September/October
January	October/November
Summer	January/February

These entries can be amended at a later date using processed amended entry sheets. In principle ALL students will be entered for the subjects associated with their timetable and the correct tiers, if relevant. Entering all candidates at this stage will minimise excessive late entry penalty fees.

At this stage Heads of Department and teaching staff should check carefully the information provided to ensure that all pupils listed match their own departmental records. The priority at this stage is to identify all candidates who do not appear on the lists generated using SIMS/Examinations.

(ii) Amended entries

For each exam period departments will be issued with an entry deadline and issued with processed entry lists to confirm pupil entries for the following season's examinations. Heads of Department and subject teachers should ensure that these lists are correct, accurate and match their own department records. Departments should check entries carefully to ensure that students are entered for the correct module or tier. **Curriculum Leaders must adhere to the dates for the entries and amended entries as given by the Exams Officer.**

(iii) Changes to entries

Changes to students' entries need to be made at the amended entry stage. Any negotiation over tiers of entry should be completed by the time of the amended entries. Changes to entries should be made in RED on the amended entry sheets. Any additional candidates should be added to the list clearly marked in RED.

Parents requesting a change of tier may be accommodated through consultation with the Head of Department but they will be asked to pay the late fee. **Fees for late entries that result from late notification requested by parents/guardians will be charged to the parent/guardian unless approved for exception by the Head of Department.**

(iv) Withdrawal of candidates

Withdrawal of candidates should not be made without initial consultation with the student, parent/carer, Head of Department, Head of Year and Headteacher. The examinations department cannot make decisions about withdrawal or entry, but needs confirmation that appropriate discussion has taken place before any action can be taken.

A candidate cannot withdraw himself or herself from an examination; a parent cannot withdraw a candidate from an examination. Any request for withdrawal must be made in writing to the Head of Department. This request must be endorsed and confirmed by the Headteacher, via a formal **withdrawal sheet** and then forwarded to the examinations department.

These procedures apply to all external examinations in November, January and June.

(v) Non attendance

Parents are informed that holidays during exam season will not be authorised and if booked after entries are submitted, fees will be incurred. Parents will be sent an invoice for the cost of the entry.

In addition, any exams which are missed by students who are absent without any authority will incur fees. Parents/Carers will be invoiced for the cost of each entry missed. This includes any which may have been subject to tier changes; resulting in multiple charges. These will be passed onto the parents/carers of the pupils involved.

(vi) Unitised examinations

Where a student is being entered for a unitised examination the school will fund one entry for each of the units.

(vii) Statements of entry

Each entry session will generate statements of entry from the examination boards. Students should be encouraged to check these statements carefully to confirm entry details, timetable details, and their personal details. Where there are concerns about an entry, students should first consult the Head of Department so changes to entries, if applicable, can be made.

(viii) Maintaining central records

Examination records are stored as hard copies in the examination office. The **Exam** folder in 'secure' (J:\Departments\Exam) also contains examination results and analysis. Individual results can also be found in pupils' SIMS profiles.

(ix) Timing

Information concerning the timing of the examination year will be published as early as possible in the academic year. The draft GCSE timetables are published early the relevant term.

Resits

The Heads of Department will indicate, after discussing with students and parents, those who will resit. The Heads of Department must get authorisation from the Headteacher for the school to fund the resit. Should a parent wish their child to resit, when not authorised by the school, they will pay for the cost of the resit. If a learner does not attend the resit for any reason other than medical, the school will invoice the parent for the cost of the entry. Resits are only possible where the pupil attends the school.

Examinations

a. Timetables

Timetables will be compiled and published as early as possible in order to provide students and staff with as much notice of examinations as possible. GCSE timetables are in draft form at the start of the academic year and finalised by the exam board at the end of the autumn term. These are available on the WJEC website.

b. Preparing students

Once students have received their Statement of Entry, information for candidates from the examination board and a revision guide, a meeting will be held by a member of SLT with all students. Preparation for the exam and protocols within the exam will be discussed. Nearer to the exams the pupils will receive their timetables.

c. Before examinations

The examination officer will liaise with the school caretaker and PE department to ensure examination rooms are set up and prepared accordingly. Candidate labels will be placed on desks before the start of external examinations. The examination officer will ensure exam papers, answer booklets, and any support materials are ready at the start of the examination.

The Exams Officer will ensure that a full timetable for exams will be fully staffed with invigilators to cover each exam season. All invigilators will undergo training once a year to ensure all are fully compliant with WJEC / JCQ rules.

d. Examination rooms and seating.

Students will be informed of the rooms for their examinations via their printed exam timetables. Students will be informed of any changes to the room list during the examination period. Wherever possible all candidates for an examination will be seated in the same room. The examinations department will attempt to accommodate examinations in as few rooms as possible in order to minimise the impact on the rest of the school in terms of invigilation and room changes.

