

ST BERNARD'S HIGH SCHOOL



EXAM POLICY

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Chair of Governors

Mission Statement

St Bernard's is a school community that aims to live by Jesus' commandment "Love one another as I have loved you."

We are a Catholic learning community committed to the on-going development of the entire potential of every person, achieved through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

We care for each other as individuals of equal worth, regardless of status, sex, race or religion and thus actively seek to promote safeguarding, justice and fairness.

We provide an atmosphere in which all can grow in our Faith, and encourage this faith by a lively relevant liturgy.

We work with parent/carers/carers, parishes, local communities and industry to prepare our students for the opportunities of adulthood.

Objectives

The central objective is to help support and prepare students for public examinations and internal assessments (Controlled Assessments and Coursework). For this to be achieved, we will continually develop an efficient administrative system where students and parent/carers/carers are fully aware of relevant assessment and examination information. A further objective is to ensure that all students' access needs are fully met and that special consideration is applied for when required. Finally, through an efficient and well managed system, students will continue to be calm and less stressed as they take their examinations/internal assessments.

Key Responsibilities

Subject Teachers: To ensure that students are appraised of required conduct for internal assessments and non-examination assessments including issues pertaining to malpractice and plagiarism.

To be fully informed and up-to-date with syllabus requirements and to have had recent relevant exam board training.

To liaise with Subject Leaders on all matters pertaining to exams and Controlled Assessments/Coursework/non-examination assessments.

To liaise with the Head of Inclusion/SENCO over the requirements and special arrangements for students with specific learning difficulties, visual impairment or certain other medical conditions.

To advise the Head of Inclusion/SENCO of students who may need to be tested for Access Rights.

Subject Leaders: To liaise with Department Team to ensure smooth administration of examination and assessment requirements.

To select an appropriate Exam Board specification.

To ensure that all deadlines for information requested by the Examinations Officer are met and that all information is accurate.

To ensure that internal assessments and non-examination assessments are carried out and marked in accordance with the Exam Board Rules and Regulations.

To meet with Examinations Officer annually to discuss needs and complete a Risk Assessment Audit.

To ensure that assessment procedures for internal assessments and non-examination assessments are robust and that students' conduct follows all regulations and requirements laid down by the exam boards and JCQ.

To supply the Examinations Officer with evidence that the candidates have had the opportunity to undertake prescribed practical activities for non-examination assessments and that assessments have been carried out in accordance with Exam Board and JCQ requirements. This evidence will be necessary for the 'Head of Centre' to provide a declaration to the Examining Body by the published deadline that the activities have been carried out in accordance with the regulations and requirements.

Heads of School/Director
of Sixth Form Studies:

To liaise with the Departmental Teams, Head of Inclusion/SENCO, Examinations Officer, Data Manager and Assistant Head Teacher line managing exams to ensure that where there are relevant pastoral issues which pertain to examination entry or withdrawal, this information is shared.

Examinations Officer:

To collect exam and assessment information from Departments and despatch this to the relevant Exam Boards when required and to track all such material, including Controlled Assessments/Coursework/ non-examination assessments.

To ensure that all pertinent information regarding exam conduct is available for students and parents. Information to be placed on the school website.

To liaise with the Awarding Bodies on all matters pertaining to the examination system.

To ensure students' special consideration is applied.

To ensure the smooth organisation, conduct and running of the examination process; accommodation & invigilation of the exams.

To train and direct the employment of Examination Invigilators following DBS checks. To ensure sufficient invigilators for the exams.

To liaise with the Cover Coordinator and other relevant staff. To book exam rooms in good time.

To ensure the smooth running of the post-results service and appeals process.

Head of Inclusion/SENCO: To be responsible for the assessment, recording and compiling of evidence on the access rights of individual students. To advise students and parents accordingly.

To liaise with the Examinations Officer about the arrangements for candidates with special needs and examination requirements.

To ensure the Examinations Officer has all relevant information and organise Educational Psychologist and other testing, if required. Unless the Head of Inclusion/SENCO is assessing the students themselves then all other assessors will need to have their qualifications checked. The Head of Inclusion/SENCO needs to be satisfied that the assessment process is administered correctly.

