



**The Polygon School**  
Headteacher: Mr Ben Penfold

## **POLICY DOCUMENT**

### **004: Examinations**

**Access: Unrestricted**

**Publish to: All Staff / All Pupils and School Website**

**Status: Statutory**

**Approval level: Senior Leadership Team**

| <b>Review Responsibility</b> | <b>Reviewed date</b> | <b>Signed off</b> | <b>Date of next review</b> | <b>Frequency Of review</b>                                               |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chris Morley                 | 15-01-2019           |                   | 15-01-2021                 | Every five years unless alteration is required.                          |
| Chris Morley                 | 01-04-2021           |                   | 15-01-2024                 | Reviewed after publication of guidance published April 2021              |
| Chris Morley                 | 15-01-2024           |                   | 15-01-2026                 | Reviewed after publication of guidance published for 24-25 academic year |

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The objectives of the exam policy are:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of all candidates;

- To ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff and pupils.

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

## **1. EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1.1 Exam Officer**

Has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- Advices on appeals and remarks.
- Reports all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. (Refer to the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments.)
- Collaborates with the Assessment Manager to prepare and present reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made.

Managing the administration of public and internal exams:

- Advices the SLT, subject leaders, teachers and relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures set by the various examination boards.
- Oversees the production and distribution (including website) to staff, governors, candidates and parents/carers of an annual calendar for all exams.
- Communicates regularly with staff concerning deadlines and events.
- Ensures that candidates and their parents/carers are informed of and understand all aspects of the exam timetable that affect them.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with the JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receives checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Liaises with the school business manager and Headteacher on issues regarding income and expenditures relating to all exam costs / charges.
- Manages the exam invigilators ensuring appropriate monitoring and highlighting training needs in order that all invigilators are able to effectively support the exam procedures (PowerPoint training / JCQ manual).
- Submits candidates' coursework, tracks despatches and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies securely, correctly and on schedule.
- 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.

- Administration of access arrangements online.
- Liaises with staff regarding possible testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates.
- In consultation with SLT submits appeals / re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their examinations.

#### 1.2 Deputy Headteacher

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- Validation of quality of provision for courses offered internally and externally.
- Line manager for Exam Officer.

#### 1.3 Subject Leaders / Teachers

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of coursework and mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer.
- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).

#### 1.4 Candidates

- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Adhere to exam regulations.

## **2. ACCREDITED AND NON-ACCREDITED COURSES AND QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED**

The courses and examinations offered at the school are overseen by Key Stage and Subject Leaders.

The external accredited qualifications offered are Entry Level, Functional Skills, GCSE, IGCSE and NCFE Technical Awards. Other qualifications may be offered that do not contribute directly to the individuals 'points score' however these are deemed to provide an opportunity to develop life skills and receive a certificate of competence within the area, particularly in relation to the world of work.

The subjects offered for qualification will be published on the school website. If any changes of specification occur, subject leaders / teachers must inform the Exam Officer by summer half term in the year that the new course starts.

#### 2.1 At Key Stage 4

All pupils will be entitled to, and supported in, entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

### **3. EXAM SEASONS AND TIMETABLES**

#### **3.1 Exam Seasons**

External exams at The Polygon School will generally be held in the Summer Term. In rare cases where Subject Leaders / teachers plan to work outside of this time frame the Exams Officer must be informed prior to the time the course starts.

#### **3.2 Timetables**

The Exams Officer will circulate exam timetables to individual pupils based upon their personalised entries. An overview of exam dates and times will be found on the school website.

### **4. ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS, LATE ENTRIES AND RETAKES**

#### **4.1 Exam Seasons**

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the subject leaders / teachers.

A candidate or parent / carer can request a subject entry or withdrawal from an exam.

#### **4.2 Late Entries**

Entry deadlines are circulated to subject leaders / teachers by the Exams Officer. Late entries must be authorised by the Exam Officer and Headteacher, as they incur an additional cost to the school.

#### **4.3 Retakes**

Candidates may sit exams early, prior to them leaving school. Whilst remaining a pupil of the school, they may request the opportunity to sit a retake of any exam taken. The decision will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the pupil, parents / carers, subject leaders, teacher and Exam Officer.

### **5. EXAM FEES**

Initial registration, exam entry, late entry and amendment fees are paid for by The Polygon School.

Candidates 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 deadlines set by the Exams Officer.

Reimbursement may be sought from candidates who fail to attend to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements.

