

EXAMINATION POLICY

This policy was approved by the Local Advisory Board on:	March 2024
The policy owner is:	Acle Academy
This policy will be reviewed by the Local Advisory Board in: (unless earlier review is recommended by the Trust)	March 2026
Policy Version/date:	March 2024
Signed by the Chair of the Local Advisory Board:	Matthew Arrowsmith-Brown
Ratified by the Board of Trustees	
Signed by the Chair of Trustee Board	

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates;
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

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.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Principal (Head of Centre), Vice Principal, Exams Officer and Governors.

2. Exam Responsibilities

Having overall responsibility for Acle Academy as an Exam Centre, the **Principal (as Head of Centre)**:

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant school staff to the Joint Committee for Qualifications (JCQ) document – 'General regulations for approved centres'.
- Advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for ensuring that all irregularities are investigated and all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice are reported. Refer to the JCQ document – 'Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments'
- Ensures confidentiality and security within the examination process is maintained.
- Ensures that Acle Academy has a data protection policy in place that complies with GDPR (2018) regulations.
- Ensures a complaints and appeals procedure covering general complaints regarding Acle Academy's delivery or administration of a qualification is in place and made available to candidates and their parents / carers.
- Ensures that Acle Academy has a safeguarding policy in place, including DBS clearance, which satisfies current legislative requirements.

The **Exams Officer** is responsible for:

Managing the administration of public and internal exams and:

- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - General regulations for approved centres
 - Instructions for conducting examinations
 - Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
 - Post-results services
- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, subject teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, Governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.

- Ensures that candidates and their Parents/Carers are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that any non-examination assessment (NEA) is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines and Acle Academy's non-examination assessment policy 2023/24.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts in compliance with JCQ regulations.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Books all rooms required for examinations at Acle Academy, both internal and external.
- Re-rooms lessons that are displaced as a direct result of an examination (internal or external), and informs the head of department of the room change.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Ensures that all exam invigilators receive appropriate training and support to undertake key tasks within the exams process.
- Ensures that all exam invigilators have enhanced DBS clearance.
- Submits candidates' non-examination assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned candidate work and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the Leadership Team, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines.
- Ensures that awarding bodies are informed of any declaration / conflict of interest involving candidates at Acle Academy and members of staff.
- Ensures confidentiality and security within the examination process is compliant with and managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions.
- Takes all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (or maladministration) before, during the course of, and after examinations have taken place.

Vice Principal is responsible for:

Line managing the Exams Officer and:

- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - General regulations for approved centres
 - Instructions for conducting examinations
 - Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Timetabling the internal examination windows in line with the school calendar.
- Ensures the Exams Officer receives appropriate support and training in order to facilitate the effective delivery of exams.
- Ensures confidentiality and security within the examination process is compliant with and managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions.
- Ensures risks to the exams process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes / contingency plans are in place to allow immediate action in the event of an emergency or staff absence.

- Ensures the required internal appeals procedures are in place and guidance is shared with candidates, parents / carers and staff.

The **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo)** is responsible for:

- Administering access arrangements and making applications for special consideration using the JCQ publication 'Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration 23/24'.
- Ensuring Acle Academy has documented processes in place relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.
- Ensuring that correct procedures are followed when assessing candidates for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.
- Ensuring that criteria for candidates granted separate invigilation within the centre is clear, meets JCQ regulations and best meets the needs of individual candidates and the remaining candidates in main exam rooms.
- Keeping relevant paperwork and evidence on file for JCQ inspection purposes.
- Presents, when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification.

Heads of Faculty/Department are responsible for:

- Providing guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Ensuring accurate completion of non-examination assessment mark sheets and centre declaration sheets.
- Ensuring accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set out by the Exams Officer.
- Providing suitable practice exam material to the Exams Officer for internal examinations.
- Ensuring non-examination assessment delivery follows JCQ guidelines – 'Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2023/24'.
- Ensuring non-examination assessment marks are submitting in time for candidates to request an internal review of marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangements/requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Meeting all internal deadlines set by Heads of Department and Exams Officer.

Lead Invigilator/Invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.
- Attending training, updates, briefings and review sessions as required.
- Following all confidentiality and security instructions as set out by the Exams Officer.

