

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body, Feb 2016. To be reviewed June 2018.

Rationale

Examinations aim to form part of the dialogue and decision making process in terms of progress and curriculum provision for individual learners in Rosstulla's Lowry Secondary Department. Securing recognised accreditation, in line with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Entitlement Framework (EF), supports our students towards accessing a wider range of further education and training options when they leave Rosstulla.

Purposes

Our commitment to Examinations will:

- Foster self-motivation
- Raise standards and ensure that the quality of Learning and Teaching meets the needs of the student
- Recognise achievement
- Develop the school as a reflective community and the individual as a self-assessor.
- Confirm that policy is implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Provide evidence for our accountability to all stakeholders.

Guidelines

- School Exams will take place annually across all learning areas to:
 - Track student progress
 - Inform annual targets, individual learning plans and identify learners needs
 - Prepare students for final externally set and marked assessments by public examining bodies i.e. CCEA, OCR, AQA and City and Guilds
 - Build a learners 'profile of need' to evidence access arrangements and exam concessions that may be required
 - Inform curriculum provision at Key Stage 4
- All public examination procedures and related matters including. controlled assessment at Rosstulla School will strictly adhere to the guidelines (updated annually) set out by the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ). Further detail and information can be found in the appendices that follow:
 - Appendix 1 – Exam Procedures
 - Appendix 2 – Controlled Assessment
 - Appendix 3 – Complaints Procedure

Appendix 1: Exams procedures

Contents

- The centre exams procedure
- Qualifications
- Exam series and timetables
- Entries, entry details and late entries
- Exam fees
- Equality legislation
- Estimated grades
- Managing invigilators
- Candidates
- Internal assessments and appeals
- Results
- Certificates

The procedures are next due for review on *June 2018*

The purpose of these exams procedures is:

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

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement these procedures.

The exams procedures will be reviewed every *three years*.

The exams procedures will be reviewed by the *L-A Mitchell (Exams officer) L. Matchett(Head of Centre) and the Board of Governors*. Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Exam responsibilities

The head of centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams officer¹:

- manages the administration of *internal exams and/or external exams*
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- oversees the production and distribution, to all centre staff and candidates, of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication *A guide to the special consideration process*.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.

¹ This is the individual to whom the Head of Centre has delegated responsibility for the administration of exams in their centre.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

- tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.

Heads of department) are responsible for:

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post-results procedures.

Teachers are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer.

The **special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)/specialist teacher in liaison with the exams officer** is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the exams office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- confirmation and signing of entries.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the *school leadership team in liaison with Newtownabbey Learning Community co-ordinator, learning area co-ordinators and other stakeholders.*

The types of qualifications offered are taken *from the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and are pitched at Entry Level, Level 1/ 2 and GCSE's*

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published options booklet for that year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the *learning area co-ordinators.*

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by *teaching staff* in consultation with the *school management team.*

Exam series

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled in *January of each academic year.*

External exams and assessments are scheduled *in term 3 in accordance with the subject specifications.*

Internal exams *are* held under external exam conditions.

Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for *internal and external exams* before each series begins.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates or parents/carers **can** request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre **does not accept** entries from private candidates.

The centre **acts** as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department/curriculum via **email**.

Heads of department/curriculum will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of **F. Burke (Head of Centre)**.

GCSE **re-sits/retakes are**.

Essential skills **re-sits are**.

Re-sit decisions will be made by **Learning Area Co-ordinators** in consultation with **the Senior Leadership Team**

Exam fees

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

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

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the **centre**.

Essentials skills entry exam fees are paid by the **centre**.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the **centre**.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Fee reimbursements *are not* sought from candidates:

- *if they fail to sit an exam*
- *if they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances*

Re-sit fees are paid by the *centre*.

Equality Legislation

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

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 *Exams Officer & School Leadership Team*.

Access arrangements

The *SENCo/specialist teacher in liaison with the exams officer* 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.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the *SENCo, Specialist Teacher and Exams Officer*.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of *SENCo, Specialist Teacher and Exams Officer*.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the *SENCo, Specialist Teacher and Exams Officer*.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the *SENCo, Specialist Teacher and Exams Officer*.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the *A. Fryers (Vice Principal)*

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Estimated grades

Learning Area Co-ordinators are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

Managing invigilators

External staff **will not be** used to invigilate examinations.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the *A. Fryers (Vice Principal) and the Exams Officer*.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the *A. Fryers (Vice Principal)*.

DBS fees for securing such clearance **are** paid by the centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the *Department of Education*

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the *A. Fryers (Vice Principal)*.

Malpractice

The head of centre in consultation with *School Leadership Team* is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam days

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

Site management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements **one week** in advance.

The *Chief Invigilator (A. Fryers)* will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Subject staff *may not* be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to heads of department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than **24** hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with *C-A Barnes (Executive Officer)*.

Candidates

The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the *Exams Officer*.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the *Chief Invigilator (A. Fryers, Vice Principal)*.

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

The *Chief Invigilator (A. Fryers, Vice Principal)* is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Clash candidates

The **Chief Invigilator (A. Fryers, Vice Principal)** will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

Special consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's **Exams Officer** to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within **7** days of the exam.

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

Internal assessment

It is the duty of heads of department 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.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the **Learning Area Co-ordinators**. The exams officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days,

- ***by post to their home address***
- ***posted (recorded delivery)***
- ***posted (first class)***
-

The results slip **will** be in the form of a centre produced document.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the *Head of Centre/Exams Officer*.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the *Head of Centre/Exams Officer*.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the *candidate*.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by *School Management Team*.

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 its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of *Exams Officer*, following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within **30** days of the receipt of results.

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

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the *candidate*.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of *Exams Officer*.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates

- *in person at the centre*

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre retains certificates for **7** years.

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.

Head of centre

Exams officer

Date:

L. MAtchett

L-A Mitchell

05/09/17

Appendix 2: Controlled Assessment Procedure

Outlining staff responsibilities - GCSE controlled assessments

Senior leadership team

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

- At the start of the academic year, begin coordinating with heads of department/subject to schedule controlled assessments. (It is advisable that controlled assessments are spread throughout the academic years of Key Stage 4.)

- Map overall resource management requirements for the academic 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 procedure for controlled assessments.

Heads of department/faculty

- Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.

- Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.

- Ensure that individual teachers fully understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.

- Ensure that individual teachers fully understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification, are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes and any other subject specific instructions.

- Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or adapt sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with the awarding body's specification and control requirements.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Teaching staff

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines detailed within the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting controlled assessments.
- Understand and comply with the awarding body's specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.
- Supply to the exams office details of all unit codes for controlled assessments.
- 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 candidates as the specification allows.
- Ensure that candidates and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark scheme provided by the awarding body. Submit marks to the awarding body by the published deadline, 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 appropriate special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

Exams office staff

- Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD or hard copy format.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

- Download and distribute marksheets for teaching staff to use.
- In exceptional circumstances where controlled assessments cannot be conducted in the classroom, arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessments can be carried out at the direction of the senior leadership team.

Special educational needs coordinator/additional learning support in liaison with exams officer will:

- Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.
- Work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

Rosstulla School
Together Towards Tomorrow
Examinations Policy

Appendix 3: Complaints Procedures

All external examinations will be delivered and assessed with reference to relevant JCQ documentation to ensure good practice and high standards in Rosstulla School.

Rationale

This document aims to create a framework within which relevant staff, Governors and other interested parties can deal with a complaint with respect to external examinations.

