ABINGDON
HOUSE SCHOOL

Exams policy

Responsible Person: Jonathan Mansell - Headteacher
Last Review Date: April 2026
Review Cycle: Annual
Next Review Date: April 2027

In all AHSP Policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word “parent” imports the meaning parent, guardian, carer or any other person in whom is vested the legal duties and responsibilities of a child’s primary caregiver.

If you require a copy of this document in large print, braille or audio format, please contact the AHSP Office.

AHSP employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure compliance is met and best practice is implemented:

Peninsula HR Online
Peninsula Business Safe (Health and Safety)
Care Check (DBS)
Educare (online CPD)

Introduction

Abingdon House School, Purley (AHSP) is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in AHSP documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as updated, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility updated August 2023 considers a 'parent' to include:
all biological parents, whether they are married or not
any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of, among others, the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

Peninsula BrightHR
Peninsula Health and Safety
Atlantic Data (DBS)
Educare (online CPD)
SchoolPro (data protection)
Marsh Commercial (insurance)
VWV (legal)

AHSP is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at AHSP.

The policy documents of AHSP are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect before the scheduled re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

Contents

1. Introduction and aims 4
2. Roles and responsibilities 4
3. Qualifications offered 6
4. Exam series 7
5. Exam timetables 7
6. Entries (including entry details and late entries) 7
7. Exam fees 8
8. Equalities 8
9. Access arrangements 8
10. Contingency planning 10
11. Estimated grades 10
12. Managing invigilators 10
13. Malpractice 10
14. Exam days 11
15. Candidates 11
16. Special consideration 12
17. GCE and GCSE non-examination assessments 12
18. Results and certificates 13
19. Monitoring and review 14
20. Links with other policies 14

1. Introduction and aims

AHSPurley is committed to ensuring that exams are managed and administered effectively.

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- The planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- Our system of exams administration is efficient and clear, and staff and pupils understand what is required and expected of them
- We comply with requirements and guidance set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding bodies

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Everyone

Everyone involved in our exam processes, including staff and pupils, must read, understand and implement this policy.

2.2 Head of centre

The head of centre:

- Has overall responsibility for the Abingdon House School, Purley as an exams centre
- Is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is compliant with the JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements
- Is responsible for ensuring that all staff comply with the JCQ guidelines
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Ensures that JCQ guidance for centres on cyber security is followed
- Ensures that accurate candidate contact information is obtained and maintained
- Ensures appropriate controls are in place that allow accurate data to be submitted to the awarding bodies, e.g. entries and internally assessed marks
- Ensures that candidates are entered under names that can be verified against suitable identification such as a birth certificate, driver's license or passport. A candidate should only be entered under alternative names in exceptional circumstances

Our head of centre is Jonathan Mansell (Headteacher).

2.3 Exams officer

The exams officer is responsible for the administration of exams. They:

- Manage the administration of internal and/or external exams
- Advise the senior leadership team (SLT), subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by awarding bodies
- Oversee the production and distribution of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved, and communicate regularly with staff about imminent deadlines and events. This calendar must be provided to all staff and candidates

- Ensure that candidates and their parents/carers are informed of, and understand, aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them
- Check with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Receive, check and securely store all exam papers and completed scripts, and ensure that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- Administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ guidance on the special consideration process
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manage the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Ensure candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks are submitted correctly and on schedule, along with any other material required by the awarding bodies
- Track, dispatch and store returned coursework/controlled assessments
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates, and forward, in consultation with the SLT, any post-results service requests
- Report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, in line with the JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Advise on appeals and re-marks
- Are one of the key holders to the secure room with question papers and pre-release materials

Our exams officer is Rob Coppin.

Your exams officer may be a member of the SLT. In larger schools or colleges, your exams officer is more likely to be a member of administrative staff, rather than a member of the SLT or a teacher.

2.4 Subject Teachers/Leads

Are responsible for:

- Advising the exams officer of any changes to syllabus or assessment details for their subjects
- Advising the exams officer of entries for their subjects
- Guidance and pastoral care for candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries
- Accurately completing entry and mark sheets, and adhering to deadlines as set by the exams officer
- Accurately completing coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Decisions on post-results procedures
- Supplying information about entries, coursework and controlled assessments

2.5 Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so they can put exam day arrangements in place
- Ensuring usual practice in lessons supports access arrangements and students most effectively
- Processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)
- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms

Our SENCO is Katherine Taylor.

2.6 Lead invigilator(s)

The lead invigilator(s) are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer to run exams efficiently, according to JCQ regulations
- Collecting exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- Collecting all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring they're returned to the exams office

Our lead invigilator is TBC.

2.7 Candidates

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirming and signing entries
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations, and signing a declaration that confirms the coursework to be their own
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations

3. Qualifications offered

The Headteacher decides the qualifications we offer.

We offer the following types of qualifications:

GCSE, NCFE, and Functional Skills.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any school year may be found in our prospectus.

If there will be a change to a specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed in good time.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of Subject Leads.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Headteacher and Exams Officer (Academic Director) in consultation with Subject Leads.

4. Exam series

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled frequently in order to help our students gain familiarity with exams, access arrangements and exam procedures.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in line with National timetables.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

5. Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and/or external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

6. Entries (including entry details and late entries)

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

We accept entries from private candidates.

We do not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of subject leads via email and briefing meetings.

Subject Leads 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 require authorisation, in writing, by the exams officer.

6.1 Re-sits

We allow re-sits for the following types of qualifications:

Delete as appropriate:

- GCSEs
- BTECs
- NCFEs
- Principle learning
- Functional skills

Re-sit decisions will be made by the Leadership Team.

7. 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 of each exams series.

Candidates may be charged for the following:

QUALIFICATION TYPE	WHEN CANDIDATES WILL BE CHARGED	COSTS
GCSEs	• Private exam entries • Re-sits at parents/carers' request • Missed exams (without medical or other extenuating circumstances)	• Entries and re-sits: £30 • Missed exams: dependent on charges levied by the exam board

We may waive these fees in certain circumstances.

8. Equalities

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

We will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that we provide to candidates in accordance with the requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the head of centre, exams officer and the SENCO.

9. Access arrangements

The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs (SEN) 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.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCO and Headteachers.

Room arrangements for candidates using access arrangements will be organised by the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for candidates using access arrangements, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the exams officer and lead invigilator. Where candidates sit their examinations in a smaller environment away from the main examination room (the suitability of which is to be assessed in conjunction with JCQ guidelines.

9.1 Use of word processors

Due to our students additional needs our students regularly use ChromeBooks and assistive technology in lessons; they become their usual way of working. So that, where appropriate, we will allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate as part of access arrangements.

The SENCO will use their judgement, in collaboration with relevant members of staff where necessary, to make decisions about when a word processor is appropriate outside the specific listed examples above.

We will make sure that:

- The proposed arrangement will not disadvantage or advantage a candidate.
- The use of a word processor will not compromise the assessment objectives or the integrity of the assessment and will be used under secure conditions. Where these objectives would be compromised, then a word processor will not be granted for use by a candidate

We will also make sure that the word processor:

- Has the spelling and grammar check and predictive text software disabled
- Does not have internet connectivity during the exam
- Has been cleared of any previously stored data, along with any portable storage medium used (and where any authorised memory stick is provided to or used by the candidate, the memory stick will be cleared of any previously stored data)
- Does not allow access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited), spreadsheets or emails
- Does not have graphic packages or computed-aided design software, unless permission is given
- Does not have computer reading (text to speech) software, unless the candidate has permission
- Does not have speech recognition technology, unless the candidate has permission

The word processor will not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

All equipment will be checked to make sure it's in working order and sufficiently charged for the duration of the examination.

Candidates provided with the use of a word processor will be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. Where we accommodate a candidate in another room, a separate invigilator will be present.

Candidates will be:

- Reminded to make sure that the centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer, or to handwrite their details on the printed documents where this feature is not available (where the candidate needs to handwrite their details, they will be supervised to make sure that's solely what they're doing and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way)
- Reminded to save their work at regular intervals, unless 'autosave' has been set up on the device to make sure that the candidate's work is not lost because of a technical issue
- Advised to use a minimum font size of 12pt and double spacing

Each page of the typed script will be numbered.

The word processor will be connected to a printer so that the script can be printed off and will be done once the examination is over. The candidate must be present to verify that the work is their own and then the script will be attached to any answer booklet that contains some of the answers. We may also be required by the awarding body to include a word processor cover sheet with the candidate's typed script.

We may retain electronic copies of a word-processed script and this may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost and it is demonstrated that the file has been kept securely.

10. Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exam administration is the responsibility of the head of centre and exams officer and all centres must have a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration, in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

All relevant centre staff must be familiar with the contingency plans, which are available via email/ noticeboards/briefing meetings and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

11. Estimated grades

Subject Leads are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested.

12. Managing invigilators

External staff will at times be used to invigilate examinations. The head of centre, a senior member of centre staff or the exams officer must ensure that a teacher, a teaching assistant, a tutor or a senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined or a Learning Support Assistant who has supported one or more candidates, is not an invigilator during the examination.

These invigilators will be used for external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams officer and any new invigilators and/or those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions must receive thorough training on JCQ guidelines

If invigilators require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks our Office Manager is responsible for obtaining these.

DBS fees are paid by the centre.

Invigilators rates of pay are set by the head of centre, SLT or Bursar.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained and briefed by the exam officer.

13. Malpractice

The head of centre, in consultation with the exams officer, is responsible for ensuring that suspected malpractice is thoroughly investigated. Malpractice doesn't necessarily involve an intention to cheat or gain an unfair advantage. Examples of malpractice include, but are not limited to:

- Unauthorised use of mobile phone or internet-enabled device in examinations
- Copying or allowing work to be copied
- Posting work on social media prior to an exam
- Inappropriate support by a scribe
- Miss use or allocation of access arrangements
- Collusion or working collaboratively

Candidates will be thoroughly briefed well before examination periods and before every exam of the rules and expectations. Signage will comply with JCQ guidelines but additional visual signage will support our students' understanding of the rules.

If any malpractice is suspected the Exams Officer will be notified immediately. The Head of Centre will also be notified. The Exams Officer will immediately notify the Awarding Body and follow their procedures and guidelines.

Any member of staff suspected of malpractice will be notified in writing prior to any formal investigation.

14. Exam days

The exams officer will:

- Book all exam rooms (after liaising with other relevant users)
- Make question papers, exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator

Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements in advance of the exams.

The invigilators and exams officer will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject Leaders and Teachers 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 Subject Leads in accordance with JCQ's recommendations after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed exam scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with the school support staff.

Emergency evacuation of the examination room will be outlined within the centre's exam contingency policy, which will be subject to inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

In the event of an emergency, a full report of the incident must be produced and retained on file and any breach of question paper security or malpractice must be reported to the awarding body immediately.

15. 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 invigilators, Exams Officer, SLT.

Our published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and we accept 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 devices with text or digital facilities.

Any precluded items must not be taken into the 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 Exams Officer.

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

The the exams officer] is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

15.1 Overseas candidates

The head of centre and exams officer] is responsible for managing overseas candidates.

15.2 Private candidates

The head of centre and exams officer are responsible for managing private candidates.

15.3 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible for making arrangements for clash candidates, including:

- Supervising escorts
- Identifying a secure venue
- Arranging overnight stays where necessary

16. Special consideration

If a candidate is unable to attend an exam because of illness, bereavement, or other trauma, or if a candidate becomes ill or otherwise disadvantaged during an exam, they are responsible for alerting the exams officer or the head of centre to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 2 days of the exam.

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 2 days of the exam.

17. GCE and GCSE non-examination assessments

Teaching staff who deliver non-examination assessments will follow the correct specifications and the specification and instructions provided by the awarding body, or JCQ instructions for conducting non-examination assessments if appropriate.

It is the duty of Subject Leads to ensure that all non-examination 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 internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by Subject Leads. The exams officer will inform staff of the deadline date for appeals against internal assessments.

Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with our internal appeals procedure document.

17.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. AHSPurley recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Pupils **may not** use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
- To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

Pupils **may** use AI tools:

- As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas

- When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed

Where a pupil uses an AI tool, the pupil should retain a copy of the question(s) asked and the AI-generated responses. Pupils must submit this along with the assessment.

Staff should:

- Be aware that AI tools are still being developed and should use such tools with caution as they may provide inaccurate, inappropriate or biased content
- Make students aware of the risks of using AI tools and that they need to appropriately reference AI as a source of information to maintain the integrity of assessments

For more information on AI misuse, see guidance from JCQ on AI use in assessments. Any misuse of AI tools may be treated as malpractice.

18. Results and certificates

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days. Due to our students wide geographical spread we will send out certificates at 9.00am on results days.

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

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the exams officer.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the exams officer and the head of centre.

Dates of results days each year will be publicised for all candidates through [the school website/information leaflets/letters home/etc.

18.1 Enquiries about results (EARs)

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 a group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre.

The cost of EARs is set out in section 7 of this policy (‘Exam fees’).

All decisions about whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by Subject Leads.

If a candidate’s request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and we will respond by following the process in our internal appeals procedure document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the exams officer or head of centre], following the JCQ guidance.

18.2 Access to scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 7 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.

Applications for EARs cannot be submitted once an original script has been returned.

The exams officer is responsible for processing requests for ATS.

The cost of ATS will be paid by the centre.

If the candidate will pay the cost of ATS, add the following line and amend section 7 accordingly:

The cost of ATS is set out in section 7 of this policy ('Exam fees').

19. Monitoring and review

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every [number] years.

Your school can decide how often to review the policy. We recommend you do this every 3 years unless there are changes to:

- The exams system
- JCQ guidance
- Your curriculum offer

20. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Exam contingency plan
- Whistle-blowing policy
- Conflict of interests policy
- Complaints policy
- Data protection policy