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should The Polygon School not uphold the enquiry and the candidates insist on pursuing the enquiry. (Also see sections 11.4 Internal Appeals Procedure / 12.2 Enquiries About Exam Results)

### **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 school staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

#### **6.2 Access Arrangements**

Making special arrangements for candidates is the responsibility of the Exam Officer who will act under the advice of subject leaders / teachers.

The Exam Officer will submit completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies and will maintain a file of applications for JCQ inspection at any time.

Room arrangements and invigilation for candidates will be arranged by the Exam Officer ensuring that the appropriate level of support is provided to meet the individual needs for all candidates.

## **7. ESTIMATED GRADES**

Subject leaders / teachers will submit estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested.

## **8. MANAGING INVIGILATORS AND EXAM DAYS**

### **8.1 Managing Invigilators**

Internal invigilators will be used for exam supervision. The Exam Officer will ensure appropriate training and level of knowledge around procedures for all invigilators.

School staff will be used for all external exams. They will be timetabled and briefed by the Exam Officer.

### **8.2 Exam Days**

The Exam Officer will manage room organisation and will liaise with other room users to ensure no clash of room. They will make the question papers, other exam stationary and materials available for the invigilator.

The Exam Officer / lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance to the JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted. If present when the exam has started these staff will remain in the room for at least one hour.

In practical exams subject leaders / teachers may be on hand to assist with any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by subject leaders, teachers or support staff prior to the start of the exam. Papers will not be removed from the room before the end of the session. Papers will be distributed to subject leaders / teachers at the end of the exam session.

## **9. CANDIDATES, CLASH CANDIDATES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION**

### **9.1 Candidates**

The Polygon School maintains its expectations on all candidates on acceptable dress code, behaviour, use of mobile phones and electronic devices at all times throughout the exam session.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the school accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the JCQ guidelines.

Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose however this requires an immediate return and an accompanying member of staff.

### **9.2 Clash Candidates**

The Exams Officer will be informed by the awarding bodies of any potential clash. They will be responsible as necessary for identifying any candidates that will require escorts and alternative and secure venues.

### **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 school or the Exam Officer / invigilator, to that effect.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam. The Exam Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

## **10. CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT POLICY**

As instructed by JCQ guidelines issued in 2016, this policy details the management of controlled assessment at The Polygon School.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Exam Officer and alterations ratified by the Governing Body.

### **10.1 Introduction**

Controlled assessment replaces coursework at GCSE level. The JCQ guidelines (2016) define "Examinations and assessments" as "any written or practical activity set according to the awarding body's specifications, or any achievement measured against national standards, which contributes to the award of a qualification."

Controlled assessment measures specific skills that may not necessarily be tested by external assessment. Controlled assessments normally take place during timetabled lessons, though some take place outside of these sessions.

### **10.2 Roles and responsibilities**

Overall responsibility for controlled assessment lies with the Headteacher. The Subject Leaders. Teachers and the Examinations Officer work together to ensure that JCQ and awarding body requirements for controlled assessment are met.

#### **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.

In the summer term, begin coordinating with Subject Leaders to schedule controlled assessments. (It is advisable that controlled assessments be spread throughout the academic Years of Key Stage 4 or as appropriate for GCSE courses studied in other Years).

Map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve:

- Clashes / problems over the timing or operation of controlled assessments;
- Issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.)

Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events.

Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for controlled assessments.

#### **Subject Leaders**

- Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.
- Ensure that at least 40% of overall assessment (controlled and / or external assessment) is taken in the exam series in which the qualification is certificated, to satisfy the terminal assessment requirement in accordance with the awarding body specification.
- Supply to the Exams Officer details of all unit codes for controlled assessments.
- Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.

- Ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.
- Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualize sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.

### **Teaching Staff**

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*.
- Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.
- Obtain confidential materials / tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times.
- Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.
- Ensure that pupils and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment. Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams officer to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.
- Retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one).
- Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates' work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.
- Ask the exams officer for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

### **Exam Officer**

- Enter pupils for individual units, whether assessed by controlled assessment, external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries.
- Enter pupils' 'cash-in' codes for the terminal exam series.
- Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams officer, they will be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD or hard copy format.
- Download and distribute marksheets for teaching staff to use, and collect and send marksheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- On the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out, at the direction of the senior leadership team.
- Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.