To ensure that a central evidence file is kept for inspection purposes.

To direct the employment of Learning Support staff to support access students.

Invigilators: To comply with all examination regulations and start all examinations using the checklist supplied by the Examinations Officer.

To create a calm environment for students during the exams.

To report any misconduct to the Examinations Officer.

Senior Leadership:
(AHT Line Manager, Exams) To act as 'Head of Centre' for purposes of exams process.

To direct and monitor the work of the Examinations Officer and regularly meet with them.

To regularly update the Exams Policy & Procedure for Appeals.

To support departmental colleagues and students through the Examination Appeals process.

To ensure all is in place for inspection as an Exam Centre.

To liaise with the Exam Boards over matters of examination conduct/misconduct.

To review cost and budget for exams ensuring support in place for FSM/Ever6 students.

Head Teacher: To appoint an Appeals Panel for internal assessments, should this be required.

To ensure that all records for such Appeals & Panel's deliberations are kept securely in the Head Teacher's office.

Students: To abide by all examination and assessment rules and regulations.

To be punctual for all exams and assessments.

To complete all administrative and exam requirements by the relevant deadlines as instructed by the Examinations Officer (eg: timetable checks).

Appendices

Security of the Examination Process

The Exams Office security meets the required security expectations. Access to the room is secured by mortice lock key as well as a coded keypad. The door is reinforced. Only the EO and the Assistant Head Teacher line-managing exams have the key and code. In the Exams Office the filing cabinets which store the exam scripts are bolted to the floor and are also padlocked.

The school conducts the exams and the exam process, including all external and internal assessments, in accordance with a wide-range of regulations and JCQ publications. The key documents are:

- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments
- Instructions for Conducting Coursework
- Instructions for Conducting Examinations
- Instructions for Conducting Non-Examination Assessments
- Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies & Procedures

The EO organises for the receipt, checking and storing of exam question papers and examination material safely and securely at all times and for as long as required, as required by the JCQ publication 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations'.

The verification of exam candidates is carried out prior to all examinations. The Senior Leadership Team is on duty outside the Exam Hall to check student identification. SLT are supported in this task by the Head of Upper School/Director of Sixth Form Studies and have additional support from the relevant subject department/subject teacher or Head of Department.

Malpractice

Students will be informed of all requirements pertaining to malpractice and expectations regarding conduct in all assessments. Information will be made available on the school website. This will be reinforced by subject specialists as part of their preparing students for assessment.

The Assistant Head Teacher (acting as 'Head of Centre') will notify an awarding body at the earliest opportunity and by completing the relevant documentation, of any established, suspected, alleged case of malpractice, including maladministration. Any suspected malpractice will be investigated thoroughly in accordance with advice given by the awarding body.

Safeguarding

All staff working at the school under-go DBS checks. This is a crucial aspect of the Recruitment Policy. The Recruitment Policy is based on the Essex Model of pre-employment checking procedure. This written policy satisfies all current legislative requirements.

Examination Contingency Plan

The Examination Contingency Plan is a separate document and has been written to cover all aspects of exam administration, with a considered view on how to resolve potential problems. This minimises any risk to the examination administration should the Examinations Officer be absent at crucial points in the exam cycle.

Data Protection

Candidates will be informed that relevant personal data (name, d.o.b, gender) will be transferred to the awarding bodies for the purposes of examining and awarding qualifications.

Candidates will have brought to their attention early in their exam courses the JCQ document 'Information for Candidates – Privacy Notice, General and Vocational Qualifications'.