3. Qualifications

Qualifications offered:

The qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Principal (as Head of Centre), Vice Principal, Heads of Faculty/Department/Subject and Senior Leadership Team.

The qualifications currently offered are GCSE, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals, Free Standing Maths Qualification and Level 1 / 2 awards.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by September of each year.

Informing the Exams Officer of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the Head of Faculty/Department.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, Parents/Carers, subject teachers and Vice Principal (Curriculum) as appropriate.

4. Exam Series and Timetables

a, Exam Seasons

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in November/ December and February / March.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May/June.

Year 11 Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs) are internal exams held under exam conditions.

The Head of Centre and Senior Leadership Team decide which exam series are used in the Centre.

b, Timetable

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams.

5. Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Candidates are selected or withdrawn for their exam entries by the Vice Principal and Heads of Faculty/Department.

Candidates or Parents/Carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The Centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

The Centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Faculty via e-mail.

Late entries are authorised by the Vice Principal.

Retakes: Any retakes are decided by and dealt with by higher education establishments, i.e. a sixth form college.

6. Exam Fees

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.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Centre or department depending on the circumstances.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline/fail to sit an exam/do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

7. Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), (2006) introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education. Provision is now included within the Equality Act 2010.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, Exams Officer and all Exam Centre staff to ensure that the Centre meets the requirements of the DDA and Equality Act 2010.

a, Access Arrangements

The SENDCo 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 SENDCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENDCo.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENDCo.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENDCo.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENDCo with the Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENDCo with the Exams Officer.

9. Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer, overseen by the Vice Principal. Please see Examinations Contingency Plan.

10. Private candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Officer (if we were to accept private candidates).

11. Estimated Grades

Heads of Faculty are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer on request.

12. Managing Invigilators

External staff will be used to invigilate all external examinations.

These Invigilators will be used for all external exams and internal exams where necessary. Recruitment of Invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) for new Invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer working alongside the PA to Principal and Vice Principal.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the Centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Wensum Trust.

13. Malpractice

The Exams Officer is responsible for investigating any suspected malpractice and reporting this immediately to the Principal (Head of Centre).

14. 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 Invigilator.

Site team is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Lead Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff (at the discretion of the Exams Officer) may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted.

All exam folders have identification pictures alongside candidate names and numbers in order for the invigilation team to confirm identification of the candidates sitting exams.

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. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Faculty/Department at the end of the exam day.

A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required (at the discretion of the Exams Officer).

15. Candidates

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other electronic devices apply at all times.

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 expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Exams Officer or Lead Invigilator.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by an invigilator at all times.

The Exams Officer and Vice Principal are responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.

16. Clash Candidates

Where candidates have different exams timetabled at the same time the Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays (where applicable).

17. Special Consideration

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or be 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 effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example by providing 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.

18. Non-Examination Assessments and Appeals

Note: 'Non-Examination Assessment' replaces the largely discontinued term 'Coursework'

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

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the Exams Officer by the Heads of Faculty/Department.

Appeals against internal assessments must be made in sufficient time for grades to be reviewed and potentially adjusted prior to an exam board deadline.

Please see Non-Examination Assessment Policy for more details.

Appeals Against Internal Assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy, available from the Exams Officer.

19. Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

a, Results

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, in person at the Centre. Results may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so. Evidence of this must be submitted in writing. Any results not collected will be posted home the same day.

Arrangements for the Centre to be open on results days are made by the Senior Leadership Team.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

b, Enquiry About Results (EARs)

EARs may be requested by Centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the Centre's expense.

When the Centre does not support a candidate's or Parent's/Carer's request for an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

c, Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' 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.

GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

20 Certificates

Certificates will be presented in person to the candidate at the celebration of success evening in the autumn term.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so. Evidence of this must be submitted in writing.

Certificates will not be withheld from candidates who owe fees.

Certificates that are not collected are retained by the Centre. The Centre will write to the students and provide a further window for collection. In the event of failure to collect, the Centre will retain the certificates for up to one year. After this time, the Centre may confidentially destroy the certificates or return them to the Exam Board.