

LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

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Date of last approval:	4 March 2009
Approval/review by:	Curriculum & Quality Committee May 2011
Review interval (years):	2
Date of next review/approval:	February 2013

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

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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
- 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 every two years. This exam policy will be reviewed by the head of centre, College Management Team and the Exams Manager.

1. EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal

Overall responsibility for the college as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document 'Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments'. All suspected or actual incidents of malpractice must also be assessed by the CIS Manager. The College Management Team need to be informed of the incident and subsequent actions.

CIS Manager

- Oversees the management and administration of public and internal examinations and examination results
- Assesses all suspected or actual incidences of malpractice and presentation to the College Management Team
- Analysis, reporting and presentation of public examination results
- Signatory for all outgoing relating to all exam costs/charges

Exams Manager

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and exam results:

- advises the senior management team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of calendars for all exams series in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- ensures that candidates are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- administers access arrangements and makes 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
- manages exam timetable clashes

- accounts for income and outgoings relating to all exam costs/charges
- organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework 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 SMT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Assistant Principal/Vice-Principal/Directors of Teaching and Learning

- Organisation of teaching and learning.

DTLs/DDTLs/Course Tutors

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of entry sheets and adherence to deadlines.
- Changes of course/entry/levels.
- Notification of Examination Boards and syllabus details given to Exams Manager
- Delivery of controlled assessment for relevant exams (see appendix)

Head of Careers

- Guidance and careers information.

Course Tutors

- Additions or removals from candidate lists.
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.

Finance

- Taking fee payments from candidates.

Learning Development Manager

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements at beginning of academic year.
- Informing Exams Manager of specific needs of students post assessment, in a acceptable format
- Provision of access arrangements such as spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment - to help learners achieve their course aims
- Prepare students with access arrangements for examinations
- Allocation of staff to provide support with examinations (scribes, readers, OLM, specialist invigilation)

Lead invigilator/invigilators

- 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.
- Reporting to Exams Manager any suspected malpractice/need for special consideration applications/late arrivals using relevant forms and paperwork as provided by the Exams Manager
- Ensuring the examination room meets with JCQ requirements with regard to displaying all required notices and information for candidates.

Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Reading, signing and adhering to the 'College Expectations for Student Behaviour before and during Exams' as discussed with Tutors and displayed at <http://www.longleypark.ac.uk/exams.php>
- Compliance with notices displayed in examination rooms regarding malpractice
- Attendance at all exams entered for in a timely manner with required materials.
- Familiarise themselves with their examination timetable and all examination regulations <http://www.longleypark.ac.uk/exams.php>

2. THE QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the heads of subject.

The qualifications offered are GCSE, AS and A levels, ESOL, BTEC, ALAN, CACHE, NOCN, Functional Skills and Diploma qualifications.

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 the end of the academic year.

3. EXAM SEASONS, TIMETABLES AND CLASHES

3.1 Exam seasons

The main external exams are scheduled in January, March, May, June, and November. However other exams are arranged throughout the year with prior consultation.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the head of centre and the College Management Team.

3.2 Timetables

The Exams' Manager maintains a full timetable of all external exams on the College website as soon as it becomes available <http://www.longleypark.ac.uk/exams.php>. This is also circulated to CMT.

Students can access their own personal timetable via College PC desktops as soon as the exam entries are made.

3.3 Clashes

Exams Manager and CIS will identify students with a potential exams clash and Exams will contact them to agree a resolution to the clash.

4. ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS, LATE ENTRIES AND RETAKES

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the subject tutors.

A candidate can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal with approval of the subject and progress tutors.

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates. Where a student has a prior connection with the College (e.g. a former student) and has permission from the Head of Centre, candidates may apply to re-sit exams within the College. They need to complete an 'Associated candidate re-sit form' and make payment for any re-sits and admin. costs prior to the entries being made.

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

4.2 Entry details

All candidates can access their individual examinations timetable in electronic format after the entries deadline. It is the candidate's responsibility to check that all required entries are listed, although teachers, progress tutors, Exams Manager and CIS staff can assist in checking all exam entries are correct. All individual candidate timetables will also initially be given to progress tutors for distribution in class in a paper format.

4.3 Late entries

Late entries and amendments can be authorised by the head of centre and Exams Manager in exceptional circumstances.

The Exams Manager will accept and process exam entries and withdrawals.

4.4 Retakes

Candidates are allowed 2 retakes per subject depending on availability, but at their own cost.

Retake decisions are made in consultation with the Director of Teaching and Learning, course tutor and candidate.

5. EXAM FEES

Normal registration and exam fees are paid by the centre for full-time students. However, students may be asked to contribute towards the cost of examination fees if they have failed to meet the terms of their Learning Agreement regarding acceptable levels of attendance in class, without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Reimbursement of fees will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by whoever is responsible for the need to make the change.

Retake fees are paid by the candidates.

(See also section 4.4: Retakes)

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements

6.1 DDA

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

6.2 Special needs

The Learning Development Manager will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs pupils who are embarking on a course leading to an exam. The Learning Development Manager can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access arrangements

Candidates who may require access arrangements are identified during the admissions process and at initial assessment during the beginning of the first term.