Routines & Protocols

In September the Exam Officer (EO) will circulate to all departments the board and specification used by that department. This must be checked, signed and returned to the EO by the Head of Department (HOD) by the given deadline

Exam Entries Process

- EO activates new season in Exams Organiser
- EO sets up new exam details in Exams Organiser if necessary
- EO sets entry deadline dates
- EO distributes entry mark sheets to HODs (specific date to be given)
- HODs return the completed mark sheets to EO by specified date.
- EO inputs entries onto Exams Organiser
- EO prints off entry list and distributes to HODs
- HODs authorise return and check entry lists by specified date
- EO makes any amendments if applicable
- EO assigns candidate and UCI numbers
- EO creates electronic file
- EO submits electronic entry file
- EO supplies students with "Statement of Entry"
- **Penalty fees will be charged to departments for late entries.**

Amendments

Change of tier, withdrawals and any other amendments will be accepted by the EO up to the date set by the board. These must be made on an Amendment form, which is kept in the filing cabinet in the staff room. This should be completed and put into EO's tray. **Any late withdrawals/entries except in exceptional circumstances will be charged to the department.**

Change of Tier

See note on amendments.

External Exams

The EO is responsible for the organisation and conduct of all external exams.

1. Final confirmation of entry numbers and levels will be made with the SIE.
2. All exam papers will be counted by the EO and locked away.
3. All sealed exam papers will be checked by the EO in good time before the exam date.
4. No exam papers can be removed from the exam room before the end of a session.
5. All exams will be conducted according to the rules laid down by exam boards and within the start and finish times determined by the board.

6. Any misconduct or irregularity must be reported to the EO as soon as possible, who will then inform the exam board concerned.
7. In the absence of the EO at the end of any exam, papers will be collected and taken to Reception and given into the care of the Reception Staff, who will ensure they are locked in the safe.
8. Students will not be allowed to leave an exam unless their exam paper has been picked up and secured by an invigilator.
9. Students will not be permitted to leave an exam room before the published end time of the exam. Those who are unwell or who need the toilet will be escorted by an invigilator.
10. Teachers who enter the exam room must stay for one hour after the published start time. Therefore, EO will inform teachers that invigilators will not allow them into the exam room. The EO will also enforce the regulation that where it has been agreed that candidates can take the examinations at a later time from the published timetable, no teacher who has accessed the question paper should be allowed contact with those candidates, who will be under examination supervision throughout the intervening period.

Timetables and Seating Plans

The EO will publish exam timetables at the earliest opportunity. All information pertaining to seating plans for students will be published to all teaching staff and the learning support and learning mentor departments. Students will be informed of timetables and exam entries to check details. Amendments to be made by EO. Following this, the seating plans will be produced and issued to students along with a covering letter and details pertaining to examination regulations. **Seating Plans can only be produced to time if all information required by the EO meets the given deadline. Where information is late this will have an impact on the ability of the EO to meet further deadlines**

Process for the Management of Coursework, Controlled Assessments and non-examination assessments

At the end of the exam cycle the EO and Assistant Head Teacher line-managing exams carry out a series of individual meetings with Heads of Department. At this meeting, in the period after the Summer exams or at the very start of the Autumn Term and new academic year, the HOD clarifies departmental requirements. A Risk Assessment is undertaken on Controlled Assessments/Coursework/ non-examination assessments, the purpose of which is to resolve any potential problems.

A calendar of Controlled Assessment/Coursework/non-examination assessments dates is agreed and published to staff and parents in the Autumn Term of the academic year.

The Head of Inclusion/SENCO ensures that staff are aware of Access Students and their rights. This information is updated when required.

The following then takes place:

- EO publishes "Notice to Candidates": Coursework and portfolios to send by letter to parent/carers/carers, classroom display and inclusion in "Action Planner".
- EO distributes coursework/controlled assessment/ non-examination assessments mark sheets to HOD by specified date (provided by exam board) along with candidate declaration/authentication sheet and centre declaration sheets.
- HOD/Subject Leader completes the mark sheet and returns all copies to the EO along with the coursework/controlled assessment/ non-examination assessments for despatch.
- EO checks and despatches coursework/controlled assessment/ non-examination assessments .
- Reception post with certificate of posting (not recorded delivery).

