

Altrincham Grammar School for Boys

Examinations Policy 2017

Head of Centre: Mr T J Gartside
Examinations Officer: Mrs P Capel

1. Introduction

This policy, briefly, outlines the aims, rationale and procedures behind the School's arrangements for internal and external examinations. It will be reviewed annually by the Examinations Officer and The Head of Centre.

1.1 Internal examinations:

- Provide an opportunity for recognising and confirming students' achievement.
- Provide valid, reliable and comprehensible information for teachers, students, parents/carers and other users on the performance of pupils and the school; identifying strengths and weaknesses and providing comparison against recognised norms.
- Ensure equality of opportunity for all students to display achievement. Can be used as a guide to the setting of pupils in specific subjects. Help in setting targets for pupils and teachers to work towards.
- Provide practice for public examinations. Internal examinations encourage the development of qualities in pupils, such as the development of retention and learning skills; the organisation of time and syllabus content for revision; the selection and application of knowledge, skills and techniques in unfamiliar context and the delivery of concise, relevant answers under the twin pressures of time and awareness that much may be at stake. They are conducted following as closely as possible to the rules and regulations of External Exams.

1.2 External examinations:

- Provide an opportunity for recognising and confirming students' achievement.
- Provide valid, reliable and comprehensible information for teachers, students, parents/carers and other users on the performance of pupils and the school; identifying strengths and weaknesses and providing comparison against recognised norms.
- Ensure equality of opportunity for all students to display achievement. Help in setting targets for pupils and teachers to work towards.

2. Internal examinations:

- 2.1 Responsibility for the planning and organisation of internal examinations is held by the Examinations Officer in consultation with Heads of Year (HoY) and Heads of Department (HoD).
- 2.2 Internal examinations are aimed at practising revision skills and examination technique and providing early opportunity to revise course content covered to date. It

offers teachers the opportunity to make judgements upon how boys are able to cope with the examination processes.

- 2.3 At KS4 study skills events are organised and Subject Departments provide individual guidance. Mentoring is offered to KS4 pupils where it is deemed advisable by the Head of Year.
- 2.4 Internal exams are scheduled in the school Assessment, Recording and Reporting (ARR) calendar. All year groups sit exams once during the school year.

3. External Examinations:

All external examinations will be carried out in accordance with the rules and recommendations laid down by the JCQ in the following documents:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Instructions for conducting examinations (the ICE booklet)
- Access Arrangements and reasonable adjustments

The Head Master is the Head of Centre and has overall responsibility for all public examinations at this Centre.

- 3.1 Examinations are organised by the School's Examination Officer, whose role is outlined below:

- Seeking advice from HoDs about examination boards, codes of entry and numbers of candidates to enable intention to enter, provisional entries and full entries to be made to the examination boards at the appropriate time. Entry fees will be paid by the School.
- Receiving and processing re-sit entries from pupils (see appendix 2).
- Advising and assisting HoDs about matters relating to deadlines for coursework/controlled assessment marks. Arranging for dispatch of coursework and keeping records relating to this (see appendices 4, 6 and 8).
- Printing and distributing information to staff, parents and candidates, principally: statements of entry, examination timetables and notices to candidates.
- Receiving, logging and securely storing examination materials which includes papers, stationary, labels and attendance registers and dispatching all scripts once completed.
- Allocating examination rooms in liaison with the site staff; resolving timetable clashes and providing written confirmation of the changes; producing seating plans.
- Recruiting and training new invigilators and refreshing existing invigilators. Ensuring all senior invigilators are fully aware of the requirements within the examination rooms and have DBS clearance. Briefing senior invigilators before the start of each exam.
- Liaising with the SENDCo with regard to Access Arrangements and ensuring that the recommendations are fully complied with.
- Making special consideration requests for pupils who are disadvantaged at the time of the examinations in consultation with HoYs and SENDCo. Special consideration is sought for pupils who have been disadvantaged by circumstances of a temporary nature

such as health problems or traumatic events such as death or serious illness in the family. Recognised learning difficulties are not grounds for a request for special consideration but may be grounds for a request for access arrangements.

- Ensuring the smooth running of examinations on a day-to-day basis. Dealing with all issues as they arise.
- Downloading and publishing examination results on examination results days, distributing statements of results. Receiving, checking and distributing examination results certificates.
- Making application for ‘Enquiries About Results’ and requests for scripts and passing the outcomes to pupils and staff. Ensuring that all pupils are given details of the EAR process with their examination timetable.
- The Examinations Office is a team of 3 staff. In the absence of the Examinations Officer, the duties outlined above will be carried out by the other members of the Examinations Office Team.