- Work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

### 10.3 Risk Management Process

| Timetabling                                                              |                                                                                                          |                                                                                |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Risks and issues                                                         | Forward planning                                                                                         | Action                                                                         | Staff          |
| Assessment schedule clashes with other activities                        | Plan/establish priorities well ahead (e.g. start of academic year) for all subjects or lines of learning | Plan dates in consultation with school calendar – negotiate with other parties | SLT, EO and SL |
| Too many assessments close together across subjects or lines of learning | Plan assessments so they are spaced over the duration of the course                                      | Space assessments to at least allow candidates some time between assessments   | SLT, EO and SL |

| Accommodation                                   |                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                  |                                |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Risks and issues                                | Forward planning                                                                                                                                       | Action                                                           | Staff                          |
| Insufficient space in classrooms for candidates | Once group sizes are known at the start of the year, flag instances where regular classroom space may not be suitable to conduct controlled assessment | Use more than one classroom or multiple sittings where necessary | SLT, EO and SL                 |
| Insufficient facilities for all candidates      | Careful planning ahead and booking of rooms/centre facilities                                                                                          |                                                                  | SLT, EO, SL and ICT Department |

| Downloading awarding body set tasks          |                                                                          |                                                                                                                |       |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Risks and issues                             | Forward planning                                                         | Action                                                                                                         | Staff |
| IT system unavailable on day of assessment   | Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date in all cases      | Book IT equipment well ahead and download tasks before scheduled date of assessment                            | SL    |
| Teaching staff unable to access task details | Test secure access rights ahead of schedule every year and every session | Ensure teaching staff have access rights for correct area of awarding body secure extranet sites ahead of time | SL    |
| Validity of assessment                       | Check task validity date                                                 | Make sure task is still valid for the year of entry of the unit                                                | SL    |

|                                      |                                                        |                                                              |    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Loss of task details in transmission | Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date | Report loss to awarding body for replacement; download again | SL |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|

| <b>Absent candidates</b>                                          |                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Risks and issues</b>                                           | <b>Forward planning</b>                                                                                   | <b>Action</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Staff</b>   |
| Candidates absent for all or part of assessment (various reasons) | Plan alternative session(s) for candidates                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | SLT, EO and SL |
| Candidates have a scheduling clash for exams or assessment        | Always consider candidate timetables well ahead and decide on priorities in advance to scheduling clashes | Check before booking the date; provide an alternative date, where necessary and consult awarding body procedures for dealing with timetabling clashes N.B. retakes of controlled assessment are limited and check validity dates | SLT, EO and SL |

| <b>Control levels for task taking</b>                                                                      |                                                                                                                   |                                      |                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Risks and issues</b>                                                                                    | <b>Forward planning</b>                                                                                           | <b>Action</b>                        | <b>Staff</b>                         |
| Assessment is undertaken under incorrect level of control (time, resources, supervision and collaboration) | Ensure teaching staff know what level is applicable and understand what is involved. Provide training if required | Seek guidance from the awarding body | SLT, EO and SL and relevant teachers |

| <b>Supervision</b>                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                      |                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Risks and issues</b>                                                                                                                        | <b>Forward planning</b>                                                                           | <b>Action</b>                                                                                        | <b>Staff</b>             |
| Pupil study diary/plan not provided or completed. (Not all controlled assessment will require the completion of a study diary or study plans.) | Ensure teaching staff are aware of the need for study diary/plans to be completed early in course | Ensure candidates start, continue and complete study diary/plans that are signed after every session | SL                       |
| Teaching staff do not understand supervision of controlled                                                                                     | Ensure teaching staff understand nature of controlled assessments and their role in supervision   |                                                                                                      | SLT, EO, SL and teachers |

|                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                       |        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| assessment is their responsibility                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                       |        |
| Suitable supervisor has not been arranged for an assessment where teaching staff are <b>not</b> supervising | A suitable supervisor must be arranged for any controlled assessment where a teacher is not supervising, in line with the awarding body specification | SL, EO |

| <b>Task setting</b>                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                      |                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Risks and issues</b>                                                            | <b>Forward planning</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Action</b>                        | <b>Staff</b>   |
| Teaching staff fail to correctly set tasks                                         | Ensure teaching staff understand the task setting arrangements as defined in the awarding body specification. (All tasks whether set by the awarding body or the centre /consortium must be developed in line with the requirements of the specification.) | Seek guidance from the awarding body | SLT, EO and SL |
| Assessments have not been moderated as required in the awarding body specification | Check specification and plan required moderation appropriately                                                                                                                                                                                             | Seek guidance from the awarding body | SL, EO         |