- EO transfers coursework/controlled assessment/ non-examination assessments mark to exam board and retains a copy of all marks in the Exams Office.
- EO checks on Coursework/Controlled Assessment/ non-examination assessments log sheet that all coursework/controlled assessments has been received from HODs and despatched.
- Returned coursework/controlled assessments/ non-examination assessments from moderator is sent to HOD by EO. HODs will be required to sign for all coursework/controlled assessments to ensure that effective tracking procedures are in place and that coursework/controlled assessment is not lost
- EO will co-ordinate eventual return of coursework/controlled assessments/ non-examination assessments to candidates. It is vital that all coursework/controlled assessments is carefully and securely held by departments until relevant pieces are called for return to students.

Additional Requirements for non-examination assessments

Subject teachers and Subject Leaders must pay close attention to the JCQ "Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (new GCE & GCSE specifications). The details will be forwarded to Subject Leaders by the Examination Officer. These must be followed to the letter and be seen as the definitive source of generic guidance and instructions. It is the Subject Leader's responsibility that the regulations are followed. In particular, the following points should be noted:

- Where centres are responsible for task setting the Subject Leader must ensure that the assessment criteria, as detailed in the specification, can be met and that tasks are accessible to candidates.
- The Subject Leader must ensure that they consult the awarding body's specification to obtain the date for the issuing of tasks. Teachers must take care to distinguish between requirements/tasks for legacy specifications and requirements/tasks for new specifications
- Supervision must adhere to the awarding body regulations and requirements
- Subject Leaders must adhere to the requirements pertaining to advice and feedback for candidates. It is NOT permissible to provide model answers or writing frames to the task (such as outlines, paragraph headings or section headings)
- Where additional assistance goes beyond general advice the teacher must record this assistance and take it into account when marking work. Work must NOT be provisionally assessed and then issued to the candidate to revise. Teachers must NOT provide any type of assistance which is explicitly prohibited on the specification. Assistance must NOT be given if there is no means to record it and take account of it in the marking. Failure to follow this procedure constitutes malpractice.
- The Subject Leader/Teacher must ensure that resources and information used in the assessments are controlled as outlined by the awarding body's documentation. Candidates must be clear about the referencing of all sources and follow the established procedures of acknowledgement. Failure to do so will be classed as plagiarism.
- Subject Leaders must ensure that candidates sign a declaration of authentication, confirming that the work they submit for final assessment is their own unaided work. Teachers must sign a declaration of authentication after the work has been completed. The signed declarations will be kept on file until advised by the Examinations Officer, as they made be required in cases of inspection or appeals. The Examinations Officer and the Assistant Head Teacher (acting as 'Head of Centre') MUST be informed regarding any concerns over malpractice.
- Once work is handed in for formal assessment it must be securely stored by the Subject Leader.
- Teachers are responsible for the marking of work in accordance with the marking criteria detailed in the specification and associated subject-specific documents. Teacher annotation should be used to provide evidence to indicate HOW and WHY marks have been awarded. Internal standardisation should be carried out in line with requirements.

- All deadlines must be kept. It is the Subject Leader’s responsibility to ensure this happens.
- Subject Leaders must ensure that the Examinations Officer has evidence that practical activities undertaken as part of non-examination assessments as done so according to the requirements. Careful record keeping is required which should include: (a) plans to carry out sufficient practical activities; (b) each practical activity and the date of completion; (c) the criteria being assessed in that practical activity; (d) candidate’s attendance; (e) details of which candidates met the criteria and which did not; (f) candidate work showing evidence required for their particular task with dates and any other associated materials for the practical activity. Where necessary, candidates must keep a record of their practical work and this can include: lab books, candidates’ folders, pre-printed workbooks or through computer-based systems.

Deadlines – GCSE

SESSION	Exam Deadline	Board
June	15 May or as advised by Exam Board	

Deadlines - GCE

SESSION	Exam Deadline	Board
June	15 May or as advised by Exam Board	

These dates depend on various event and workload and vary each year.

External Invigilators

The team of external invigilators are all DBS checked and trained in our school exam system. Training includes safeguarding, Fire Safety and exam conduct & regulations.

