

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

The Governing Body has adopted
The Meridian School Examinations Policy.

Date adopted by the Governing Body: June 2013

Chair of Governors: 

Date of Review: June 2015

Purposes

To ensure that:

- The exams system in this school combines entitlement with flexibility.
- Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate the highest achievement of which they are capable and competent; administration helps them to achieve their best.
- Students undertake examinations knowing what is expected of them in terms of preparation and behaviour.
- Students are guided in their decisions about whether to withdraw an examination entry and do so with full knowledge of the implications for their careers or further education.
- Staff understand fully their obligations and responsibilities with relation to examinations.
- The school meets the requirements of examination security and is properly equipped to undertake the administration of examinations, including data processing and a results service.
- Community education is provided with an administrative centre for GCSE and A level entries.
- Accurate examination data is available to inform target setting.
- Curriculum planning, target setting and careers links take into account up-to-date information on the current examinations system.

Guidelines

Responsibilities for public examinations:

- **Headteacher**, overall responsibility for the school as an examinations centre, is the Head of Centre.
- **Deputy head**, organisation of teaching and learning and therefore of the opportunities for external validation of courses followed at key stages 4 and post 16.
- **Heads of key stage, Senior Tutors and Head of Sixth Form** guidance and pastoral oversight of students who are unsure about examination entries or where alteration of the initial entry is made.
- **Heads of Department**, determining entries, level and tier and providing this information to the Exams Officer when requested.
- **Exams officer**, administration of entries, relevant paperwork, communication with the examination boards, organisation of examination sessions and invigilation, briefing candidates and ensuring good conduct, providing examination data, despatching examination papers and organising the post results procedures.

Exam Seasons

External examinations may be taken during November, and the Summer sessions.

Entries and amendments

The Exams Officer will instigate all entry procedures:

- Issuing estimated entry forms then final entry forms to Heads of Departments (HODs) for completion.
- Submitting all entries to the awarding bodies by the due dates.

Amendments:

- May come from candidates or their parents but must go through departments to the Exams Officer for input.
- Must reach the Exams Officer by the due date and be in writing.

Withdrawals:

- Must have the approval of the HOD and the Headteacher
- Must be given in writing

All entries, amendments and withdrawals must:

- Reach the Exams Officer by the due date. These dates will be notified to all staff by the Exams Officer.
- Late entries and amendments will be charged to departments unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Coursework

The Exams Officer will:

- Ensure that all HODs are aware of deadlines in the submitting of coursework and that all relevant paperwork is completed.
- Collate and send off coursework marks, samples and candidate declaration sheets by the due date
- Coordinate any queries.

Forecast grades

- Requests for Forecast Grades will be distributed to departments by the Exams officer and collected and submitted by the Exams Officer.

Access arrangements

- Any request for an access arrangement for an individual candidate must be made to the SENDCO/INCO.
- Requests must be made as early as possible in the academic year to enable all paperwork to be completed and submitted to the boards by the due dates.
- All pupils who require access arrangements will be identified by the SENDCO and requests completed for the boards. HODs must inform the SENDCO immediately of any decision to enter pupils in other year groups for exams to allow requests for access arrangements to be prepared.
- The Exams Officer will coordinate the compilation and submission of requests to the boards and process the replies.

Candidate briefing

In March or April of each year the Exams Officer will:

- Hold briefing sessions for Year 10, Year 11 and Sixth Form.
- Issue internally produced guidance notes, JCQ Notice to Candidates and timetables to each candidate.
- All procedures will be explained and the rules regarding misconduct stressed.

Clashes

- The Exams Officer will identify clashes between different exams when compiling the timetable and will resolve them in the least disruptive way by moving some exams.
- Wherever possible exams will remain on the same day as originally scheduled and will only be moved to the next day in exceptional circumstances. The Exams Officer will liaise with the boards on overnight arrangements.
- The Exams Officer will inform candidates how their clashes have been resolved and will issue a personal timetable.
- The Exams Officer will make all necessary arrangements for candidates to be supervised between moved exams.

Storage of papers

The Exams Officer will:

- Check exam papers immediately on arrival.
- Store in secure, double locked cabinets in the Exams cupboard.
- Label the cabinets clearly to allow papers to be retrieved efficiently.