3.2 Subject Departments may choose their syllabus in consultation with the Head Master and their SMT link. Departments may choose from the full range of Examination Boards available.

3.3 Pupils are normally entered for at least 10 subjects at GCSE level at the end of Year 11. If pupils are struggling to meet the demands of the full 10 subject course, the School will occasionally recommend to parents that they discontinue a subject or, very rarely two subjects during Year 11.

3.4 Y12 students sit AS modules in May/June of that academic year in the subject they wish to drop at the end of Y12, whilst Y13 students are normally entered for at least 3 subjects at A2 level. A number of students study 4 main subjects and they are allowed to do this if the Head of Sixth Form feels that they have the ability to do so and their record at AS level justifies their wish.

3.5 This school expects its pupils to prepare in a responsible and proper fashion, with due consideration to the nature of the examination and their own health and well-being.

3.6 The type/make of calculator allowed in an exam room will be at the discretion of the school. The decision on the make and type of calculator will be guided by the Examination Boards’ calculator regulations, and the obligation of the school to be confident that malpractice is prevented.

3.7 Food will not be allowed in the examination room except where a pupil has a medical need. Any food taken into an examination room must be without its packaging.

3.8 Pupils arriving very late for an exam (see the criteria for very late in the ICE booklet) will not be allowed to sit the examination.

- 3.9 Pupils in this school will not be allowed to leave an examination room until the scheduled end of the examination. It is felt that pupils leaving earlier than the scheduled end time causes a disruption to those pupils who are still working.
- 3.10 School reserves the right not to enter a student for external examinations, after consultation with parents / carers.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Emergency evacuation procedure and contingency planning
- Appendix 2 - GCSE and 'A' level re-sit policy
- Appendix 3 - Identification of candidates
- Appendix 4 - Non-examination assessment policy
- Appendix 5 - Post results services and Appeals Procedures
- Appendix 6 - Controlled Assessment Policy
- Appendix 7 - Internal Appeals Procedure
- Appendix 8 - Reviews of marking - centre assessed marks

Separate Policies:

- Disability Policy (w/office/school policies -- under SEN Policy 2016)
- Data Protection Policy (w/office/school policies -- under D)
- Child Protection Policy (w/office/school policies -- under C)

Approved by the Governing Body.....

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Emergency Evacuation Procedure for Examinations

The invigilator must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert:

- Stop the candidates from writing
- Collect the attendance register
- Make a note of the time
- Prepare to evacuate
- Advise candidates to leave all question papers, scripts and equipment on their examination desk
- Advise the candidates that they are going to evacuate the room; they must not communicate with anyone and they must leave the room in silence
- Evacuate the room in line with the instructions given by the Examinations Officer using the route shown on the map in the examinations bag
- Candidates should assemble in the south yard at the fire points
- Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so there is no discussion about the exam

If circumstances allow the examination to recommence, candidates should return to the examination room by the quickest means, again in silence. The invigilator should:

- Make a note of the time the examination recommences
- Allow the candidates the full working time allowed for the examination
- Make a full report of the incident and the action taken so that the Examinations Officer can send a report to the examination board

Contingency planning

The JCQ plan for widespread disruption covers various scenarios of serious problems which could affect the delivery of examinations. Some of the scenarios are the responsibility of the Awarding Bodies. In these cases the centre would be reliant on the Awarding Bodies to take the relevant action. Those scenarios which relate to the Centre may be addressed as follows:

- Several of the potential problems (for example a courier delivers the wrong set of papers to the centre) can be alleviated by good practice in the exams office, particularly with careful checking of the examination papers as they are received and dispatched.
- In the event of closure of the centre, parents and candidates will be kept informed using the school's website. Alternative methods of teaching will be put in place using the Office 365 and if necessary by using alternative venues giving priority to examination classes.
- AGSB is part of the Hamblin Education Trust and the school will consider the possibility of transfer of some/all exams and some/all lessons to our partner school should all of the school be deemed to be inaccessible. Priority will be given to examination classes.
- In the event of part of the school being inaccessible, it may be possible to use other parts of the school for examination purposes for example the sports hall is a self-contained building which will hold 215 candidates.
- The centre will contact the examination boards with full details of the nature of the emergency and seek their help with finding a solution. There will also be discussion with the examination boards in regard to application for special consideration for the candidates.