Each year, at the start of the academic year, a training day is held where regulations are re-iterated and any updates highlighted. This training day provides an opportunity for the existing invigilators to meet newly employed invigilators and share experiences.

The EO puts together an exam timetable, works out how many invigilators are required in each session and books the invigilators. The EO is the main point of contact. In the event of an invigilator having to cancel a booking, they are asked to contact the EO as soon as possible on her mobile.

Invigilators are booked to start 15 minutes before the published start time of an exam (30 minutes for larger exams) until 15 minutes after the exam ends in order to give them sufficient time to collect in the papers.

Invigilators to check attendance according to seating plan.

Invigilators must not take any work into the exam room but give full attention to the conduct of the examination.

Invigilators must comply with all examination regulations and must start all examinations using the checklist at the front of the Exam Folder.

Internal Examinations

The EO will be responsible for the overview of the organisation of accommodation and invigilation for these exams where these exams take place as part of a centrally managed approach. Each department will be responsible for producing and copying exam papers, which are suitable from the time slot allocated to their subject. Departments must ensure that they are represented at the start of each exam and collect papers at the end. **If an internal exam has to be finished during lunch or after school, it is the responsibility of the department concerned to invigilate.**

EO to check with Cover Co-ordinator re: allocation of staff to avoid staff being used when required for early finish.

Despatch of Exam Scripts

The school will despatch exam papers to examiners via the system set up by the NAA. Labels are provided and an exam log must be completed; this is kept in reception. Until despatch all scripts will be kept under secure conditions and in accordance with advice given from the awarding bodies.

Results

Results are kept confidential until the official dates for the release of results to candidates. Only those staff who, in the opinion of the Head of Centre, need to be aware of this information will have access.

1. Results will be available for collection on the day notified by the exam boards only.
2. Subjects should check for the possibility of a re-mark/re-grade **within three days** of scrutiny of the results.
3. If a result is queried the EO will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark.

Post-Results Service

Students will be informed of the Post-Results Service at the time of results being despatched.

Clear instructions will be issued to students about the services available and the deadlines. The EO will ensure that where written consent from students is required then this will be sought.

Access Students

In cases where students have a specific learning difficulty or medical condition or impairment, they may be entitled to any or all of the following:

- Extra time for coursework and examinations
- Rest periods
- A reader
- A scribe
- Enlargements/models
- A helper
- A prompter
- Separate room/invigilator
- Use word processing/printing facility
- Read and Write Gold computer learning software

The Head of Inclusion/SENCO will make all decisions pertaining to access rights, will carry out relevant assessments in line with JCQ regulations and will inform the EO, who will continue to communicate with the exam boards at the beginning of a course, if any student is to be given Access Arrangements for coursework which carries marks towards a final mark.

The Head of Inclusion/SENCO will work with the EO to ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on their subject qualifications, exams and assessments and in a format they can easily access and understand.

For any access arrangements requiring a reader/scribe it is the duty of the reader/scribe to ensure that no unauthorised help is given to students.

The Head of Inclusion/SENCO, in consultation with the EO, will complete the special arrangement request forms for special needs candidates at the appropriate time and provide the necessary evidence to reach the exam boards on the stipulated dates.

Boards have a timetable of dates for the ordering of modified/enlarged papers for NCTs and GCSEs which must be complied with.

The early opening and checking of special needs candidates' papers should be conducted in the presence of the EO with the permission of the exam board, at an agreed time and any further enlargements/modifications completed by the designated person in good time for the start of the exam. In cases where extra time has been granted and the examination finishes after school hours, the candidate's papers will be given to the EO and locked away.

The necessary re-scheduling of internal and external exams for special needs students will be co-ordinated with the EO e.g. students who have extra time may not fit all their exams in one day.

Candidates with visual impairments may be granted an early start to examinations to allow time for rest breaks and extra time. Such candidates will be properly supervised at all times and have no contact with other candidates taking the same examination.

Candidates with extra help/time for Controlled Assessments/coursework/ non-examination assessments must ensure that it is all their own work. It is the responsibility of the Learning Support Department to ensure that all work is original.

