



Exams Policy

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Contents

Section	Heading	Page
1	Scope	3
2	Exam Responsibilities	3
3	Qualifications Offered	6
4	Exam Series	7
5	Exam Timetables	7
6	Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries	7
7	Exam Fees	7
8	Equality Legislation	8
9	Access Arrangements	8
10	Word Processor use in Examinations and Assessments	8
11	Contingency and Emergency Evacuation Planning	9
12	Estimated Grades	9
13	Managing Invigilators	9
14	Malpractice	9
15	Exam Days	10
16	Candidates	10
17	Clash Candidates	11
18	Special Consideration	11
19	Internal Assessments	11
20	Results	11
21	Enquiries about Results	11
22	Access to Scripts	12
23	Certificates	12
24	Exams and GDPR	12

1. Scope

- 1.1 The purpose of this exams policy is to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates and to ensure the operation of an efficient exams system with clear guidelines for all relevant employees.
- 1.2 It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand, and implement this policy.
- 1.3 The exams policy will be reviewed every year.
- 1.4 The exams policy will be reviewed by the member of senior leadership with responsibility for exams.
- 1.5 Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at [Exams Office - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

2. Exam Responsibilities

2.1 Principal:

- 2.1.1 The Principal is the 'head of centre' and the most senior operational officer in the organisation and has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre and it is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that all staff comply with the instructions in this policy.
- 2.1.2 The Principal is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice [Malpractice - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 2.1.3 The Principal will be required to confirm, on an annual basis, that they are aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ regulations. Heads of centre must familiarise themselves with sections 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.
- 2.1.4 This confirmation is managed as part of the National Centre Number Register (NCNR) annual update. This responsibility cannot be delegated to a member of the senior leadership team or the exams officer. Failure to respond to the NCNR annual update and /or the head of centre's declaration, will result in:
 - the centre being suspended
 - the centre not being able to submit examination entries.
 - the centre not receiving or being able to access question papers.

As a contingency to enable the prompt handling of urgent issues only, the head of centre responds to the awarding bodies' request for information regarding the contact details of a senior member of staff (which might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). This will ensure that any urgent matters which might adversely affect candidates which arise outside of term time, and which potentially put qualification awards at risk, can be addressed by awarding bodies with the support of that member of staff. The head of centre should ensure that this member of staff has the necessary authority to mobilise resources to provide this support, which might include resolving issues within the centre itself.

- 2.1.5 Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements for exams and assessments.
- 2.1.6 The head of centre must have the authority to deploy the necessary resources to ensure that the centre is always compliant in meeting those published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.
- 2.1.7 The head of centre must ensure that appropriate controls are in place which allow accurate data to be submitted to the awarding bodies, e.g. entries, internally assessed marks etc.
- 2.1.8 The head of centre must ensure that the exams officer has sufficient time to perform their role and familiarise him/herself with relevant awarding body and JCQ documentation.

- 2.1.9 The head of centre must ensure that the SENDCo has sufficient time to both manage the access arrangements process within the centre and familiarise themselves with the [Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 2.1.10 The head of centre must ensure that relevant members of staff respond promptly to requests for information from awarding bodies relating to the administration and conducting of examinations/assessments.
- 2.1.11 Has in place a member of the senior leadership team who will provide effective support and supervision of the examinations officer to ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained through an examination series.
- 2.1.12 Can confirm to an awarding body the external governance arrangement so that the awarding body has confidence in the integrity of centre activities such as the delivery of qualifications and the conducting of examinations and assessments.

2.2 Member of Senior Leadership Responsible for Exams:

- 2.2.1 Helen Tanner, Senior Vice Principal, is responsible for exams and the line management of the Exams Officer.
- 2.2.2 Oversees the exam process, consulting with all stakeholders.
- 2.2.3 Works in consultation with the Principal and the Exams Officer to ensure the administration of exams follows the JCQ regulations.
- 2.2.4 Provides support and guidance to the Exams Officer and ensures the integrity and security of exams and assessments are maintained throughout an exam series.

2.3 Senior Leadership Team:

- 2.3.1 Are familiar with the contents of the following annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [‘ICE’ – Instructions for conducting examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
 - [Regulations and Guidance - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
 - [Non-Examination Assessments - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 2.3.2 The Senior Leadership Team must not be present at the start of an exam if they have prepared the candidates for the examination themselves (i.e. as their teacher).