| <b>Security of materials</b>                                |                                                                                                                 |                                           |              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Risks and issues</b>                                     | <b>Forward planning</b>                                                                                         | <b>Action</b>                             | <b>Staff</b> |
| Assessment tasks not kept secure before assessment          | Ensure teaching staff understand importance of task security                                                    | Request/obtain different assessment tasks | SL, EO       |
| Candidates' work not kept secure during or after assessment | Define appropriate level of security, in line with awarding body requirements, for each department as necessary | Take materials to secure storage          | SL, EO       |
| Insufficient or insecure storage space                      | Look at provision for suitable secure                                                                           | Find alternative spaces                   | SL, EO       |

|  |                             |  |  |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|
|  | storage early in the course |  |  |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|

| <b>Deadlines</b>                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                       |                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Risks and issues</b>                                          | <b>Forward planning</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Action</b>                                                                                         | <b>Staff</b>    |
| Deadlines not met by candidates                                  | Ensure all candidates are briefed on deadlines/penalties for not meeting them                                                                                                                    | Mark what candidates have produced by deadline and seek guidance from awarding body on further action | SL and teachers |
| Deadlines for marking and/or paperwork not met by teaching staff | Ensure teaching staff are given clear deadlines (prior to awarding body ones) to complete marking /paperwork so the exams office can process and send off marks ahead of Awarding Body deadlines | Seek guidance from awarding body                                                                      | SL              |

| <b>Authentication</b>                                                                          |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                     |                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Risks and issues</b>                                                                        | <b>Forward planning</b>                                                                                           | <b>Action</b>                                                                                       | <b>Staff</b>        |
| Candidate fails to sign authentication form                                                    | Ensure all candidates have authentication forms to sign and attach to work when it is completed before handing in | Find candidate and ensure form is signed                                                            | SL, EO              |
| Teaching staff fail to complete authentication forms or leave before completing authentication | Ensure teaching staff understand importance of authentication forms and the requirement of a signature            | Return form to staff for signature. Ensure forms are signed as work is marked, not at end of season | SL, EO and teachers |

| <b>Marking</b>                                            |                                                                                     |                                                                                      |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Risks and issues</b>                                   | <b>Forward planning</b>                                                             | <b>Action</b>                                                                        | <b>Staff</b> |
| Teaching staff interpret marking descriptions incorrectly | Ensure appropriate training and practising of marking. Plan for sampling of marking | Arrange for remarking. Consult awarding body specification for appropriate procedure | SL           |

|                                                                               |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                    |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
|                                                                               | during the practice phase                                                                                            |                                                                                    |    |
| Centre does not run standardisation activity as required by the awarding body | Plan against the requirements for standardisation for the awarding body when and how this activity will be conducted | Check with the awarding body whether a later standardisation event can be arranged | SL |

#### 10.4 Instances of malpractice

This policy will provide guidance for effectively conducting controlled assessment and procedures to follow in instances of malpractice. Additional guidance and resources may be sought from JCQ and the latest document on “*General and Vocational Qualifications Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures*”.

Instances of malpractice arise for a variety of reasons:

- some incidents are intentional and aim to give an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment;
- some incidents arise due to ignorance of the regulations, carelessness or forgetfulness in applying the regulations;
- some occur as a direct result of the force of circumstances which are beyond the control of those involved (e.g. a fire alarm sounds and the exam is disrupted).

The individuals involved in malpractice are also varied. They may be:

- candidates;
- teachers, tutors, trainers, support staff, assessors or others responsible for the conduct, the administration or the quality assurance of examinations and assessments;
- assessment personnel such as examiners, assessors, moderators or internal and external verifiers;
- other third parties, e.g. parents/carers/guardians, siblings, friends of the candidate.

Irrespective of the underlying cause or the people involved, all allegations of malpractice in relation to examinations and assessment need to be investigated in order to protect the integrity of the qualification and to be fair to the centre and all candidates.

#### 10.5 Investigations of malpractice - Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for controlled assessment lies with the Headteacher. The Subject Leaders, teachers and the Examinations Officer work together to ensure that JCQ and awarding body requirements for controlled assessment are met.

Investigations of malpractice will normally be carried out by the Headteacher acting on behalf of the awarding body. Investigations into allegations of malpractice or irregularities against the Headteacher may be carried out by the awarding body directly (acting individually or in conjunction with the regulators), or the Chair of the Governing Body of the centre, or the responsible employer (or his/her nominee) and reported to the awarding body when completed.