Invigilators will be employed to monitor conduct during examinations.

All decisions on access arrangements, including the testing and compilation of evidence, are the responsibility of the Head of Inclusion/SENCO. These decisions will comply with all JCQ regulations.

Equality Act 2010

The Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy shows in greater detail how the school complies with the Equality Act 2010 and that we fully support disabled candidates.

Procedure for Appeals relating to Internal Assessment Decisions

Under Section 2, paragraph 19 (ix) of the Code of Practice produced by QCA, the Awarding Bodies require centres offering their examinations to

- Have a published appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions.
- Make this document available and accessible to candidates.

The grounds for appeal relate **only to procedures**; there is no requirement to make internally assessed coursework marks available to candidates before moderation.

Procedure for Appeals against procedures used in internal assessments

- Candidates will be informed by the member of staff i/c Examinations of their right to appeal against procedures used in internal assessments for public examinations.
- Candidates will have access to this Procedure for Appeals document upon request to the member of staff i/c Examinations.
- The appeal must come in the form of a written request from the parent/carer to the Head Teacher, setting out the grounds for the appeal.

The Appeal

1. The Head Teacher will appoint a panel consisting of a Head of Department not involved in the original process, a School Governor as an independent member and Head Teacher or the Assistant Head Teacher (acting as 'Head of Centre').
2. The panel will examine the evidence for the procedures used in the assessment and decide upon their appropriateness and that they have been properly followed, as required by the Awarding Body concerned.
3. The panel's findings will be formally reported back to the parent/carer.
4. Records of the request for appeal and the panel's evidence and deliberations will be kept by the Head Teacher's office. An Awarding Body might wish to examine this evidence at a future date.

Procedure for Appeals relating to External Assessment Decisions

Following publication of results candidates who wish to appeal may do so by completing the Enquiry About Results (EAR) Pro-forma. Under section 9, paragraph 5 of the Code of Practice produced by OFQUAL, the Awarding Bodies must provide notification of the outcome of any enquiry concerning a subject within an 18 to 40 day timeframe, depending on what type of enquiry has been made. Where an enquiry has been made, the original script cannot be returned until the enquiry is completed. Candidates are also able to use the Access to Scripts Service by each Exam Board, enabling them to receive the original script or a photocopied version.

Where EARs and Appeals are instigated by Departments or in the recommendation of the Head of Centre or Assistant Head Teacher line-managing exams, the cost will be borne by the school or department. Candidates must sign a candidate consent form. In all cases the candidates parent/carers/carers will be responsible for payment. As a general rule EARs or Appeals will not be made until payment has been received. Where there is a request by a candidate for support or an extension to pay the relevant fee, then the Assistant Head Teacher line-managing exams will decide. EARs and Appeals cannot be made by internal candidates themselves, as outlined in Section 9, Paragraph 12 of the Code of Practice produced by OFQUAL. Where candidates are still not happy with the outcome following a Stage 1 Appeal, then they should inform the Exams Officer in writing. A Stage 2 Appeal will be instigated on their behalf. The deadline for making a Stage 2 Appeal is within 14 calendar days of notification of an EAR enquiry. At Stage 2 the grounds for Appeal relate only to procedures and there is no guarantee that marks awarded will be amended. Nonetheless, the school will instigate a Stage 2 Appeal for the candidate provided that the deadlines as laid out in the information given to students have been met. Deadlines will

be strictly applied, without exception. Candidates are liable for all charges relating to a Stage 2 Appeal. Support can be given through the Disadvantaged Subsidy and candidates will be informed of this if they wish to Appeal at Stage 2.

External Appeals to the Examinations Appeals Board (EAB)

The EAB is independent of the awarding bodies and exists as a final avenue of appeal. The centre can **only** appeal if a Stage 2 appeal has been completed and candidates remain dissatisfied with the outcome. Appeals here must be made in writing by the Assistant Head Teacher line-managing exams within 3 weeks of receipt of the draft report detailing the outcome of an appeal to the awarding body.