2.4 Exams Officer:

- 2.4.1 Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [Exams Office - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
 - [‘ICE’ – Instructions for conducting examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
 - [Post-Results Services - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
 - [Regulations and Guidance - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 2.4.2 Manages the administration of exams.
- 2.4.3 Completes/submits the National Centre Number Register annual update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR [National Centre Number Register](#) by the end of October each year.
- 2.4.4 Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines.
- 2.4.5 Ensures key tasks are undertaken, and key dates and deadlines met.
- 2.4.6 Assists with recruitment of invigilators as required.
- 2.4.7 Trains and deploys a team of internal/external invigilators as required, keeps a record of the training content provided to invigilators for the academic year, and works with the SENDCO to ensure that invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates and those acting as

facilitators fully understand their respective roles and what is and is not permissible in the exam room.

- 2.4.8 Advises the Senior Leadership Team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support employees, on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- 2.4.9 Oversees the production and distribution, to all staff and candidates, of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with employees concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- 2.4.10 They check with teachers that the necessary coursework and controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 2.4.11 They provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries.
- 2.4.12 They maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- 2.4.13 They receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- 2.4.14 They administer access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication [JCQ - A Guide to the Special Considerations Process](#)
- 2.4.15 They identify and manage exam timetable clashes.
- 2.4.16 They account for income and expenditure relating to all exam costs.
- 2.4.17 They ensure candidates' Non-Examined Assessment marks and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies are submitted correctly and on schedule.
- 2.4.18 They track, dispatch, and store returned non-examined assessments.
- 2.4.19 They arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forward, in consultation with senior leadership, any post results service requests.
- 2.4.20 They support the head of centre in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed of any 'Conflict of Interest' declared by members of centre staff and in maintaining records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected before the published deadline for entries.
- 2.4.21 They brief other relevant centre staff (e.g. reception staff or teachers) where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials.

2.5 Director of Learning and Standards (DLS)

- 2.5.1 They are responsible for the accurate completion of exam entry documentation, all mark sheets, ensuring they check and sign for accuracy in adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer.
- 2.5.2 They are responsible for accurate completion of non-examined assessment sheets and declaration sheets. After being checked with the Exams Officer they sign to say they are complete.

2.6 The Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCO)

- 2.6.1 Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including: [Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 2.6.2 Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process, including; identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the Exams Officer in good time so that they can put in place exam day arrangements.
- 2.6.3 Works with the qualified assessor for access arrangements to ensure the correct procedures are followed.

- 2.6.4 Presents, when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification.
- 2.6.5 Gathers the necessary documents to make online applications with JCQ to gain approval of access arrangements, if required.
- 2.6.6 Works with the Exams Officer to ensure the provision of the required access arrangements for candidates in exams rooms.

2.7 Invigilators

- 2.7.1 Assist the Exams Officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- 2.7.2 Distribution of exam papers and materials throughout the exams room prior to the exam.
- 2.7.3 Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and handed to the exams officer or lead invigilator at the front of the exam hall.
- 2.7.4 Collection of all materials associated with the exam, in order that nothing leaves the exam rooms.

2.8 Reception staff

- 2.8.1 Complete the confidential materials receipt, secure movement, and secure storage log when exam materials arrive on site. Inform site maintenance staff of delivery so that arrangements can be made for the immediate transfer to the exam's office.
- 2.8.2 Supports the exams officer in the dispatch of any confidential materials.

2.9 Site Manager

- 2.9.1 Collect confidential materials from reception when notified of delivery and take to the Exams Office as soon as possible.
- 2.9.2 Supports the Exams Officer in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources.

2.10 Candidates

- 2.10.1 Are expected to check, confirm and sign to agree entries are correct using the MS form provided.
- 2.10.2 Understands non examination assessment regulations and sign the declaration that authenticates the work as their own. [Information for candidates documents - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 2.10.3 Ensures they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations. [Information for candidates documents - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

3 Qualifications offered

- 3.1 The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Principal. The types of qualifications offered are:
 - BTEC
 - GCSE
 - A Level
 - Applied General
- 3.2 The Director of learning and standards for a subject has responsibility for informing the exams officer, after discussion with the Principal, by the 1st July if there is to be a change of specification for the next academic year, the exams officer must be informed by 1st July of the previous academic year.
- 3.3 Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by senior leadership in consultation with the Director of learning and standards.

4 Exam Series

- 4.1 Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in the school calendar.
- 4.2 External exams and assessments are scheduled according to Exam Boards in the relevant series e.g. June series
- 4.3 Internal mock exams are held under external exam conditions. Copies of mock examination scripts are kept as a contingency in the unlikely event of exam cancellation, in line with the government guidance of 30th November 2022 [Supporting resilience in the exam system in 2023 - GOV.UK](#)
- 4.4 The Senior Leadership Team decides which exam series are used in the centre for internal exams and assessments.

