

Isaac Newton Academy Examination Policy Draft

Aims

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- to provide an equal and fair opportunity for all candidates undertaking examinations and assessments at the centre
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff
- to ensure that internal and external examinations and assessments are run in compliance with the regulations from the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications)

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

This exam policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal, Assistant Principal (data and assessment), Examinations Officer and the governors.

This policy applies to internal and external examinations and assessments.

The responsibility for examinations lies with the Examinations Officer, Assistant Principal (data and assessment), and the Principal.

Roles

The Principal

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre
- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- Decides on the qualifications offered at the school, along with the senior leadership team

The Assistant Principal (Data and Assessment)

Is responsible for

- Overseeing the examination process
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4
- Accounting for income and expenditure relating to all exam costs/charges
- Providing support to ensure effective delivery of the Examinations Officer's role through regular line management
- Facilitating contact time with students and parents in order to distribute information and materials
- Advising the senior leadership team, subject, and class tutors and other relevant operational staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Overseeing the production and distribution to staff, governors, and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicating regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensuring that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- Consulting with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time
- Deciding on whether a candidate should not take an individual exam, in consultation with the parents/carers and HoDs
- Approval of early entry exams, being contingent upon attaining a high mark on past papers, a high chance of achieving a high grade in the examination, and in consultation with the relevant head of department
- Collection of deposit fees paid by the parents of those students taking early exams, to be returned upon successful completion of the exam
- Authorisation of late entries
- Appointing invigilators either from within the school or from external agencies for all exams, in liaison with HR
- Managing the senior exam invigilator in organising the training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Liaising with the SENCO regarding special arrangements for SEND students
- Training and communicating expectations of students to students and parents
- Dealing with students who breach exam protocol, communicating with exam board and parents about incident
- Providing counsel and support with other members of senior leadership team to students on exams results day

Data/Exams Officer

Is responsible for

- Managing the administration of all public and internal examinations
- Receiving, checking, and storing securely all exam papers and completed scripts

- Making applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access Arrangements and Special Considerations regulations and guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations and on the instruction and guidance of the SENCO
- Identifying and managing exam timetable clashes in consultation with the Assistant Principal
- Submitting candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch, and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedules
- Arranging with the Assistant Principal (Data and Assessment) for the dissemination and analysis of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the senior leadership team, any appeals/re-mark requests
- Maintaining systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Checking that the layout of examination rooms meets JCQ requirements, liaising as necessary with site staff, including exam signs, clock, start and end times, pens etc.
- Booking exams rooms and ensuring all necessary stationary, materials, and papers are available for the invigilators
- Ensuring the security of exam papers; that they must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session.
- Circulating entry deadlines to heads of department
- Ensuring that internal exam papers have been reproduced by the MRO and quality assuring this process
- Ensuring all candidate cards are out
- Collecting, packaging, and posting of exam scripts
- Analysis of exam results and the production of reports for SLT, heads of department, and teachers
- Publishing to all staff all exams
- Keeping an overview calendar of all exams
- Maintaining an accurate list of student names and their contact details in case of absent candidates
- Downloading and entering exams data into CMIS in order to produce data analysis reports for SLT and HoDs, including a report that demonstrates which students have and have not earned a 6th Form place
- Producing exam result slips for students

Heads of Department

Are responsible for

- Checking internal exam papers
- Selecting students for exam entries
- Deciding the entry tiers for each student
- The guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Accurately completing coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Accurately completing entry and all other mark sheets and adhere to deadlines as set by the examinations officer
- Liaising with the examinations officer in advance of controlled assessment and exams to agree examination room set up
- Notifying the SENCO of access arrangements for the department
- Providing internal exam papers and resources to the SEN team for administration

Site Team

Are responsible for

- The setting up of exams rooms in liaison with the exams officer in accordance with JCQ requirements