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‘A’ level re-sit Policy

All examinations at GCSE are now linear and there is no re-sit opportunity with the exception of those pupils who did not achieve a grade C or greater in English Language and/or Maths. In these cases, there is a November re-sit opportunity where grades may be carried forward from the summer examination and re-used in the November exam.

As new specifications are being phased in at ‘A’ level, the AS qualification and the A2 qualification are becoming ‘stand alone’. Once all the new specifications are active, there will no longer be an opportunity to re-sit at AS or A2 level. Until that time, the following rules apply:

- Pupils will be responsible for submitting their request for a re-sit when requested to do so and subsequently for checking that their entry is correct
- Pupils will be responsible for the cost of the re-sit, which will be in line with the fees charged by the examination boards
- Study leave will not be provided for re-sits
- Extra tuition will not be provided by the school although individual departments/teachers may provide guidance and/or additional help.
- Exceptionally, and with the agreement of the Examinations Officer, a Y14 pupil may be allowed back into school to re-take exams. The responsibility for submitting the entry, payment and finding out all details of the examination are entirely the responsibility of the candidate. Entries will not be accepted for pupils older than Y14.

All candidates can ‘re-take’ a qualification, which means that all units are taken again in the same examination season ie there can be no carry forward of existing unit scores.

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Identification of all candidates at the time of the examination/assessment

The identification of candidates is a task made easier by the policy that this centre **does not** accept external candidates.

Identification of candidates is carried out by the senior member of staff/examinations office staff who attend the start of every examination. In addition to the visual identification at the door of the examination, the centre will provide up-to-date photographs of all candidates. These will be located in the examinations bag which goes to every examination room. If there is any suspicion about the identity of a candidate, the invigilator can easily check the candidate against his photograph.

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Non-examination assessment policy (an example of this would be a science practical)

- All examinations and assessments will be conducted according to the rules laid down in the 'Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments' and the 'instructions for conducting examinations' issued by JCQ.
- It will be the responsibility of Heads of Department to see that non-examination assessments are conducted according to the regulations and that the members of teaching staff in their Department are fully aware of the tasks and requirements of the assessment.
- All examinations will be held under conditions that will give all candidates the chance to carry out their tasks and display their true level of attainment.
- HoDs will ensure that the candidates understand the need for referencing and setting out sources and made aware of the rules on plagiarism.
- The centre will not provide model answers or writing frames specific to task.
- The centre will meet the deadlines for submission of the candidates' work to the awarding body and will securely store all candidates' work until the deadline for enquiries about results has passed.
- Access arrangements apply equally to both written components and non-examination components

A level Sciences

- In A level Biology, Chemistry and Physics, teachers will be required to undergo training to deliver the assessment of practical skills.
- The centre will ensure that all candidates are given the opportunity to undertake the prescribed practical activities to gain the practical endorsement for A level sciences as detailed in the 'Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments'. This includes the organisation of alternative sessions for absent candidates wherever possible.
- The centre undertakes to appoint a lead teacher; keep records of the assessments; co-operate with the visiting monitors from the examination boards.
- All examinations will be invigilated by a member of the Science Department.

GCSE English Language

- In GCSE English Language the centre will ensure that all candidates are given the opportunity to undertake the spoken language endorsement for GCSE English Language as detailed in the 'Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments'. This includes the organisation of alternative sessions for absent candidates wherever possible.
- The centre undertakes to make arrangements for internal standardisation; provide a sample of audio/visual recordings in line with the criteria laid down by the JCQ and submit to the awarding body by the published deadline.
- All examinations will be invigilated by a member of the English Department.

GCSE and A level Art

- Appropriate materials for examinations will be provided by the centre.
- The examinations will be invigilated by an Art teacher with support from an additional invigilator at the discretion of the centre.
- Candidates may take into the room those items listed in section 11.2 of the 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' booklet.

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Post Results services

Enquiries About Results requests must be made in writing and requested via the Examinations Officer. An EAR request must be paid for by the candidate in advance of the request being made. The school does not make a judgement about the validity or otherwise of an EAR request; the decision to send for an EAR is that of the candidate and his parent/carer.

- All requests for appeals **MUST** be submitted by the centre. Individual requests are not accepted by the awarding bodies.
- Any decision to submit an appeal against the outcome of an EAR will be made by the Head of Centre, in consultation with the parents/carers, the Examinations Officer and other members of staff as appropriate.
- The timescale for all appeals is set by the awarding bodies and the centre agrees to abide by the timescale set.
- A moderation appeal can only be requested by the centre as it affects the whole cohort. The decision to request a review of moderation will be made by the Head of Department.