Exam venues

- Wherever possible venues will be decided when the timetable is compiled by the Exams Officer.
- Any change of venue will be posted on the website and on notice boards.
- The caretaking staff set out the desks in the rooms.
- The Exams Officer sets out all other equipment and checks that JCQ requirements are being met.
- The Exams Officer compiles the seating plans for each session and ensures that each desk is correctly labelled with the candidates' details.

Invigilation

- External invigilators are recruited and trained by the Exams Officer.
- The Exams Officer determines the number of invigilators needed and organises the external invigilators to cover most sessions.
- Exams will be started and finished by the Exams Officer or experienced invigilators.

- Members of staff are not allowed any access to papers until the session is complete and all candidates have completed the exam. Spare papers will be distributed to HODs as soon as possible.
- Any absent candidates must be quickly identified by the invigilators and a message sent to the general office. Office staff will then contact individuals.
- If the invigilators suspect any malpractice they must quietly warn the individual, confiscate any inappropriate materials found and write down details of the incident on an Incident Report Sheet. The Exams Officer must be informed as soon as possible and definitely before the end of the exam. The Exams Officer will see the individual at the end of the exam and make a decision on the appropriate action. The Exams Officer together with the Head of Centre will send a report to the board when necessary.

Special consideration

- Any candidate may request that special consideration be given to their exam paper due to personal reasons. The request must be accompanied by written evidence, a doctor's note, or parent's letter.
- If there is a disturbance during the exam the invigilator should write all details on an Incident Report Sheet and the Exams Officer will make a report to the board on behalf of all candidates.

Charges

The school may impose a charge equal to the financial charges levied by examination boards on:

- Students whose entries are withdrawn because of lack of coursework.
- Students who make a decision to sit or not to sit an examination after the late entry/withdrawal deadline.
- Students who fail to attend an examination and do not produce medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances. This will be communicated in writing to students and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post 16 courses.

Results

- The Exams Officer will receive the results by EDI the day before they may be published and will compile preliminary statistics for the Head.
- When results are published appropriate staff will distribute results, be available to give guidance to students and prepare data for publication and monitoring purposes.
- Requests from the press will be dealt with by the Head or another member of SLT.

Enquiries about results

- Details of which enquiries are possible and the fees involved will be included in each candidate's results envelope.

- Any individual may request an enquiry or access to a script and they are responsible for any fee incurred.
- Departments may request enquiries with the permission of the Head, any fees incurred will be charged to the department.

Certificates

- Certificates will be distributed at Presentation Evening held in December.
- Candidates who do not attend the Presentation may collect certificates from the office or can arrange for them to be posted, the individual will pay for the postage.
- Certificates will be stored securely for twelve months

At post-16

- It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12 and AS awards will be cashed in at the end of year 12.
- Re-sits will be charged to the candidate. A level re-sits can be taken during the summer session. GCSE English and Maths re-sits can be taken in November or the Summer. Application forms for re-sits will be made available to candidates by the Exams Officer and must be returned by the due date. Any late applications may not be accepted or a late fee may be levied.

Examination appeals procedures

The school is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assesses students' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Staff that have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills should conduct assessments. Students' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the examination board. Where a set of work is divided between staff, consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation. If a student believes that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this appeals procedure. **Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade.**

The existence of this procedure is made known to students by reference in a letter and at the start of examinations courses and in this examinations policy, which is available for inspection on request.

1. Appeals should be made as soon as possible, and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examinations series.
2. Appeals should be made in writing to the examinations officer who will investigate the appeal. If the examinations officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, he/she will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise if the

examination officer is not able to conduct the investigation for any other reason.

3. The person conducting the investigation will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed with the requirements of the awarding body and examination code of practice of the QCA. This will be done before the end of the series.
4. The result of the appeal will be made known in writing to the parties concerned, together with any correspondence with the awarding body, any changes made to the assessment of the piece of work in question and any changes made for the future.
5. A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. **Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of the school and is not covered by this procedure.** Details of the appeals procedure for the relevant awarding body are available from the examination officer.

Internal examinations

- The exact nature of summative assessment in each subject will be determined ultimately by the subject leader within the rationale and purposes of this policy and other related policies.
- The cost of internal examination papers is the responsibility of subject areas.