The Headteacher must:

- report to the appropriate awarding body at the earliest opportunity all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice (form JCQ/M1). The only exception to this is malpractice discovered in coursework before the authentication forms have been signed by the candidate;
- supervise personally all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice;
- ensure that if it is necessary to delegate an investigation to a member of staff, the member of staff chosen is independent, and not connected to the department involved in the suspected malpractice. This is to avoid conflicts of interest which can otherwise compromise the investigation;
- respond speedily and openly to all requests for an investigation into an allegation of malpractice, as this is in the best interests of centre staff, candidates and any others involved;
- co-operate and ensure their staff co-operate fully with an enquiry into an allegation of malpractice, whether the centre is directly involved in the case or not;
- inform staff members and candidates of their individual responsibilities and rights as set out in these guidelines;
- pass on to the individuals concerned any warnings or notifications of penalties, and ensure compliance with any requests made by the awarding body as a result of a malpractice case.

### **10.6 Suspected malpractice identified by The Polygon School**

Where suspected malpractice is identified, the Headteacher must submit the fullest details of the case at the earliest opportunity to the relevant awarding body. The form JCQ/M1 should be used; copies can be found on the Joint Council website, ([www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/)). Reports in letter format will be accepted providing the information given covers the same points as the form.

Malpractice in a coursework component or a controlled assessment component of a specification discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to awarding bodies, but must be dealt with in accordance with the school's internal procedures.

Centres should not normally give credit for any work submitted which is not the candidate's own work, but if any assistance has been given, a note must be made of this on the cover sheet of the candidate's work or other appropriate place. (Note: Centres are advised that if course or portfolio work or a controlled assessment which is submitted for internal assessment is rejected by the centre on grounds of malpractice, candidates have the right to appeal against this decision. The JCQ website contains advice on the recommended procedures for appeals against internal assessment decisions.)

### **10.7 Malpractice reported by others**

Allegations of malpractice are sometimes reported to awarding bodies by employers, centre staff, candidates and members of the public. Sometimes these reports are anonymous. Where so requested, awarding bodies will not disclose the identity of individuals reporting cases of suspected malpractice, unless legally obliged to do so.

In the case of reports of suspected malpractice received from examiners, moderators, external verifiers or members of the public, the awarding body will consider the report and decide to:

- take no further action; or

- where necessary, ask the head of centre to conduct a full investigation into the alleged malpractice and to submit a written report; or
- in the case of alleged fraud or a serious breach of security, investigate the matter directly.

The awarding body will notify the regulators as soon as it receives an allegation of fraud or a serious breach of security. The other awarding bodies which have approved that centre, and the police, will also be informed.

#### **10.8 Investigations carried out by the head of centre**

It will normally be expected that investigations into allegations of malpractice will be carried out by the Headteacher. The Headteacher should seek to deal with the investigation in a timely manner. The Headteacher will refer to section 2.5 of this document for their responsibilities.

If a centre is reporting the suspected malpractice, the awarding bodies recommend that, as a minimum, the centre provides the accused individuals with a completed copy of the form or letter used to notify the awarding body of the malpractice. Reference should also be made to section 6.15 which deals with the rights of the accused individuals.

#### **10.9 Rights of the accused individuals**

When an incident of suspected malpractice is reported to the awarding body, or on receipt of a report from the awarding body, an individual, whether a candidate or a member of staff, accused of malpractice must:

- be informed (preferably in writing) of the allegation made against him or her;
- know what evidence there is to support that allegation;
- know the possible consequences should malpractice be proven;
- have the opportunity to consider their response to the allegations (if required);
- have an opportunity to submit a written statement;
- have an opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a supplementary statement (if required);
- be informed of the applicable appeals procedure, should a decision be made against him or her;
- be informed of the possibility that information relating to a serious case of malpractice may be shared with other awarding bodies, the regulators, the police and/or professional bodies as appropriate.

The conduct of an accused candidate or member of staff in other examinations or assessments should not be taken into account unless there is an established, clearly evidenced, repeated pattern of behaviour.

