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BST Secondary External Examinations Policy

The British School in Tokyo
School Policy Document

BST Secondary External Examinations Policy

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The purpose of this exam policy is to ensure the:

- planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff
- security of The British School in Tokyo as an examination centre

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy. This exam policy will be reviewed every two years by the secondary leadership team, examinations officer and trustees.

1. Exam responsibilities

Assistant Head of Secondary

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the Assistant Head of Secondary is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document '*Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.*'
- line management of the relevant curricular and examinations processes

Exams Officer

Responsible for the administration of public and internal exams and provision of exam results:

- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, trustees 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 exam timetable that will affect them
- consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts

- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- prepares seating plans for external examinations
- accounts for income and outgoings relating to all exam costs/charges
- line manages the exams invigilators, organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators
- submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Liaises with HoFs and subject teachers with regard to estimated grades and information required for entries.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Prepares seating plans for relevant examinations
- Quality assure the examination process

Heads of Faculty, Heads of Phase

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Appropriate support of students through individual advice and guidance
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to Heads of Faculty.

Head of Learning Support

- Advice on access arrangements.
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Provision of appropriate additional support — with spelling, reading, Mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment

Lead invigilator/invigilators

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.
- Recording and reporting required information in the exam.

Candidates

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

Administrative staff

- Support for the input of data.
- Posting of exam papers.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of School and Secondary School in consultation with faculty heads.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSEs and A levels. The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found on the school website. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed.

At post-16 it is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12 except for Critical Thinking. Resits for AS modules may take place in year 12 or year 13.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

The timing of internal exams is kept under review by the Secondary Leadership Team.

External exams are scheduled in January and June. At GCSE, students can sit examinations in June of year 10 and 11. Science exams are also scheduled in January of year 11. In year 12 and 13, exams take place in January and June. Students are entered into the most appropriate exam session to maximise attainment. All internal exams are held under external exam conditions. HoFs under the Leadership Team decide which examination series will be used in the centre.

3.2 Timetables

The exams officer will circulate the outline exam board timetables for external exams once these are received from the exam boards. Detailed School Exam Timetables will be circulated after the last date for withdrawals of any exam session.

The exams officer will circulate the internal exam timetables 1 month prior to the date of the exams. The exams officer will provide individualised exam timetables for each candidate and publish them to parents. The school website and BST Learningspace will be used to provide information to support candidates and their families.

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

All candidates are entitled to have access to the examination. Specific decisions about entries, including tier of entry, are taken by the subject teachers. Candidates, or parents, may request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal with the Assistant head of Secondary. The final decision rests with the Assistant Head of Secondary.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to HoFs and subject teachers by email and the school calendar. Late entries are authorised by the Assistant Head of Secondary.

Late entry fees should be charged to the department where the late entry/amendment is caused by error or omission at department or faculty level.

4.3 Resits

Candidates are allowed to retake subjects at GCSE, AS and A level. The school will usually make a charge for this. Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, relevant subject teachers and HoFs. (See also section 5: Exam fees)

4.4 External Candidates

In support of the ethos of lifelong learning, the school will endeavour to accommodate external candidates who are known to the school. This will be wholly at the candidates own expense and only under conditions which are in no way prejudicial to the interests of existing BST candidates.

5. Exam fees

GCSE, AS and A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees may be charged to departments (see 4.2 above). 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. Any made out of the time allowed by the awarding bodies will be charged to the department.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam, commit malpractice or meet the necessary coursework requirements. Certificates will be withheld from candidates until reimbursement has been made.

A deposit covering the costs of exams will be required to be lodged at the school for pupils about whom the senior leadership team believes there are concerns e.g. attendance, attainment, coursework etc. This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses. Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes may be required to be paid by the candidates. Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry. Fees are required to be paid to the school before an EAR will be

Submitted (See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

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

6.1 DDA

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

6.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the educational psychologist / specialist teacher / Head of Learning Support.

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

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the exams officer, informed by advice from the Head of Learning Support. Completing access arrangement applications is the responsibility of the Head of Learning Support; submitting these to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the exams officer. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams officer in consultation with the Head of Learning Support. Allocation of staff to support access arrangements for candidates will be organised by the Head of Learning Support with the exams officer.

7. Estimated grades

The heads of subject will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer according to the timescales given by the exam boards

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for all exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams officer.

8.2 Exam days

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

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

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates and must act entirely in accordance with JCQ guidelines. A subject teacher will remain on site during all exams in case of emergency e.g. earthquake

In practical exams, subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 Candidates

The centre's rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage. Candidates should leave any valuables in their lockers.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them. The invigilators will notify the office who will try to make contact with the candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all.

9.2 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

9.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect. Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor. The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form (JCQ form 10) to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

HoFs and delegated subject teachers will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom. Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office.

The main points are:

- Appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- Candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification

- Appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the Assistant Head of Secondary (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- The Assistant Head of Secondary's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

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

11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre or by email within 2 days.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of School.

Certification for post-16 students- all students that are expected to achieve a grade at AS should be entered for certification. Those students who are likely to achieve a U grade will not be certificated. However, if students achieve a grade in the summer the exams officer will ensure that students are certificated as soon as possible in September. All students must be certificated at A2.

11.2 EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged. (See section 5: Exam fees)

11.3 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 head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person to pupils who remain on roll at the school. Pupils who have left collect and sign for their certificates from the Exams Officer. Students who have moved overseas will have to pay a Fedex charge in advance to cover postage of their certificates.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have written authority to do so. Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred. The centre retains certificates for one year.



JDB Christian MA
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