All appeals will be carried out following the instructions laid out in the JCQ publications 'Post results services' and 'a guide to the awarding bodies appeals processes'.

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CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to make clear the schools approach to Controlled assessment based upon Examination Board Guidance.

1 Senior Management Team:

- a to be accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' instructions.
- b to map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this to resolve:
 - * clashes/problems over the timing or operation of controlled assessments.
 - * issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc).
- c to ensure that all staff and students have a calendar of events.
- d to create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for controlled assessments.

2 Heads of Department:

- a to standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component and to attend any compulsory training courses.
- b to ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.
- c Where appropriate, to develop new assessment tasks or contextualised sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.
- d to be responsible for ensuring that all confidential materials, together with the work produced by the candidates, are stored securely at all times in accordance with the JCQ publication 'Instructions for conducting controlled assessments'
- e to supply to the exams office details of all unit codes for controlled assessments and to submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.

3 Teaching staff:

- a to understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*.
- b to understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.

- c to obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times.
- d to supervise assessments (at the specific level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.
- e to ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
- f to mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body.
- g to retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one).
- h post-completion, to retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about the results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted and retain candidates' work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.
- i to ask the SENDCO for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

4 Exams office staff:

- a to enter students for individual units, whether assessed by controlled assessment, external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries.
- b to enter students' 'cash-in' codes for the terminal exam series.
- c Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission.
- d to distribute marksheets for teaching staff to use, and collect and send marksheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- e On the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out.

5 SENDCO :

- a to ensure access arrangements have been applied for.

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INTERNAL APPEALS PROCEDURE

Each Awarding Body publishes detailed criteria for the internal assessment of work and its arrangements for appeals against its decisions. In addition, in exceptional circumstances where all other mechanisms have failed, an appeal can be made to the School concerning the internal assessment. In addition, the Awarding Body must moderate the assessment and the final judgement on marks awarded is that of the Awarding Body. Appeals against matters outside the School's control will not be considered in the School's appeals procedure.

The appeal applies only to the procedures used in arriving at internal assessment decisions and does not apply to the marks or grades submitted by the school to the awarding bodies. The enquiry will consider whether the procedures used for the internal assessment were in conformity with the published requirements of the Awarding Body.

1. The Head Master is in overall charge of managing appeals relating to internal assessments. If a candidate (via their parent/carer) wishes to appeal about his/her internal assessment mark then the following procedures should be followed:
 - a The appeal should be made in writing to the Head Master stating the details of the complaint and the reasons for the appeal.
 - b The appeal should normally be submitted by 30th April for examinations in the summer series. [This deadline may be extended in exceptional circumstances where the controlled assessments marking and moderation schedule extends beyond this time].
2. The teacher(s) concerned in marking the assessment which is the subject of the appeal will respond to the appeal in writing and a copy will be sent to the parent/carer.
3. If the candidate and their parent/carer are not satisfied with the written response they have received then they can request a personal hearing before an appeals panel:
 - a The appeals panel will consist of the Head Master and two of the following – a Governor – a member of SMT - the Head of Department – the Examinations Officer.
 - b The request for a personal hearing must be made within five days of receipt of the written reply to the initial appeal.
 - c The candidate and their parent/carer will be given at least five days notice of the hearing date.
 - d A breakdown of the marks awarded will be provided in advance of the appeal
 - e The teacher(s) involved will be present at the hearing.
 - f The Head Teacher will convey the outcome of an appeal and the reasons for that outcome in writing to the candidate and their parent/carer.
 - g The school will maintain a written record of all appeals.
 - h The school will inform the Awarding Body (exam board) of any change to an internally assessed mark as a result of an appeal.
4. If the candidate and their parent/carer remain dissatisfied, the case can be referred to the JCQ
6. The existence of this procedure is made known to students and their parents/carers through reference on individual Student Examination Timetables.

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Reviews of Marking - Centre Assessed Marks

AGSB is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff mark candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents. Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. AGBS is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

1. We will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.
2. We will inform candidates that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.
3. We will, having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate.
4. We will provide candidates with sufficient time in order to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision. Requests for reviews of marking **must** be made in writing.
5. We will allow sufficient time for the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline.
6. We will ensure that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review. We will instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
7. The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.
8. The outcome of the review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the review of the centre's marking bring any irregularity in procedures to light, the awarding body will be informed immediately.

After candidates' work has been internally assessed, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. The moderation process may lead to mark changes. This process is outside the control of AGBS and is not covered by this procedure.