#### **10.10 The report**

After investigating any complaint or allegation of malpractice the Headteacher must submit a full written report of the case to the relevant awarding body. The report should be accompanied by the following documentation, as appropriate:

- a statement of the facts, a detailed account of the circumstances of the alleged malpractice, and details of any investigations carried out by the centre;
- written statement(s) from the invigilator(s), assessor, internal verifier(s) or other staff who are involved;
- written statement(s) from the candidate(s);

- any mitigating factors;
- information about the centre's procedures for advising candidates of the awarding bodies' regulations;
- seating plans;
- unauthorised material found in the examination room;
- any work of the candidate and any associated material (e.g. source material for coursework) which is relevant to the investigation.

#### **10.11 The decision - The Malpractice Committee**

In making a decision on any report, the Malpractice Committee will establish that core procedures have been followed in the investigation of the case, and that all individuals involved have been given the opportunity to make a written statement.

The Malpractice Committee will also seek to determine:

- whether the examination and assessment regulations have been broken;
- where the culpability lies for the breach of regulations.

The Malpractice Committee will then determine:

- appropriate measures to be taken to protect the integrity of the examination of assessment and to prevent future breaches;
- the nature of any sanction or penalty to be applied.

#### **10.12 Sanctions and penalties for centre staff malpractice – individuals**

In cases of centre staff malpractice, the primary role of the awarding body is confined to considering whether the integrity of its examinations and assessments has been placed in jeopardy, and whether that integrity might be jeopardised if an individual found to have indulged in malpractice were to be involved in the future conduct, supervision or administration of the awarding body's examinations or assessments.

In determining the appropriate sanction or penalty, the awarding body will consider factors including: the potential risk to the integrity of the examination or assessment; the potential adverse impact on candidates; the number of candidates and/or centres affected; and the potential risk to those relying on the qualification (e.g. employers or members of the public). The awarding body may consider, at its discretion, mitigating factors supported by appropriate evidence. Ignorance of the regulations will not, by itself, be considered a mitigating factor.

#### **10.13 Sanctions for malpractice by The Polygon School staff**

The awarding bodies will determine the application of a sanction according to the evidence presented, the nature and circumstances of the malpractice, and the type of qualification involved. Not all the sanctions are applicable to every type of qualification or circumstance. These penalties may be applied individually or in combination. Awarding bodies may, at their discretion, impose the following sanctions against centres: Written warning, Review and Report (Action Plans), Approval of specific assessment tasks, Additional monitoring or inspection, Removal of Direct Claims Status, Restrictions on Examination and Assessment Materials, Independent Invigilators, Suspension of candidate registrations or entries, Suspension of certification, Withdrawal of approval for a specific qualification(s), Withdrawal of centre recognition

Any expense incurred in ensuring compliance with the penalties and/or special conditions must be borne by the centre.

These sanctions will be notified to the Headteacher who will be required to ensure that they are carried out.

If a member of staff moves to another centre while being subject to a sanction, the Headteacher should notify the awarding body of the move. Awarding bodies reserve the right to inform the Headteacher to which the staff member is moving to as to the nature of, and the reason for, the sanction

If the Headteacher leaves while the centre is subject to any sanctions or special measures, the awarding body will, if approached to do so, review the need for the continuation of these measures with the new Headteacher.

#### **10.14 Sanctions and penalties applied against candidates**

The awarding bodies will determine the application of a sanction or penalty according to the evidence presented, the nature and circumstances of the malpractice, and the type of qualification involved. Not all the sanctions and penalties are appropriate to every type of qualification or circumstance. These penalties may be applied individually or in combination. Awarding bodies may, at their discretion, impose the following sanctions against candidates: Warning, Loss of marks for a section, Loss of marks for a component, Loss of all marks for a unit, Disqualification from a unit, Disqualification from all units in one or more qualifications, Disqualification from a whole qualification, Disqualification from all qualifications taken in that series, Candidate debarral.

Unless a penalty is accompanied by a bar on future entry, all candidates penalised by loss of marks or disqualification, may retake the component(s), unit(s) or qualification(s) affected in the next examination series or assessment opportunity if the specification permits this.

#### **10.15 Appeals**

The following individuals have a right to appeal against decisions of the Malpractice Committee or officers acting on its behalf.

- Headteacher, who may appeal against sanctions imposed on the centre or on centre staff, as well as on behalf of candidates entered or registered through the centre.
- Members of centre staff, or examining personnel contracted to a centre, who may appeal against sanctions imposed on them personally.
- Third parties who have been barred from examinations of the awarding body.

Further information may be found in the JCQ publication Guide to the Awarding Bodies' Appeals Processes ([http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams\\_office/appeals/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/appeals/)). This booklet provides details of the awarding bodies' appeals processes.

