Parkside Academy

Exams Policy

2024-2025

Policy Details	
Person Responsible for this Policy	**Angela Ransby**
Policy Author	**Ashlee Jacobs**
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CEO Signature	**Angela Ransby**

Updates Made	Date

Contents

1. Introduction and aims

Our school is committed to ensuring that exams are managed and administered effectively.

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- The planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- Our system of exams administration is efficient and clear, and staff and pupils understand what is required and expected of them
- We comply with requirements and guidance set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding bodies

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Everyone

Everyone involved in our exam processes, including staff and pupils, must read, understand and implement this policy.

2.2 Head of centre

The head of centre, Kirsty Osborne:

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre, ensuring examinations are conducted in-line with the examination officer's recommendations.
- Is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is compliant with the JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements
- Is responsible for ensuring that all staff comply with the JCQ guidelines
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Ensures that JCQ guidance for centres on cyber security is followed
- Ensures that accurate candidate contact information is obtained and maintained
- Ensures appropriate controls are in place that allow accurate data to be submitted to the awarding bodies, e.g. entries and internally assessed marks
- Ensures that candidates are entered under names that can be verified against suitable identification such as a birth certificate, driver's license or passport. A candidate should only be entered under alternative names in exceptional circumstances
- Ensure that candidates and their parents/carers, and where applicable, the entering centre, are informed of, and understand, aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them
- Check with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates, and forward, in consultation with the Exams officer, any post-results service requests
- Advises the exams officer of any changes to syllabus or assessment details for subjects
- Advises the exams officer of entries requested for subjects
- Timetables and allocates staff for invigilation as per the examination officer's examination timetable
- Actively participates in the delivery of the examination series and any contingency planning

2.3 Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher

The Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher are responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving Head of Centre exam entry decisions before these are sent to the Exams officer for action;
- Ensuring access arrangements are in place for all children requiring adjustments;
- Ensuring there are adequate invigilators available to implement the exam series
- Leading on the creation, sharing and delivery of the exams contingency planning
- Leading on the creation, sharing and implementation of the annual examinations timeline

2.4 Exams officer

The exams officer, Amanda Lockwood, is responsible for the administration of exams. They:

- Manage the administration of internal and external exams, liaising with exam boards and home school exams officers
- Advise the Head of Centre, subject and class teachers, and other relevant staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by awarding bodies
- Oversee the production and distribution of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved, and communicate regularly with staff about imminent deadlines and events. This calendar must be provided to all staff and candidates
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Receive, check and securely store all exam papers and completed scripts, and ensure that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- Administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ guidance on the special consideration process
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Organise the training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Ensure candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks are submitted correctly and on schedule, along with any other material required by the awarding bodies
- Track, dispatch and store returned coursework/controlled assessments
- Report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, in line with the JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Advise Head of Centre on appeals and re-marks
- Are one of the key holders to the secure room with question papers and pre-release materials

2.5 Curriculum staff

Curriculum staff are responsible for:

- Supplying information about entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Head of Centre and/or the exams officer
- Guidance and pastoral care for candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries
- Accurately completing entry and mark sheets, and adhering to deadlines as set by the exams officer
- Accurately completing coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Decisions on post-results procedures

2.6 Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) (Academy Leaders)

The SENCO, Emma Osborne, is responsible for:

- Identifying and raising candidates' requirements for access arrangements with the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher and ensuring necessary arrangements in place
- With the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher, ensuring all required applications for access arrangements are submitted by home school.
- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms

2.7 Lead invigilator(s)

The lead invigilator(s), Sharon Flint & Laura Leeder, are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer to run exams efficiently, according to JCQ regulations
- Collecting exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- Collecting all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring they are returned to the exams office

2.8 Candidates

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirming and signing entries
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations, and signing a declaration that confirms the coursework to be their own
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations

3. Qualifications offered
The Head of Centre, in collaboration with the home school, decides the qualifications we offer.
We may offer the following types of qualifications:
- GCSE, Functional Skills, Entry Level Certificates, Arts Awards

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any school year may be found by accessing the curriculum area of our school at www.raedwaldtrust.org.

If there will be a change to a specification (the actual content/syllabus of the exam) for the next year, the exams officer must be informed. For instance, when switching from OCR to AQA for English.

Informing the exams officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of Centre through the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Head of Centre in consultation with the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher; families; candidates; and home schools.

4. Exam series
Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments may be scheduled. This information will be shared directly by the school with parents/carers and students. GCSE exams in 2025 start from the week commencing Monday, 5 May and finish on Friday, 20 June 2025.

External exams and assessments will be scheduled in the exam series listed below.

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.
- Exam dates set by each exam board, may change closer to the exam period. Information about all exam timetables for each GCSE exam board can be found here:
  - AQA GCSE exams 2025
  - Edexcel GCSE exams 2025
  - OCR GCSE exams 2025
  - WJEC GCSE exams 2025
- Non-exam assessments, such as modern foreign language speaking tests and practical science experiments, may be set before this period as they are decided by individual schools.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The centre can offer assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher and the Head of Centre.