Subject Teachers

Are responsible for

- Notifying the HoD of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Submitting candidates' names to HoDs
- Agreeing with HoDs any tiered entry requirements
- Adhering to guidance on coursework and controlled assessments conditions, completion, and deadlines

SENCO

Is responsible for

- Administrating access arrangements
- Identifying and testing candidates' requirements eligibility for access arrangements
- Providing additional support – with spelling, reading, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment – to help candidates achieve their course aims
- Training readers and scribes
- Informing subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs of any special access arrangements that these candidates can be granted during the course and in any internal and external exams
- Managing the SEN team to collect SEN students from line-up
- Entering students with access arrangements

Head Invigilator/Invigilators

Is responsible for

- Collecting exam papers and other material from the exams officer before the start of the exam
- Collecting all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office
- Assistance with paperwork and despatch of exam papers as necessary
- Starting and finishing of exams
- Taking exam registers

School Admin team

Is responsible for

- Contacting parents of absent students at the start of exams
- Supporting during exams results day

Candidates

Are responsible for

- Confirming and signing entries
- Understanding coursework and controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework/assessment as their own, where necessary
- Meeting all examination rules and regulations

Exam Seasons and Timetables

Examination Seasons

- Internal exams can be scheduled for any time during the academic year
- Controlled Assessments are conducted throughout the academic year
- External exams are scheduled by the awarding bodies, usually during May/June

Examination Timetables

- Draft timetables for external exams will be issued to students
- Once confirmed, final timetables will be issued to students; details will also be made available on the school calendar and website.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries:

Early Entries

- Early entries will be authorised by the Assistant Principal (Data and Assessment), and will be contingent upon attaining a good mark on past papers and a high chance of achieving a high grade in the examination
- Students will pay a deposit approximately equal to the value of the entry fee, which will be returned upon successful completion of the examination

Entries

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of subject
- Candidates, or parents/carers, cannot request a change of level or withdrawal
- The centre will only accept entries from external candidates in exceptional circumstances, once agreed by the Assistant Principal and Principal.

Late Entries

- Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of subject via email by exams officer
- Late entries are authorised by the Assistant Principal.

Exam Fees:

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by departments when requested by the student.

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

Should a candidate be absent from an external examination, Isaac Newton Academy reserves the right to pass on any charges which may have been incurred for the examination, in part or whole.

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

DDA

- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

SEN

- A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO in liaison with external agencies
- The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam. The SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in any internal and external examinations.

Access Arrangements

- Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO
- Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams officer with the SENCO
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the exams manager.

Managing Invigilators and Exam Days:

Managing Invigilators

- Trained invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the HR and exams office
- Securing the necessary DBS clearance and 'Right to Work' checks for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR Manager. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the school
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams officer
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the school.

Exam Days

- 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 invigilators
- The exams office, via site management, is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms
- Exam and invigilation staff 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 and resolve any issues with regard to tier of entry or errors with the exam

papers. However, their involvement is limited to this and by exam staff must leave the exam room as soon as they are directed to do so

- In practical exams and controlled assessments, 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. Any unused exam papers will be distributed by the Exams Officer to heads of subject the day after the exam session
- Registers will be completed at the start of the exams and collected by the Exams Officer to be dispatched to exams boards with scripts
- A member of the admin team will be present to identify students who are absent, and then make the necessary phone calls to parents
- Scripts will be collected by invigilators at the end of exam and given to the Exams Officer, who will then dispatch them to the exams boards
- Students taking exams should remove any watches and place on the desk
- Students need to present their ID card on the desk at all times

Candidates, Clash Candidates, and Special Consideration:

Candidates

- The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic assistance apply at all times and in all internal and external examinations and controlled assessments
- Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Candidates are not permitted to leave an exam room within the first 60 minutes of an exam commencing
- Candidates may request to leave the exam room for a genuine purpose after 1 hour, requiring an immediate return to the exam room; the student must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times during this absence. These absences should be as minimal as possible
- Admin staff will be present at the start of an exam, and will immediately make phone calls to any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Clash Candidates

- The Exams Officer and Assistant Principal will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays in line with JCQ guidelines.