Pupils will undertake mock exams in Year 10 and the outcome of reactions to exam conditions will determine future reasonable adjustments available to all pupils. Evidence

required for reasonable adjustments such as a calmer, quieter setting must be backed up with professional evidence, clearly stating the pupil's needs. This should also be evidenced as the pupil's normal way of working.

e. Starting examinations

The Exams Officer will attend the start of all examinations in order to oversee the smooth start to the examination. The examinations department will ensure that matters arising at the start of the examination are dealt with including:

- Providing additional copies of papers
- Providing any missing equipment
- Absences and phoning home
- Dealing with any matters of discipline associated with the start of the examination
- Dealing with other general examination related matters as they arise.

Invigilators attending the start of the examination should distribute papers, help candidates find their desks, and maintain quiet and order in the examination room.

The examinations officer will begin all exams, ensuring all pupils have the correct paper and equipment. Instructions on the front of the exam paper must be read out to all pupils and any erratum notices too. Curriculum Leaders cannot give instruction to pupils once they are in the exam room. The invigilators will end the exam and collect all papers etc.

Subject teachers and Curriculum Leaders are not permitted to be in the exam room and under no circumstances should they have access to the papers. All spare papers must remain in the exam room.

Invigilation

External invigilators will be employed for all external examinations. If there is a problem on the day of the examination with external invigilation then the school cover supervisors/exam officer may be used to invigilate examinations.

The Exams Officer will ensure that all invigilators undergo the JCQ training once every 12 months.

Where an invigilator is invigilating a small examination and is the only invigilator, the examinations department will provide the school mobile phone or a "walkie talkie" as a means of communication with the main office.

The examinations department will provide invigilators with general guidance for invigilating external examinations. It is the duty of the invigilators to ensure the integrity of the examinations process is upheld. Invigilators need to ensure that:

- Mobile phones/electronic devices are handed in prior to the exam. All watches to be removed and placed with phones.
- The activity and behaviour of candidates is exemplary.
- There is no graffiti to the examination desks. Any vandalism is noted on the incident forms provided.
- There is a smooth entry and dismissal from the examination rooms.
- Registers are taken.
- All ALN requirements such as extra time are noted.
- Incident documents are completed during each exam to capture any issues, such as toilet / rest breaks or fire alarms.
- All registers, seating plans and incident forms are signed by all invigilators present during each exam.
- No students leave the exam until the designated end time.
- Completed papers are handed back to the Exams Officer after the exam is over.

In the event of a candidate finishing an examination early, they will not be allowed to leave the examination room until the designation finish time for that exam, not including pupils with extra time. There should be no disruption to examination conditions with candidates leaving early. Where this applies to the afternoon sessions, candidates may need to make alternative arrangements for travelling home. No student will be allowed to leave the examination room before 10:10am in the morning or 2:10pm in the afternoon, even if the exam has finished.

At the end of the examination invigilators should check carefully that all papers are accounted for. Papers should be collected in separate tiers and ascending exam number order.

Papers should then be returned the Exam Officer/Office. **Papers must not be left unattended.**

Special requirements

The learning support staff (Teaching Assistants) assigned to a student with ALN requirements during an exam will supervise candidates as directed by the Exams Officer. Candidates will access appropriate concessions to enable them to demonstrate their full potential within the examinations. The examination board determines the range of concessions available. These will be applied for as per guidance, in collaboration with staff, students, and parents.

Malpractice

Any case of malpractice in external examinations will be reported to the examination board and considered on its own merits with reference to the nature of the malpractice and the degree of forethought that has gone into the action. When an accusation of malpractice has been made and there is strong evidence to support the accusation, the Headteacher may take action against a student that may involve a permanent exclusion if the reputation of the school has been brought into disrepute.

In any event, malpractice in either an examination or piece of coursework will be considered a serious act of misconduct and will be punished accordingly by the school regardless of any action taken by the examination board. Malpractice during an exam could result in disqualification from that exam. However, any malpractice within an examination series may lead to the Exam Board or Headteacher refusing to allow the candidate to sit the rest of their GCSE examinations at Argoed High School.

Results

- a. Arrangements for the collection of GCSE results will be confirmed to candidates by the Exams Officer. If a student cannot collect their results on the day, a self-addressed envelope can be provided and the results sent to the home address. A student can also provide a letter with written permission for another family member to collect the results on their behalf. Results on the day will not be provided over the phone. Results can be emailed by prior arrangement with the Exams Officer, preferably to pupil's school email.
- b. The Exams Officer will provide a summary of results for the Headteacher and staff.

Re-marks

The school will identify any learners where a re-mark may improve the learners' grade. It will then be decided by the Headteacher whether the school will pay for the re-mark. If a parent/carer requests a re-mark or a copy of the exam paper, the appropriate paperwork will need to be signed and sent into school with the appropriate fee. If the re-mark is successful and the mark is changed, the fee will be refunded to the parent/carer. Parents/carers will be advised if a re-mark is recommended by the Curriculum Leader or the SLT team.

This policy was reviewed on the 15 July 2025.