5. Exam timetables
Once confirmed, the exams officer will generate the exam timetables for external exams at a specified date before each series begins. Heads of Centre are responsible for publishing and sharing timetables with all stakeholders.

6. Entries (including entry details and late entries)
Candidates or parents/carers may be able to request subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. This would need to be discussed and agreed with the candidate's home school who will liaise with the Head of Centre.

We may accept entries from private candidates.

We may serve as an exams centre for other organisations.

The Head of Centre, in collaboration with the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline require authorisation, in writing, by the CEO.

6.1 Re-sits
We allow re-sits for the following types of qualifications:
- GCSEs
- Functional Skills

Re-sit decisions, where Parkside was the entering body, will be made by the Head of Centre in consultation with the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher and the exams officer.

7. Exam fees
Candidates or exam centres 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.

The exams officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance of each exams series.

Maintained schools and academies are not allowed to charge pupils to enter "prescribed public examinations" you have prepared them for in school, or for re-sits of these exams if you have prepared them for the re-sit at school. This is set out in the DfE's guidance on charging for school activities. "Prescribed public examinations" includes GCSEs, AS-levels and A-levels. A full list is in the annex to an explanatory memorandum to the Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010.

We **may** charge for:
- Exams or re-sits the pupil has not been prepared for at school, even if they are on the list of prescribed public examinations.
- Exams not on the set list of prescribed public examinations.

8. Equalities
We will comply with equality legislation and trust policies, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that we provide to candidates in accordance with the requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher, Head of Centre, exams officer and SENCO.

9. Access arrangements
The SENCO, through the Head of Centre, will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs (SEN) and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO and Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher, as per above.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCO, in liaison with the home school and Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher.

Room arrangements for candidates using access arrangements will be organised by the Head of Centre, in collaboration with the Exams officer.

Invigilation and support for candidates using access arrangements, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams officer. Where candidates sit their examinations in a smaller environment away from the main examination room, suitability will be assessed in conjunction with JCQ guidelines.

For details on appeals, please refer to our internal appeals procedure here: PS Internal Appeals Procedure 2024 2025.docx

9.1 Use of word processors
We may allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate as part of access arrangements or as a reasonable adjustment where appropriate, including:
- When it is their normal way of working, i.e. where the curriculum is delivered electronically, and word processors are provided to all candidates.
- If they need support with handwriting
- If they have a:
  - o Physical disability
  - o Learning difficulty that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
  - o Medical condition
  - o Sensory impairment

The SENCO will make a recommendation to the Head of Centre, in collaboration with the home school and other relevant members of staff where necessary, to make decisions about when a word processor is appropriate outside the specific listed examples above.   The Head of Centre will gain approval from the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher to confirm all final decisions.

We will make sure that:
- The proposed arrangement will not disadvantage or advantage a candidate.
- The use of a word processor will not compromise the assessment objectives or the integrity of the assessment and will be used under secure conditions. Where these objectives would be compromised, then a word processor will not be granted for use by a candidate.

We will also make sure that the word processor:
- Has the spelling and grammar check and predictive text software disabled
- Does not have internet connectivity during the exam
- Has been cleared of any previously stored data, along with any portable storage medium used (and where any authorised memory stick is provided to or used by the candidate, the memory stick will be cleared of any previously stored data)
- Does not allow access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited), spreadsheets or emails
- Does not have graphic packages or computer-aided design software, unless permission is given
- Does not have computer reading (text to speech) software, unless the candidate has permission
- Does not have speech recognition technology, unless the candidate has permission

The word processor will not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

All equipment will be checked to make sure it's in working order and sufficiently charged for the duration of the examination.

Candidates provided with the use of a word processor will be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. Where we accommodate a candidate in another room, a separate invigilator will be present.

Candidates will be:

- Reminded to make sure that the centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer, or to handwrite their details on the printed documents where this feature is not available (where the candidate needs to handwrite their details, they will be supervised to make sure that's solely what they're doing and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way)
- Reminded to save their work at regular intervals, unless 'autosave' has been set up on the device to make sure that the candidate's work is not lost because of a technical issue
- Advised to use a minimum font size of 12pt and double spacing

Each page of the typed script will be numbered.

The word processor will be connected to a printer so that the script can be printed off and will be done once the examination is over. The candidate must be present to verify that the work is their own and then the script will be attached to any answer booklet that contains some of the answers. We may also be required by the awarding body to include a word processor cover sheet with the candidate's typed script.

We may retain electronic copies of a word-processed script and this may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost and it is demonstrated that the file has been kept securely.

Specific Arrangements at Parkside Academy:

- Laptops have been cleared of any previously stored data. All data is cleared from any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate. Where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff.
- Word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination.
- Word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen.
- Word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off,or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium.
- Candidates are escorted by an invigilator to the Examination Officer to print their work. Candidates are asked to verify that the work printed is their own, each page is numbered and initialed by the candidate in the presence of the Examination Officer. Scripts are then attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers.
- Predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have scribe cover sheet attached), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking.