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 school to that effect
- The candidate must support any claim for special consideration with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor

- The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Word Processor Policy

- The school will maintain a number of laptops that have been specially prepared for exam use
- In accordance with JCQ regulations, these laptops will not have access to the internet and their hard drives be devoid of any material and software save that which is necessary for the conduct of the exam.

Coursework, Controlled Assessments, and Appeals against Internal Assessments:

Coursework and Controlled Assessments

- Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by deadlines issued by the subject teacher
- Heads of subject will ensure all coursework/controlled assessments are ready for despatch at the correct time.
- The Exams Officer will keep a record of coursework/assessments which have been sent, when and to whom
- Marks for all internally assessed work, assessments and estimated grades are provided to the Exams Officer by the subject teachers and the heads of department within agreed timescales.

Appeals Against Internal Assessments/Controlled Assessments

- The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office. The main points are:
 - appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
 - candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
 - appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the Principal who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
 - the Principal's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

Results and Enquiries about Results (EARs)

Results

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses, by prior arrangement (candidates to provide)
- Results will not be issued over the telephone, or to a third party
- Results will be issued to staff and pupils on the advised results days, and not before
- Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Principal
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the senior leadership team.

Pre-results day

- The exams and data officer prepares the results slips and securely locks away in the exams cupboard

Results day

- The results slips are removed from the secure location and set out ready for collection by the exams and data officer and /or SLT. A member of staff remains with the results at all times to ensure security.
- Students collect slips showing their lanyard.
- If a student nominates a parent to collect this information will have been received in advance and will occur in the afternoon. The parent will need to present their son/daughters ID card and bring a passport and birth certificate.
- Students leave the site and the site is re-secured.

EARs

Any student who wants to query a mark/grade awarded by an Awarding Body upon issue of results should follow the following procedure:

- Contact the Exams Officer **and** the subject teacher as soon as possible (but at least FIVE working days before the published deadline for EARs) in person to discuss the mark/grade. The Exams Officer will advise on the options available to query the mark/grade and implications involved.
- Students should be aware that EARs can result in the marks/grades being raised, confirmed, or lowered. Students must sign a consent form to confirm that they understand the consequence of an EAR. Consent forms will be issued by the Exams Officer
- If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, heads of department, and Principal will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the school's expense.

If the HoD **agrees** to support the EAR, the exam manager will obtain the student's consent and will make the EAR request on the student's behalf.

If the HoD **DOES NOT AGREE** to support the EAR:

- A student may appeal against the decision not to support an EAR
- Appeals should be made in writing to the Principal at least 5 working days before the published deadline for EARs
- The appeal should state, in detail, the reason(s) for the appeal
- The appeal should be signed, dated and should include the contact telephone number and email address (if possible) of the student
- The appeal information will be reviewed by the exam manager and a member of the senior leadership team
- The outcome of the appeal will be communicated by telephone, email or 1st class post as appropriate within 48 hours of receipt
- The decision is final.

If the school does not support the EAR, the student may still request that the school submits the request on their behalf but all costs involved will be paid by the student at the time the EAR is made, including an administration fee.

No EAR will be made until fees are paid. If the enquiry is successful the fee (minus the admin fee) will be refunded to the student.

Outcomes following EARs will be forwarded by the Exams Officer to the student within 48 hours of being received from the Awarding Body.

Exam Certificates

Exam certificates and results are the property of the individual student, and are to be either collected in person, presented in person at awards evening, or collected by a third party requiring a signed letter of authority which will be retained for future reference.

Enquiries for replacement certificates will be directed to the Awarding Body's web-sites, candidate must agree to pay the costs incurred.

The centre retains certificates for two years. The JCQ requirement is that exam certificates be retained for 12 months.