### **11. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE THE POLYGON SCHOOL INTERNAL APPEALS POLICY FOR ASSESSMENT DECISIONS AT ELC, GCSE AND BETEC**

The Polygon School policy is designed to promote quality, consistency, accuracy and fairness in assessment and awarding. In all cases, the final awarding decisions are taken by the Awarding Bodies: AQA; OCR; Edexcel; WJEC and others.

This document covers the schools' policy in dealing with the Awarding Bodies, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), internal departments, officers of the school and any other parties involved in awarding matters.

### **11.1 Examinations and Procedures Relating to Examinations**

Examinations policy is decided by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with reference to the guidance and regulations supplied by the JCQ and the Awarding Bodies. The Examinations Officer is responsible to the Headteacher for the day to day administration of the examinations system.

Awarding Bodies are often unable to process appeals and queries relating to the examinations process, timetabling, internal assessment or complaints from pupils or parents. All queries of this type must be raised in the first instance with the school Examinations Officer. Should a complaint relating to the administration of some part of the exams process be made against the Examinations Officer, this must first be notified directly to the Headteacher.

At the time of the exams, candidates must be aware of the JCQ 'Exams Regulations' and, a copy of which is posted inside and outside of each examinations room and school website. During examinations, candidates must follow any instructions given to them by the Examinations Officer, member of the school staff or any Invigilator present. Candidates must also be aware of the regulations regarding the submission of coursework/controlled assessment, particularly those relating to the proper acknowledgement of sources. Failure to do so can result in the Awarding Bodies or the JCQ setting penalties which can include official reprimands, loss of examination marks or in extreme cases the loss of all examination results and banning from future examinations.

The school undertakes to run the examinations system in accordance with the published JCQ guidance, given in the Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations (I.C.E.) document, and others.

### **11.2 Mobile Phones, Smart watches, Wireless earbuds and Examinations**

The possession of a mobile phone, smart watch or a wireless earbud in an examination room, whether switched on or not, is an offence under JCQ regulation I.C.E. School policy is that mobile phones, smart watches or wireless earbuds must not be brought into the examination room. Failure to observe this regulation will result in the loss of all results for the exam. School expectations and procedures are that all pupils hand mobile phones into the tutor bases when entering school.

### **11.3 Internal Assessment**

The Joint Council Code of Practice, the Awarding Bodies require the school offering their examinations to:

1. have a published appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions;
2. make this document available and accessible to candidates.

The Awarding Body will moderate the assessed coursework/oral tapes and the final mark awarded is that of the Awarding Body. This mark is outside the control of the school and is not covered by this procedure.

The school will ensure that:

1. work submitted by the candidate for assessment has been authenticated as original work according to the guidance issued by the Joint Council;
2. at the beginning of the course, candidates are given guidance about the Awarding Bodies regulations on the production of coursework, the school's deadlines for submission and information about the school's appeals procedure. This will be posted upon the school website so that there is open access to all pupils and parents/carers;
3. each subject leader / teacher will ensure that candidates are given adequate and appropriate time to produce the coursework;
4. internal assessments are conducted by staff who have an appropriate level of knowledge, understanding and skill;
5. the consistency of the internal assessment is secured through the departmental mark scheme or marking criteria and internal standardization, as necessary;
6. the staff responsible for internal standardization of a subject may attend any training sessions given by the relevant Awarding Body.

#### **11.4 Internal Appeals Procedure**

1. The grounds for appeal relate only to the procedures used in arriving at internal assessment decisions or the production of externally assessed work and do not apply to the judgment themselves.
  2. The appeal must be made in writing to the School's Examinations Officer by 31<sup>st</sup> May of the year that the coursework was assessed. The grounds for the appeal must be clearly stated. The candidate can be supported in the presentation of their case by a parent/carer/friend.
  3. The Headteacher will nominate a senior member of staff, normally the Examinations Officer (EO), to lead the enquiry provided that the EO has played no part in the original assessment process. An experienced member of staff or School Governor to act as an independent member will also be on the panel.
  4. The panel will examine the evidence for the procedures used in the assessment, decide upon their appropriateness and that the procedures have been properly followed as required by the Awarding Body concerned. The enquiry will be completed by the end of June of that examination series.
  5. The panel's findings will be formally reported back to the candidate/parent/carer at the beginning of July.
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6. Records of the request for the appeal, the evidence, deliberations of the panel and the result will be kept by the Examinations Officer and made available to the Awarding Body if required.