Course tutors identifying candidates who may require access arrangements after the start of the course should inform the Learning Development Manager at the earliest opportunity. It is the course tutor and the Learning Development Manager's responsibility to ensure arrangements are made as soon as possible after the start of the course.

Students may self-declare a need with the Learning Development Team, again the Learning Development Manager needs to ensure arrangements are made as soon as possible after the start of the course, and course tutors are informed.

Once the Exams Manager has been informed of specific needs of candidates it is their responsibility to apply for, and arrange access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies and manage those arrangements.

7. Estimated grades

Estimated grade forms are to be completed and returned via the subject tutors to the Exams Manager by the awarding bodies' published deadlines.

8. MANAGING INVIGILATORS AND EXAM DAYS

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for all exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Manager.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

CRB fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Manager.

8.2 Exam days

The Exams Manager will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users, and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available to the invigilator.

Facilities are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff would normally be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not look at the paper. Papers will be available for Subject Tutors as soon as possible after the exam has ended.

In practical exams subject teachers and/or technicians would normally be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

9. CANDIDATES, CLASH CANDIDATES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

9.1 Candidates

JCQ rules on candidates' use of mobile telephones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

Normal centre rules on behaviour apply, as detailed in 'College Expectations for Student Behaviour before and during Exams'.

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.

For all public exams candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until the end of the full exam duration unless guidance is given to the contrary by the subject teacher or lead invigilator/Exams Manager.

The Exams Manager will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

If a candidate arrives late for an examination, but the initial supervised mandatory time has not passed, the student would normally be allowed to sit the exam. However, it is at the discretion of the Exams Manager if extra time can be allowed at the end of the exam as this is not always logistically possible. All time allowed is decided upon in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

9.2 Clash candidates

The supervision of escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight parental supervision is the responsibility of the Exams Manager.

9.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the Exams Manager, to that effect.

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

The Exams Manager will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within 10 days of the exam.

10. COURSEWORK AND APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the required date.

The Exams Manager will ensure all coursework is despatched at the correct time.

Keeping a record of what has been sent, when and to whom is the responsibility of the Exams Manager.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams' office by the course tutors.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate policy 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 must be made in writing to the head of centre and Exams Manager who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements. Appeals must be made within the awarding body's deadlines.
- the Exams Manager's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the head of centre and recorded for awarding body inspection.

10.3 Controlled Assessment

From September 2010 revised specifications in English, English language, English literature, mathematics and ICT were available for teaching. These GCSEs will be awarded from summer 2012.

CMT has overall responsibility for ensuring controlled assessment operates successfully, which involves:

- establishing centre policy on controlled assessment
- assigning responsibilities to specific members of staff

- ensuring that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities – for example using professional development sessions
- dealing with issues arising – for example resolving timetable clashes, obtaining additional facilities
- monitoring the operation of controlled assessment – for example receiving reports from subject departments and/or the exams office.

DTLs and teaching teams have responsibility for:

- selecting awarding organisations and GCSE specifications
- deciding on timings of assessment to meet requirements of terminal assessment
- arrange internal standardisation of marking by all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component
- ensuring that all teachers understand their roles and responsibilities in controlled assessment and are familiar with the requirements of the GCSE specification
- ensuring schemes of work incorporate controlled assessment appropriately
- Liaising with the Learning Development Team on additional arrangements, which might be needed for particular candidates
- making contingency arrangements for the event of absences by candidates or teacher – for example a second, alternative date for the controlled assessment
- arranging for secure storage of candidates' work with the Exams Manager

The Exams Manager will:

- liaise as necessary with CMT, subject areas and teachers
- store candidates' work securely
- enter students for individual units, including controlled assessment units and externally examined units
- be responsible, as necessary, for storage and transmission of information, data and confidential materials between awarding organisations and teachers.
- arranging any additional equipment or materials which will be needed for the controlled assessment task well in advance
- resolve any timetabling clashes

11. RESULTS, ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS (EARS) AND ACCESS TO SCRIPTS (ATS)

11.1 Results

All individual candidate statements of results received will be distributed in college. Where such distribution is not possible, candidates can collect their statements of results from the exams' office.

All individual candidate statements of results will be presented in person at the centre.

Examination results may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party provided they have been authorised to do so.

11.2 EARS

EARS for general qualifications may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

Candidates are normally expected to pay for the EARS, where the enquiry is upheld any payments will be refunded.

When the centre does not uphold 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.

11.3 ATS (applicable to general qualifications only)

After the release of results of general qualifications, candidates may ask the Exams Manager to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

If a result is queried, the Exams Manager in conjunction with teaching staff or head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. (See also Section 5: Exam fees)

12. Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The centre retains certificates for six years. After this time they are returned to the issuing Examination Board. If a copy of the certificate is required after this time candidates need to apply direct to the awarding body, details of how to do this, and any charges made, are available on the awarding body websites.

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Exams Manager: Emma Sheridan

Date: 31 March 2011

The policy is next due for review February 2013