Exam Contingency Plan

Exams Officer not on site during exam session day

- The exams officer will ensure beforehand that all staff associated with examinations (invigilators, SLT, etc.) understand what is required for the efficient running of an exam and underline the importance of maintaining the integrity of the exam

If reasonable warning time has been given (e.g. long-term illness or injury):

- All staff associated with examinations must be made aware of absence of exams officer
- The secondary key holder becomes responsible for opening and closing the exams cupboard for the head invigilator to collect and store exam papers
- The head invigilator becomes responsible for arranging and managing the dispatch of exam papers via Parcelforce
- The exams must continue according to JCQ regulations and this policy document

If reasonable warning time has not been given (e.g. sudden illness or injury, bereavement, etc)

- The exams officer *must* inform the Assistant Principal (Data and Assessment) as soon as possible and before 8am on the day of the exam
- All other staff associated with examinations must be made aware of the absences of the exams officer, including the Principal
- The secondary key holder becomes responsible for opening and closing the exams cupboard for the head invigilator to collect and store exam papers
- The head invigilator becomes responsible for arranging and managing the dispatch of exam papers via Parcelforce
- The exams must continue according to JCQ regulations and this policy document

Exams Hall out of action due to structural fault

- Site team will survey the exams hall and ascertain whether or not an exam can be safely held on the site
- If enough of the hall is deemed to be safe, the exam will proceed as normal, with any area that might be unusable cordoned off with chairs and the seating plan re-arranged as appropriate
- If the hall is deemed to be unsafe, the exam will be moved to an alternative location on the site, i.e. the Sports Hall, the Dining Hall, or the Primary Hall
- If the exam needs to be moved to a different venue, it will likely result in a delay. Therefore, the delay and the change of venue will be noted in the exam log and the exam boards notified

Student is disruptive during an exam session

- An invigilator will quietly approach the student and ask them to cease causing the disruption as it is disturbing other candidates
- If the disruption persists, the invigilator will remind the student again that they are not following the regulations of the exam and they are at risk of disqualification
- A record of the incident will be entered into the exam log book

- If the disruption does not cease, the exams officer must be informed immediately. If necessary, the student will be removed from the exam room

Insufficient invigilators for an exam session

- The Exams Office will have selected a team of back-up invigilators from the teaching and operational teams in the school, who will be briefed on their roles and responsibilities should the need arise
- The exams officer will liaise with assistant heads responsible for assigning cover to determine which teachers are free to support

School is shut down due to a safety concern

- SLT will have organized beforehand alternative accommodation for the exam, this will either be the Primary site or, failing that, a hall

Examinations Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The aim is to ensure:

- Safe evacuation of an examination room during emergency situations whilst maintaining the integrity of the exam.
- That measures are in place to enable all exam candidates to safely evacuate examination rooms in times of emergency.

i. Procedure Detail

When the alarm system is activated, the school buildings/exam building will be evacuated with immediate effect and all individuals will assemble at the assembly points.

- In the event of an emergency during an examination, should it require the evacuation of the examination room, candidates should remain silent and seated until instructions are issued by the head invigilator
- Invigilators will be assigned to take charge over a group of candidates (usually in rows), and will lead them out through the normal emergency exits one row at a time
- All question papers and scripts must be left in the examination room
- Candidates must be supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination or contact with other students
- The head invigilator will make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
- Candidates will be allowed the full working time set for the examination
- The Examinations Officer will make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and retain on file until the relevant date for Enquiries about Results
- For online tests, software specific instructions should be referred to safeguard the security of assessment content and responses (by locking an assessment room which has been evacuated without closing down software)
- For exams conducted under special arrangements: the invigilator for the room will follow the procedure above and then lead the student(s) to exit the building following the normal evacuation route. Students should stay with invigilation staff.

Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point

Students will line up away from those not taking exams in the courtyard **in silence**.

Under no circumstances should staff/students/visitors re-enter the buildings after the evacuation until directed to do so by the Principal/Assistant Principal.

The rest of the procedure should be in accordance with the whole school Emergency Evacuation Procedure.