### **11.5 GCSE Coursework Procedure at The Polygon School**

1. Coursework is defined as any piece of written or practical work which is marked by the school or an external examiner and which contributes to a GCSE Award.

2. Pupils must read and understand fully the Notice to Candidates from the Joint Council for Qualifications about GCSE Coursework Regulations.

3. Irregularities in coursework discovered prior to the pupil signing a declaration of authentication will not be reported to the Awarding Body but dealt with as an internal disciplinary matter. The work will not gain any credit.

4. An irregularity in coursework discovered after the signing of the declaration of authentication by the pupil will be reported to the Awarding Body which may lead to disqualification from the subject.

5. Coursework must be handed in by the agreed published departmental deadline.

6. All pupils are given the same and sufficient time to complete the work.

7. Pupils are given clear instructions as to the time and place for handing in the work.

8. The work must be handed in by the pupil to the designated teacher and not given to another pupil to hand in.

9. If the pupil is absent from school on the deadline day, a parent/carer or friend must bring the work to school to be handed in to meet the deadline.

10. If it is impossible to deliver the work to school, the Deputy Headteacher must be contacted by phone on the deadline day for advice.

11. If the coursework has not been completed by the deadline, the incomplete work must be handed in on the deadline day to receive a mark. There will be no further opportunity to complete this work for an improved mark.

12. Normally there will be no extension of a coursework deadline if a pupil is absent for a day or two during the period that the coursework is being completed.

13. If there are any special circumstances e.g. a school exchange, play rehearsals or a prolonged absence covered by a medical certificate, there is a possibility of an extension but this must be negotiated with the Deputy Headteacher. A note will be given to the Subject Leader and parents to confirm the extension.

### **11.6 Coursework / Controlled Assessments Appeals Procedure**

1. The Joint Council for Qualifications Code of Practice requires schools to have a published appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions.
2. The grounds for appeal relate only to the procedure used in arriving at internal assessment decisions and do not apply to the judgments themselves.
3. Appeals must be made in writing by 31<sup>st</sup> May of the year that the work was assessed to:  
Chris Morley  
The Examinations Officer
4. The Polygon School Appeals Procedure is available for inspection.

### **11.8 What the Subject Leader must provide for the Appeal Panel**

1. Staff meeting minutes from the first meeting of the school year to indicate that the school procedure for internally assessed coursework was discussed and given out to new and existing members of the school. Absentees were given their copy.
2. The mark scheme or marking criteria for the coursework provided by the Awarding Body.
3. The departmental mark scheme or marking criteria given to the teachers for marking the coursework if this differs from that of the Awarding Body.
4. Dates when the coursework was set and to be handed in for that pupils.
5. Evidence that all teaching groups have been given the same length of time.
6. The procedures and intervention provided for candidates who were absent when the coursework was set or were absent for part of the period during which the coursework was being carried out.
7. Dates when the coursework was marked by the teachers.
8. The name of the teacher in charge of the internal standardization.
9. Dates when the teacher attended the last Awarding Body standardization meeting.
10. Evidence that the information from this meeting was disseminated to the relevant teachers.
11. Date(s) for subject standardization meeting and teachers in attendance.
13. Copy of coursework marks sent to the Awarding Body.

The above information should be provided in a ring binder or suitably filed.

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- It would be advisable to set up this binder at the beginning of the course and update it each year.
  - If an appeal application is made, the Subject Leader would only have a short time to provide this information for the appeal panel. Appeals have to be made by 31<sup>st</sup> May in the year that the work was assessed.
  - The evidence above may only be requested by an Awarding Body inspector visiting the school or the Awarding Body if a parent makes a further appeal against the panel's decision.
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## **12. RESULTS, ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS (EARs) AND ACCESS TO SCRIPTS (ATS)**

### **12.1 Results**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results day in person at the school or post to their home address.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Headteacher and Exams Officer.

### **12.2 Enquiries About Results (EARs)**

EARs may be requested by school staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

When the school 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 (See section 5: Exam Fees).

### **12.3 Access to Scripts (ATS)**

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

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

School staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates will have been obtained.

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

## **13. CERTIFICATES**

Certificates may be collected/presented in person, or posted (recorded delivery).

If certificates are collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, they have been authorised to do so and have written authentication.

Certificates will not be withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The school retains certificates for two year after which they will be archived.