Monitoring at Parkside Academy:

- At Parkside Academy candidates with fully charged laptops or tablets are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall. Laptops are fully charged before the examination but are also connected to a power source during the examination.
- Candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer.
- Candidates using Notepad or Wordpad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script. They are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

- Invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals. Students are given instructions prior to exams.

10. Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exam administration is the responsibility of the Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher in liaison with the Head of Centre. This is in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Parkside Academy has a written examination contingency plan that covers all aspects of examination administration.

All relevant centre staff must be familiar with the contingency plans, which are available via Sharepoint and are in line with the [guidance provided by Ofqual](#), [JCQ](#) and awarding organisations.

11. Estimated grades

The home school, if applicable, is responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested.

12. Managing invigilators

We do not use external staff for invigilating exams at Raedwald Trust. We may use external invigilators for alternative site requests.

13. Malpractice

The head of centre, in consultation with the exams officer, is responsible for ensuring that suspected malpractice is thoroughly investigated. Malpractice doesn't necessarily involve an intention to cheat or gain an unfair advantage. Examples of malpractice include, but are not limited to:

- Unauthorised use of a mobile phone or internet-enabled device in examinations
- Copying or allowing work to be copied
- Posting work on social media prior to an exam
- Collusion or working collaboratively

Candidates and invigilators will receive guidance from the Head of Centre that will also be shared at the beginning of each examination.

Information for candidates documents - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications.
If malpractice is suspected or reported, it will be investigated by the exams officer and then escalated to the Head of Centre.

Please refer to our Malpractice policy here for further details: RT Malpractice Policy 2024 2025.docx

14. Exam days

The exams officer will:

- Liaise with the Head of Centre to book all exam rooms (after liaising with other relevant users).
- Make question papers, exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator

The invigilators and the exams officer will start and finish all exams in accordance with [JCQ guidelines](#).
Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with [JCQ guidelines](#).

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 centre in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no sooner than 24 hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the exams officer, with the Head of Centre, will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed exam scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with invigilators and the Head of Centre.

Emergency evacuation of the examination room will be outlined within the centre's exam contingency policy, which will be subject to inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

In the event of an emergency, a full report of the incident must be produced and retained on file and any breach of question paper security or malpractice must be reported to the awarding body immediately.

15. Candidates
The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series.

In an exam room, candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject.

This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic devices with text or digital facilities.

Any precluded items must not be taken into the exam room.

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.

Candidates who leave an exam room must be always accompanied by an appropriate member of staff.
The exams officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

15.1 Private candidates
The Head of Centre and exams officer are responsible for managing private candidates.

15.2 Clash candidates
Where candidates are taking two or more examinations in a session and the total time is three hours or less, candidates may be given a supervised break of no more than twenty minutes between the papers. The supervised break must be conducted within the examination room under formal examinations conditions at all times.
The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays but only in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort.

16. Special consideration
If a candidate is unable to attend an exam because of illness, bereavement, or other trauma, or if a candidate becomes ill or otherwise disadvantaged during an exam, they are responsible for alerting the invigilators, the exams officer or the Head of Centre to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 3 days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the exam.

17. GCE and GCSE non-examination assessments
Teaching staff who deliver non-examination assessments will follow the correct specifications and the specification and instructions provided by the awarding body, or JCQ instructions for conducting non-examination assessments if appropriate.

It is the duty of heads of centre to ensure that all non-examination assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details, and the date and time sent.

Marks for internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the head of centre. The exams officer will inform staff of the deadline date for appeals against internal assessments.
Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with our internal appeals procedure document.

For full details of our arrangements for non-examination assessments (NEA), please refer to our NEA policy.

17.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)
Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. Parkside recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Pupils **may not** use AI tools:
> During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
> To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

Pupils **may** use AI tools:
> As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas
> When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images, all AI-generated content must be properly attributed

Where a pupil uses an AI tool, the pupil should retain a copy of the question(s) asked and the AI-generated responses. Pupils must submit this along with the assessment.

Staff should:
> Be aware that AI tools are still being developed and should use such tools with caution as they may provide inaccurate, inappropriate or biased content
> Make students aware of the risks of using AI tools and that they need to appropriately reference AI as a source of information to maintain the integrity of assessments

For more information on AI misuse, see [guidance from JCQ on AI use in assessments](). Any misuse of AI tools may be treated as malpractice.

18. Results and certificates
Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days.   The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of Centre

18.1 Enquiries about results (EARs)
Enquiries About Results may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results.
A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate. A request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of a group of candidates. All decisions about whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Head of Centre through the CEO. If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and we will respond by following the process in our internal appeals procedure document. All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer

18.2 Access to scripts (ATS)
After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 7 days of the receipt of results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

Applications for EARs cannot be submitted once an original script has been returned.

The Exams Officer is responsible for processing requests for ATS.

19. Monitoring and review
The Deputy CEO and Trust Head Teacher are responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every 3 years.

20. Links with other policies
This policy links with our policies on:
- Exam contingency plan
- Whistle-blowing policy
- Conflict of interests policy
- Non-Examination Assessment policy
- Malpractice policy
- Complaints policy
- Data protection policy
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy