Exam Policy

OMG Education (OMG) is committed to ensuring that all examination and assessment practices are conducted fairly, comply with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations, and meet the individual awarding body requirements and the Equality Act 2010. All staff involved in examination and assessment processes at the College are responsible for reading, understanding and implementing this policy.

The Exams Officer will review the exam policy annually.

The Director (Jamal Miah) has overall responsibility for the College as an exam centre and is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual malpractice incidents (refer to the JCQ document - Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments).

The Exams Officer (Waqas Riaz) manages the administration of exams and analysis of results. The responsibilities of the Exams Officer are as follows:

- To advise the Senior Management Team, tutors and relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies and update the Planning Cycle with exam dates at the beginning of the academic year
- To create and distribute to staff and learners the timetables of all exams in which they will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines
- To calculate and make entries online within the deadline produced by the awarding body
- To arrange and facilitate a JCQ inspection of the secure facilities if/when required
- To store securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- To make applications for special consideration when applicable
- To manage the expenditure of exam postage charges
- To organise the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- To oversee the setup and equipping of exam rooms
- To submit candidates' coursework marks and track the despatch of any other coursework material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- To disseminate the exam results and certificates to learners
- To liaise with centre managers with regards to set up and furnishing of exam rooms
- To securely keep accurate seating plans for all exams

The Curriculum Manager is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that learners' parents/carers are informed of the exam timetable in the weeks leading up to the first exam
- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- Training invigilators to successfully fulfil their role
- Accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Invigilators are expected to:

- Complete the yearly invigilator training arranged by the Exams officer
- Support the Exams Officer when preparing and equipping the exam room for the start of exams
- Supervise learners and ensure JCQ' Instructions for Conducting Examinations' are adhered to
- Check the personal details on exam entries are correct and inform the Exams Officer of any discrepancies
- Ensure they know the date, time and location of all the exams they are invigilating
- Create a drawn seating plan, mapping the positions of all learners within the exam room. This must be dated, titled with the name and level of the exam and filed by the Exams Officer after the exam.
- Read the exam instructions and give exam timings.
- Record start and finish times on a board that can be seen by all learners, and remind them when they have 10 or 20 minutes left as directed by the Exams Officer.

Receipt of Examination materials

- The delivery of all confidential examination materials received to OMG is logged by reception upon receipt using the exam materials receipt log.
- The receptionist will transfer the confidential materials to the exams officer to be stored in the secure storage room. The Exams officer will check the delivery against the delivery note and log the receipt of the confidential materials into the secure storage unit.

Exam Window Planning

Exam boards publish exam timetables for November and June series on their websites, and the Exams Officer will create exam plans for the exam period. This is a Google document and is shared with the whole staff team. A copy of the current exam plans is available during inspection.

The plans contain a tab for each separate exam which lists the details of:

- the students taking the exam
- access arrangements
- the room where they are sitting for their exam
- invigilator details
- A list of available staff to help plan for exam invigilation and contingency
- A list of the staff who have completed invigilation training

Access Arrangements

As per the Equality Act 2010, all candidates are entitled to equal opportunities, and all reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure that all candidates are able to take their examinations in a setting that meets their requirements and needs. Please refer to the OMG Disability and Special Educational Needs policies for more details.

The LLDD (Learner with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities) team complete their assessments of all learners to establish whether there are any access arrangement needs. The LLDD create an exam tracker, which is stored on google docs and shared with the Exams Officer (available to view during inspection).

The Exams Officer uses the information on the LLDD tracker to plan the exams for learners with Access arrangements. All learners entitled to readers or scribes with anxiety disorders who need a quiet exam space are accommodated in smaller classrooms or 1:1 rooms and have their own invigilator throughout the exam.

Learners who are entitled to extra time are grouped together in an extra time room so that the disruption of candidates leaving the exam is kept to an absolute minimum.

Word Processors during Examinations

Learners are assessed during their initial assessment period for their need for access arrangements during exams, including using a word processor. The learners' prior access arrangements, which form part of a learners' educational health plan, are also considered during this period.

Learners who may benefit from using a word processor include but are not limited to, learners with medical conditions, physical disability, sensory impairment, poor handwriting and long-term learning difficulty, preventing the learner from writing legibly. For a learner to be permitted to use a word processor during exams, it must be the learners' usual way of working during their lessons.

Details of learners who are entitled to use a word processor for examinations are recorded onto the access arrangements tracker; this is used when planning examinations throughout the academic year.

Word processing cover sheets provided by JCQ are used for all learners who use a word processor during an exam.

Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

Where possible, available tutors will be asked to invigilate before any other staff are employed; however, tutors will not invigilate their own subject exams. These invigilators will be trained and timetabled by the Exams Officer.

The Exams Officer will book all examination rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other examination stationery and materials available for the invigilators.

- All invigilators will meet with the Exams Officer before an exam to be briefed about any changes or additional information needed.
- The lead invigilator or Exams Officer will start all examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Exam papers must not be removed from the examination room before the end of an exam. The Exams Officer will collect the papers from the exam room at the end of the exam.
- Staff in the exam room must operate the exam room to JCQ, and a copy of the JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations handbook must be present in each examination room.

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exam administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer. The Exams Officer has an allocated chain of command who has a full overview of the specific plans for the exam window and will have access to the secure facilities via the operations manager.

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Contingency Plan for Building Emergency

In the event that the building cannot be accessed on the day of the exam, the following procedure will apply:

- The Exams officer arrives to check the site at 9:00 am on exam days and does a check on the building.
- They should ring the operations managers immediately if the building cannot be accessed.
- After establishing why the building is inaccessible, the Exams officer should call the Exam board for advice.

Ordering exam papers

- Exam papers are ordered in advance and have a specific final entry date as set by JCQ. All Exam entry deadlines are scheduled in the Exam officer and Deputy Exam officer's calendar, with a week-in-advance reminder set.
- The Examinations officer will follow the examination board process to create and order the correct exam papers. Yearly Exam officer training is completed to keep up to date with any changes. When papers are ordered, the receptionist must be informed about the delivery.
- If the Examinations officer is absent when the papers arrive at the Centre, they are to be immediately locked in the exam cupboard by the Operations Manager, who has the spare key to the examinations room and cupboard in the safe. The Operations Manager must inform the examinations officer/deputy examinations officer that the papers have arrived, and the operations manager must be accompanied to the Exam storage room. The operations manager must complete the Exam storage log, including a signature.
- On the receipt of the exam papers, the exam officer must open the outer packets of the exam materials and double-check that the received papers match the order. The contents of the delivery must be recorded on the exam storage log on the wall in the exam storage room.

Contingency Plan for Exam Day

- If the Exams officer is absent on the day of the exam, the Curriculum Manager officer will complete the duties of the Exams officer as set out in this policy.

Contingency Plan for breaks in education

- If a teacher has prolonged absence during the academic year, a suitable subject-specific tutor would be in the post to ensure a continuous level of education is maintained, and learners receive the correct preparation for examinations.

Exam Day Process

- The exams Officer prints off the exam details for the day & checks that the setup of the exam rooms meets JCQ guidelines.
- The Exams officer puts up the exam room posters inside and outside the room and completes the information board for each room.

- The Exams officer puts post-it notes with the candidate's name, number and any access arrangements on the desks in the exam rooms.
- The exams Officer puts out the equipment allowed for the exam according to JCQ guidelines.
- The Exams Officer locks all exam rooms.
- The Exams Officer meets with all the invigilators to advise of any changes to the exam plans, answer any questions they have, and advise them to go to their allocated exam room.
- The Exam Officer Liaises with the Curriculum Manager about missing candidates and all missing candidates that have not arrived by 9:00 am are called.
- Half an hour before the exam is due, the Exams Officer goes with an invigilator to the secure cabinet and removes the correct exam papers. The invigilator double checks the papers are for the correct date and time. This information is recorded on the second pair of eyes check forms. The Secure cabinet is then locked.
- Where it is required that exam packs need to be opened and papers are split to accommodate different rooms, this must be completed in the secure storage room. All exam papers that are removed from the secure packet must be put into an envelope and sealed before leaving the secure storage room. The sealed envelopes must then be delivered to the exam rooms by the exam officer and handed over to the head invigilator in the exam room.
- Candidates are asked to leave their coats, bags and mobile devices in the cloakroom for the duration of their exam.
- Candidates are asked to go to their exam room 10 minutes prior to the exam.
- The exam room invigilator will complete the seating plan.
- The Exams officer takes the papers to the exam rooms, giving complete packets of unopened exams where possible. The Lead invigilator will receive the exam papers and issue them to candidates.
- The Lead invigilators start the exam by reading the information to candidates and recording the start time on the notice board.
- The Exam Officer will do a sweep of the building 10 minutes after the start of the exam to ensure all exam rooms have started.
- The Exams Officer is located in the reception area to manage late candidates or issues arising during the exam.
- The Exams Officer will collect the exam scripts from each exam room at the end of the exam period.
- The Exams Officer and the Deputy Exams Officer will check all exam scripts for names and centre numbers which are marked on the attendance register.
- The completed exam scripts are packed into the Exam Board Stationary bags and returned to the secure cabinet to await collection from the Parcel Force Yellow Label service.
- The Despatch log is completed (copies of the dispatch log are stored in the exam folder in the exam storage room).
- The Exam storage log must be completed.
- All Unused exam scripts are locked in the secure cabinet.

Procedures for Removing Learners from the Exam Room

Where a candidate creates a disturbance, the following procedure should be followed:

- The candidate will be asked to stop causing the disruption and informed that if they carry on disturbing the exam, they will be removed from the room.
- If the candidate fails to stop, the invigilator must report the learner to the Exams Officer.

- It will be the decision of the Exams Officer to remove the learner and relocate to another exam space or remove them completely from the exam room and send them home without allowing them to complete the exam.

A candidate who involuntarily causes a disturbance, e.g. by a fit of coughing, must be asked to leave the room and told they will be re-admitted once the Exams Officer is satisfied that the disturbance is unlikely to recur for the time being. Extra time will be allowed to make up for the time lost.

Emergency Evacuation of the Exam Room

- On hearing the alarm signal, the invigilator will immediately stop the examination and make a note of the time.
- The invigilator will remind candidates they are still under exam conditions and ask them to leave the room in silence and in a single file, ensuring all question papers and scripts are left in the exam room.
- All learners and staff will leave the building by the nearest fire exit, and learners will be escorted to the assembly point as quickly as possible.
- No rooms are locked, and nobody is permitted to use the lifts.
- Learners must be supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the exam room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination. Invigilators will remain with them at all times.
- The Exams Officer will take a register of invigilators and learners.
- Once the operations manager has given the all-clear, candidates must be escorted back into the exam room.
- The invigilator will note when the examination can resume and allow the candidates the full working time set for the exam.
- The invigilator must write a full report of the incident on the exam room incident log and of the action taken and give it to the Exams Officer.
- The Exams Officer must then inform the Awarding Body.

Staff Responsibility

The Curriculum Manager is responsible for ensuring that all GCSE Spoken Language endorsements are completed under JCQ Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments guidelines within the dates published by the examination board.

The Examinations officer is responsible for ensuring that the Curriculum Manager has received the relevant training and information from the JCQ Instructions for conducting the non-examination assessments booklet.

The Curriculum Manager is responsible for ensuring that All English teachers carrying out the spoken language endorsement recordings have been trained in the exam board guidelines for conducting the non-examination assessment.

Appeals against internally assessed marks

In accordance with the Code of Practice for the conduct of external qualifications produced by the QCA, OMG is committed to ensuring that:

- Staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills conduct internal assessments.

- Assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant Specifications for each subject.
- The consistency of internal assessment is assured through internal standardisation as set out by the Awarding Bodies.
- Staff responsible for internal standardisation and/or assessment attend any compulsory training sessions.

Online Examinations

Online examinations are completed for some of the vocational courses on offer at OMG. Online examinations follow the JCQ instruction for conducting on-screen tests. OMG only conduct online tests in authorised centres as agreed with the awarding body.

Administering On-screen Examinations

- The exam officer schedules the on-screen exams online with the relevant exam board.
- The on-screen exams are sent out 24hrs in advance to the administration dashboard which the exams officer operates.
- All Exams are completed on specific examination laptops with the required software installed.
- The exams officer will log into each computer and download the individual exams. Each exam has a unique ID and password.
- The exams officer will allocate invigilators to the virtual exam room.
- Exam room notices and warning to candidate's notices are displayed inside and outside of the examination room.

Conducting Online Examinations

- Immediately prior to the exam, the invigilator will check that the computers are all working and have the correct software downloaded.
- The invigilator will read out the information for candidates for the on-screen test notice and also supply the candidates with a hard copy of the information.
- Candidates will be advised of the usual exam room regulations as per the displayed notices.
- candidates log into their examination using their unique ID and Password
- When all candidates are logged into the examination system, the administrator selects and authorises the exam, and the candidates then start the exam.
- The On-screen exams have a set time for the examination; this includes extra time agreed through access arrangements online for eligible candidates.
- When the on-screen examination is complete, the exam software automatically saves and uploads the candidates' exams.
- Candidates are allowed to leave the exam room when their on-screen examination is complete.

Risk Assessment for on-screen exams

- On-Screen exams have a window of 4 hours from the designated start time of the exam, in which the exam must be completed.
- Software is checked by the exams officer the day prior to the exam taking place to ensure all software is installed correctly and is up to date.

- The emergencies evacuations procedure is followed during on-screen examinations, and the on-screen test procedure for emergency evacuations will apply; this is awarding body specific, and their procedure will be applied.
- The exam room incident log will be completed in all disruptions to the on-screen exam and forwarded to the relevant awarding body.

Written Appeals Procedure

Each Awarding Body publishes procedures for appeals against its decisions, and the Examinations Officer will be able to advise students and parents of these procedures.

Appeals may be made to OMG regarding the procedures used in internal assessment but not the actual marks or grades submitted by the OMG for moderation by the Awarding Body.

A student or parent wishing to appeal against the procedures used in internal assessments should contact the Examinations Officer as soon as possible to discuss the appeal, and a written appeal must be received at least two weeks before the date of the last external exam in the subject.

Upon receipt of a written appeal, the Examinations Officer will inquire into the internal assessment. This enquiry will consider whether the internal assessment procedures conformed to the Awarding Body's published requirements.

The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including details of any relevant communication with the Awarding Body and any steps taken to protect the candidates' interests further.

Information for Students

If at any stage during your exam courses, you have concerns about the procedures used in assessing your internally marked work for public exams (e.g. coursework/portfolio/projects/performance), you should first speak with your subject teacher and/or the Curriculum Manager and discuss the matter fully with them. Hopefully, this will resolve the situation.

If you are still unhappy, you should then see the Examinations Officer as soon as possible. The Examinations Officer, Waqas Riaz, can be contacted via email at waqas.riaz@omgeducation.co.uk.