5 Exam timetables

- 5.1 Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams by a reasonable date decided by senior leadership before each series begins. These will be agreed by the candidate via an MS form.
- 5.2 Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the mock exam timetables by a reasonable date decided by senior leadership before the internal exams start.

6 Entries, entry details and late entries

- 6.1 Candidates or parents/carers can request an additional subject entry in writing to the member of senior leadership responsible for exams. The decision to agree to or disagree with the request will be made by the Principal and communicated to parents via letter within 4 weeks of the original letter.
- 6.2 Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a change of level or withdrawal from a qualification.
- 6.3 GCSE re-sits are allowed at the discretion of the Principal, A level re-sits are not permitted.
- 6.4 The centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.
- 6.5 Entry deadlines are circulated to Directors of learning and standards via email.
- 6.6 The Exams Officer completes estimated entries based on the programmes of study in the MIS, to meet the JCQ and awarding body deadlines.
- 6.7 Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require authorisation, via email, of the member of senior leadership responsible for exams.
- 6.8 Candidates should be entered under names that can be verified against suitable identification such as a birth certificate or a passport to prevent problems in the future. For example, if a candidate needs to confirm their results to a third party or obtain a replacement certificate. Whilst the centre is best placed to understand the candidate's circumstances and make an informed decision, a candidate should only be entered under alternative names in exceptional circumstances.

7 Exam fees

- 7.1 Candidates or subject departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes, provided that these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.
- 7.2 The Exams Officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series.
- 7.3 GCSE and A level registration and entry exam fees are paid for by the centre.
- 7.4 BTEC and any other vocational qualification registration and entry fees are paid for by the centre.

- 7.5 Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre if it is due to a decision made by senior leadership. These fees are payable by the faculty if it is due to administrative timelines not being adhered to.
- 7.6 Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates if they fail to sit an exam without medical evidence.

8 Equality Legislation

- 8.1 All exam centre employees must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.
- 8.2 The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the member of senior leadership responsible for exams.

9 Access arrangements.

- 9.1 The SENDCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.
- 9.2 A candidate's access arrangements requirement and ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement, is the responsibility of the SENDCO.
- 9.3 Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENDCO in liaison with Exams officer.
- 9.4 Rooming and invigilation for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer in liaison with the SENDCO.
- 9.5 Support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the SENDCO. Please read the SEND policy.
- 9.6 Invigilators will be informed about the access arrangements for every relevant candidate.

10 Word Processor use in examinations and assessments

- 10.1 Gospel Oak School fully supports the use of word processors in assessments and examinations in line with JCQ regulations and recommendations.
- 10.2 Centre's are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to their needs. For example, the quality of language significantly improves because of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand. (This also extends to the use of electronic braille's and tablets.)
- 10.3 The use of word processors in non-examination assessment or coursework components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.
- 10.4 It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers.

N.B. Examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. This avoids for the candidate the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen.

- 10.5 The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

- 10.6 Use of a word processor in examinations is a centre-delegated arrangement. This statement about the use of word processors has been prepared to be shared with stakeholders.
*Principally, a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now **wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.***
- 10.7 It is not a reasonable adjustment for a candidate to request use of a word processor because they can type faster than they can handwrite.
- 10.8 The use of a word processor will be as a result of a **well-established SEND need or due to illegible handwriting which has been identified that would unfairly disadvantage the student should they handwrite .**
- 10.9 Students and their parents are at liberty to request permission to use their own word processor or laptop in school at their own risk during lessons, however, in examinations, students who require a laptop will use one from bank of exam-certified laptops. This request will be considered by the Principal and will be granted if it is agreed it will benefit the student.
- 10.10 A school word processor agreement must be signed before this arrangement can begin and the device has to be PAT tested before it can be used in school. Personal devices brought into school are the responsibility of the student at all times and the school cannot be held liable for any loss or damage.
- 10.11 **Permission to use a laptop or device in class should not be taken to imply permission to allow this arrangement in assessments or exams.** These decisions are taken at the start of the GCSE and A Level course following testing and consultation with staff.
- 11 Contingency and Emergency Evacuation planning – Please refer to the separate policies on the website**
- 12 Estimated grades**
- 12.1 Directors of Learning are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested.
- 13 Managing invigilators**
- 13.1 Invigilators will be employed by the school as casual employees. These invigilators will be used for internal mock exams and external exams.
- 13.2 Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the member of senior leadership responsible for exams.
- 13.3 Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Human Resources Manager.
- 13.4 Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Principal.
- 13.5 Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer and the member of senior leadership responsible for exams.
- 13.6 A record of the training via 'Exam Office' will be held in school to present during a JCQ inspection when required.
- 14 Malpractice**
- 14.1 The Principal, in consultation with the member of senior leadership responsible for exams, is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice. The current version of [Malpractice - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#) will be followed.

