



Policies

Exams Operational Policy 2026-2029

Next review date: April 2029



**Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School and
Sixth form College
Examinations Operational Policy**

Contents

- Policy purpose
- Responsibilities
- Qualifications
- Examination series and timetables
- Entries, entry details and late entries
- Examination fees
- Disability Discrimination Act
- Estimated grades
- Managing invigilators
- Candidates
- Internal assessments and appeals
- Results
- Certificates

The policy purpose

The purpose of this examination policy is:

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

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

The examination policy will be reviewed annually.

The examination policy will be reviewed by the Head of centre, Exams officer and Governors.

Examination responsibilities

Having overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre, the **head of centre**:

- Advises on appeals and review of marking.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document - Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

Examinations manager

Manages the administration of external and internal exams that are centrally organised by the Examinations Office:

- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual examination 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 examinations in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the examination 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 where required.
- receives, checks and stores securely all examination papers and completed scripts.
- identifies and manages examinations timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all examinations costs/charges.
- line manages the senior examinations invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of examinations invigilators responsible for the conduct of examinations.
- submits candidates' coursework, tracks dispatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- arranges for dissemination of examination results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/review of marking requests.

- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their examinations.
- makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications
- Implements all access arrangements required as notified by the SENCO.

Teachers are responsible for:

Submission of candidates' names to heads of department/school/curriculum.

- Checking of entries before the awarding body deadline.
- Submitting candidates' coursework marks, supplying coursework for despatch correctly and on schedule in accordance with the appropriate awarding bodies guidelines.

The SEND Coordinator (SENDCO) is responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- Administering applications for access arrangements using the JCQ publications Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- Provision of additional support where required - with reading or scribing or the use of IT equipment - to help candidates achieve their course aims.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the examinations office before the start of the examination.
- Collection of all examination papers in the correct order at the end of the examination and their return to the exam office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Qualifications

Qualifications offered

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

The qualifications offered are mainly GCE, GCSE and BTEC. Other Level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications are provided when this would be of benefit to the candidate.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found on the school website. It is the responsibility of the Head of Faculty to ensure this documentation is kept up to date.

If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by the Head of Faculty.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Learning Intervention Manager, Head of 6th Form, Subject teachers, SENDCo and Deputy Head.

Examination series and timetables

Examination seasons

Internal examinations are scheduled in November/December and February for Years 11 and 13. External examinations are mainly scheduled in November (GCSE Resits), March (Entry Level Certificate), May and June. External examinations may happen at other times according to the specification of the course being followed.

The Head of Centre and Head of Curriculum decide which examination series are used in the centre.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the examinations officer will circulate the examination timetable for External examinations.

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their examination entries by the Heads of department.

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The centre accepts private entries at the discretion of the Examinations Officer. The centre does not act as an examination centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to all teaching staff via Heads of Faculty and whole staff communication.

Late entries are authorised by Heads of Faculty/budget holder. English and Maths GCSE retakes allowed.

All AS retakes are allowed where applicable. All A2 retakes allowed where applicable.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with Candidates, Head of 6th Form, Head of subject and Head of Faculty.

Examination 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 first entry examination fees are paid by the Centre. AS first entry examination fees are paid by the Centre.

A2 first entry examination fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Departments and Candidates. Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline or fail to sit an examination without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Re-sit fees are paid by the Candidates unless agreed by the budget holder of a faculty or other funding stream.

Disability Discrimination Act

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Disability

Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, which has now been repealed and replaced by the Equality Act 2010.

The DDA 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.

'A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The centre will meet the requirements of the DDA by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible to all and improving candidate experience for all students. This is the responsibility of the Head of centre. See separate Examinations Disability Policy on the school website.

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 examination.

The SENDCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the examination. A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENDCo, Doctor and Educational psychologist/Specialist teacher.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of both the SENDCo and Examinations officer.

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

Appropriate 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 examinations officer.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for examinations administration is the responsibility of the Examinations Manager and Senior leadership team. See separate Contingency Plan for Examinations.

Private candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Examinations officer.

Managing invigilators

External staff are used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for Internal trial exams and External exams organised centrally by the exams office.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations office.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Centre's HR department. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the Centre. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examinations office. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Centre's HR department.

Malpractice

The examinations office alongside the Head of Centre is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Examination days

The examinations officer will book all examination rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other examination stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The lead invigilator will ensure that all students are identified by Senior Leadership, Learning Intervention Manager, Learning Support or by the use of available photo ID.

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

In practical examinations subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties where allowed by JCQ regulations.

Examination papers must not be read or removed from the examination room by subject teachers during the examination.

Papers will be made available in the examinations office to teaching staff 24 hours after the official exam finish time. (Providing there are no overnight supervisions or clash students who have still to complete the examination).

Candidates

The centre's rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones, watches and other electronic devices apply at all times in accordance with strict JCQ regulations.

All KS4 students must wear full school uniform when attending an examination, no coats or hoodies allowed.

All KS5 students must wear appropriate dress, no hats, coats or hoodies allowed.

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 senior invigilator.

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

The Examinations officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates.

Clash candidates

The examinations officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue.

The examinations officer will be responsible for arranging overnight isolation in conjunction with the Headteacher or Head of School.

Special consideration

Should a candidate be ill before an examination, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the examination itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an examination, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the examinations officer, or the examination 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 examinations officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within the timescales set out in *JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2026/26* and ICE to *JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations 2025/26*.

Internal assessments and appeals

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

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Heads of subject and Heads of faculty and submitted on the exam boards secure website where required.

Appeals against internal assessments must be made in line with our Internal Assessment Appeals Policy available on the school website.

Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at the centre or electronically via Bromcom. Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Head of centre. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Exams officer and Head of Centre.

EARs (Enquiries about results)

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 review of marking either at the centre's expense or that of the candidate.

When the centre does not support a candidate's or parent's request for an EAR, a candidate may still apply to have an enquiry carried out. A candidate can request an EAR without the support/knowledge of the centre. They will need to complete the necessary paperwork and provide the appropriate payment for this service. The Examinations Office will make it clear to the candidate that

the EO cannot provide advice on the risks involved in requesting a review of marking and will make the candidate fully aware that marks can go down as well as up. The candidate will sign to acknowledge their understanding of this and to authorise the review of marking on this basis.

ATS (Access to scripts)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request original or photocopies of scripts. Candidates can ask for copies of scripts without the consent of subject staff.

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

Certificates

Certificates can be collected in person by the candidate.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so. Written authorisation is required from the candidate.

The centre is only required to retain certificates for 1 year.

A statement of results may be issued if a candidate has lost their certificates if this is available on the schools MIS.

If replacement copies are required it is the responsibility of the candidate to contact the examination boards directly.