- 14.2 Candidates will be warned of the possible penalties an awarding body may apply as per the current version of JCQ publication [Information for candidates documents - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

15 Exam days

- 15.1 The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms and make the question papers and other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.
- 15.2 Site management employees are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and will be advised of requirements in advance.
- 15.3 A member of senior leadership or the Exams Officer will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 15.4 Subject staff should not be present in the exam hall at the start of the exam or for the duration of the exam. Heads of Year may be present to assist with identification of candidates. Any employees present must comply with the rules defined by JCQ [‘ICE’ – Instructions for conducting examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 15.5 Year 11 Form Tutors in the morning sessions, and class teachers in the afternoon sessions, will support a quiet and calm entry into the room unless they have taught the subject that is being examined.
- 15.6 In practical exams, subject teachers’ availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines. [‘ICE’ – Instructions for conducting examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 15.7 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 Directors of learning and standards in accordance with JCQ’s recommendations after all candidates have taken the examination. [‘ICE’ – Instructions for conducting examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- 15.8 After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies.

16 Candidates

- 16.1 The Exams Officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates will be given by the member of senior leadership responsible for exams prior to the exam period and written documentation will be provided that candidates electronically agree to adhere to.
- 16.2 The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour always apply. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- 16.3 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 any technological/web enabled sources of information e.g. mobile phones, smart watches. Watches of any kind are not allowed. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.
- 16.4 Disruptive candidates will be dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. [‘ICE’ – Instructions for conducting examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#) Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the member of senior leadership responsible for exams.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be always accompanied by an appropriate member of staff.

- 16.5 The Exams Officer and member of senior leadership responsible for exams are responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

17 Clash candidates

- 17.1 The Exams Officer will be responsible for supervising candidates, identifying a secure venue and all administration in the event of a clash in accordance to JCQ guidelines. [Supporting exams officers with timetable clashes - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

18 Special consideration

- 18.1 Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer a bereavement or other trauma, be ill during an exam or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's Exams Officer or member of senior leadership responsible for exams to that effect.
- 18.2 The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 5 days of the exam.
- 18.3 The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the exam.

19 Internal assessment

- 19.1 It is the duty of Directors of learning and standards to ensure that all internal 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.
- 19.2 Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Exams Officer by the Director of learning and standards. The Exams Officer will inform staff of the date by which appeals against internal assessments decisions must be made. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document (see *website*). Please refer to the **Non-Examination Assessment policy**.

20 Results

- 20.1 Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre or by post to their home address if candidates provide a stamped self-addressed envelope.
- 20.2 Results can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided the third party have written authority from the candidate to do so. The third party must bring suitable identification with them that confirms their identity.
- 20.3 The results slip will be in the form of a centre produced document.
- 20.4 Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the member of senior leadership responsible for exams, the Exams Officer and the Site Manager.
- 20.5 The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the member of senior leadership responsible for exams.

21 Enquiries about Results (EARs)

- 21.1 EARs may be requested by centre employees or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate.
- 21.2 The cost of EARs may be paid by the centre or the candidate dependent upon the circumstances. All decisions about whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Principal. The guidance offered to candidates about requesting an appeal is published on the website and is provided in envelopes on results day with the Post Results Service form.

- 21.3 If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal, and the centre will respond by following the process in the centres Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) (see website). Please refer to the **Non-Examination Assessment policy**.
- 21.4 All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the exams officer, following the JCQ guidance.

22 Access to Scripts (ATS)

- 22.1 After the release of results, candidates may request the return of written exam papers before the exam board deadline using the Post Results Services. This should be paid for by the candidates directly to the appropriate school and administered by the Exams Officer after the final date for EAR. An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.
- 22.2 Centre employees may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.
- 22.3 Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

23 Certificates

- 23.1 Candidates will receive a letter sent to the most recent address on the school data system with dates to collect their certificates, this letter will also be available on the school website. These should be collected and signed for in person at the centre.
- 23.2 Certificates will not be posted but certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided the third party has written authority from the candidate to do so. The third party should bring suitable identification with them that confirms their identity.
- 23.3 Certificates will be held at the school for a total of 12 months. Any certificates not collected after 12 months will be destroyed.
- 23.4 A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

24 Exams & GDPR

- 24.1 The exam centre must comply with GDPR regulations. The exams officer will hold exams related information on candidates and will share this information with awarding bodies. This may relate to exam entries, access arrangements, special consideration, and exam results/post results. Candidates will be made aware of information and data relating to exams throughout their course. Please refer to the Privacy notice on the school's website for more information.