

# **Looe Community Academy**

## **Exam Policy**

Revised January 2016

### **Contents**

- 1. Exam responsibilities**
- 2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered**
- 3. Exam seasons and timetables**
- 4. Entries, entry details and late entries**
- 5. Exam fees**
- 6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements**
- 7. Managing invigilators and exam days**
- 8. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration**
- 9. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments**
- 10. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)**
- 11. Certificates**

### **Appendices:**

- A External Candidates
- B GCSE and BTEC Controlled Assessment Policy
- C Internal Appeals Procedure
- D BTEC Registration & Certification Policy
- E BTEC Assessment Policy

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This exam policy will be reviewed every two years.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the deputy head (responsible for curriculum and examinations), exams officer and the governors.

## 1. Exam responsibilities

### Head of centre

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

### Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ *Access arrangements and special considerations regulations* and *Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations*

- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manages and organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Supports the SLT to prepare and present reports to the Governors showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made, submits candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and submits enquiries, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.

### **Deputy Head**

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16. Leaders of Faculty and Work Related Learning Coordinator
- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.

### **Year Team Leader for Years 10 and 11**

- Guidance and careers information.

### **Teachers**

- Liaison with specialist SEN teacher regarding access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to leaders of subject regarding levels of entry.
- Accurate completion of all mark sheets and declaration sheets.

### **Specialist SEN Teacher**

- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- Provision of additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to help candidates achieve their course aims.

### **Invigilators**

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Supervision of exam candidates according to JCQ regulations
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.

## **Candidates**

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

## **2. Qualifications offered**

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the senior leadership team.

The qualifications currently offered are GCSE, Entry Level, BTEC, Functional Skills and appropriate vocational qualifications.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published options booklet for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by the end of the second week of the autumn term.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, leaders of subject and the deputy heads. The final decision will be made by the deputy head responsible for curriculum and examinations.

At key stage 4 all candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

## **3. Exam seasons and timetables**

### 3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled for all year groups per the annually produced school calendar.

External exams are usually scheduled in and May & June. Mock exams are held under external exam conditions.

Leaders of subject decide which exam series are to be used in the centre.

### 3.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal exams and external exams.

## **4. Entries, entry details and late entries**

### 4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected by the deputy heads and the leaders of subject for their exam entries with due regard to equality of opportunity and non-discrimination.

Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal, which will be considered by the leader of subject and deputy heads.

The centre accepts external entries as per the external candidate policy found in Appendix A.

The Academy reserves the right not to accept an entry from an external candidate.

#### 4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email.

Late entries are authorised by the exams officer.

### **5. Exam fees**

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of internal candidates. Late entry or amendment fees are usually paid by the centre.

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.

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

#### 6.1 DDA

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

#### 6.2 Special needs

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

The specialist SEN teacher or the Exams officer will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The specialist SEN teacher or the Exams officer can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

#### 6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the exams officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the exams officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams officer.

The centre must keep on record a Form 8 or equivalent, and a data protection consent form signed by the candidate.

## **7. Managing invigilators and exam days**

### 7.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for some internal exams and all external exams. The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration

Securing the necessary Data Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre. In order to maintain continuity of the DBS clearance, invigilators will have paid contact with the centre for either training or invigilation at least once in any 3 month period, or have signed up to the DBS update service.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams officer.

### 7.2 Exam days

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

Site management is responsible for setting up the main exam room. All exams will be started in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff who are present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

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

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will not be distributed to teachers until the following day.

## **8. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration**

### 8.1 Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times, in addition to those of the JCQ.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.

The exams officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

### 8.2 Clash candidates

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

### 8.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the exams officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor, and complete Form 14. The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

## **9. Coursework/Controlled Assessments and appeals against internal assessments**

### 9.1 Coursework/Controlled Assessments (see also Appendix B)

Candidates who have to prepare coursework/controlled assessments should do so by the teacher's requested deadline.

Leaders of departments will ensure all work is ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the leaders of learning.

### 9.2 Appeals against internal assessments

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

## **10. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)**

### 10.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae).

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

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the head of centre.

### 10.2 EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. NB Both staff and/or candidates who wish to pursue an EAR must do so immediately and within the time frame published annually by the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) and which is available at the time of enquiry from the

school's Examination Officer. All candidates must sign a consent form prior to any application being submitted.

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, payment must be made in advance of the appeal.

10.3 ATS (See also section 5: Exam fees)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

## **11. Certificates**

Certificates are collected and signed for by candidates.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so in writing.

Replacement certificates are only issued by the Awarding Bodies at the candidate's expense.

The centre retains certificates for one year after which they can be destroyed.



## **Appendix A**

### **Looe Community Academy External Candidates**

This policy covers all entries made by Looe Community Academy Examinations Office on behalf of External Candidates for GCSE, iGCSE and Functional Skills examinations.

#### **Entries**

Entries will be accepted for the Summer series. Entry deadline is **21 February** each year. When requesting entries to be made, consideration should be given to this date falling on a weekend or during half term.

Looe Community Academy cannot accept any entries or amendments after this date.

#### **Fees**

External Candidates will be charged a fee which will incorporate the published examination fee along with our administration, invigilation and any postage costs. Current fees (subject to change) for administration are £35 per examination. Payment is requested in advance.

Additional charges will be made should a candidate require separate invigilation, any other access arrangements or require a claim to be made for special consideration. Fees will vary depending on individual circumstances. Please speak to the Examination Office if you require any of these services.

A refund of fees will not be made once entries have been submitted to the Examinations Board.

#### **Controlled Assessments**

Looe Community Academy cannot be responsible for overseeing or the marking of any controlled assessments components attached to an exam entry.

#### **Oral/Practical Examinations**

Looe Community Academy cannot administer oral components for language examinations or practical components of a specification.

#### **Specification Choice**

It is the responsibility of the candidate or their tutor to choose an appropriate specification and provide these details to the Examination Office. Looe Community Academy cannot advise on choice of specification/awarding body and will not be held responsible for any late fees that arise from amendments.

Further information on specifications, together with Private Candidate Guidance, is available from the awarding bodies' websites.

#### **Access Arrangements**

It is the responsibility of the candidate to advise the Examinations Officer as soon as possible of any additional requirement which needs to be addressed. The candidate will be required to

provide supporting evidence of such need and we will make the necessary applications to the Exam Boards. Should a candidate require separate invigilation or any other access arrangement an additional charge will be made.

### **Certificates**

Certificates will be posted to candidates by recorded delivery.

## **Appendix B**

### **GCSE and BTEC Controlled Assessment Policy**

#### **Introduction**

It is a requirement of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) that all examination centres have a policy for controlled assessment in place from the autumn term of 2010.

Controlled assessment is the form of internal assessment that has largely replaced GCSE coursework. It encourages an integrated approach to teaching, learning and assessment. It is intended to enable teachers to authenticate and confirm that students have carried out the assessment tasks set in accordance with awarding body specifications.

Controlled assessment applies different levels of control (Low, Medium or High) at each stage of the assessment process: task setting, task taking and task marking. In some subjects, the awarding body will mark work. For most subjects, however, work will be marked by the centre and moderated by the awarding body.

This policy lists the responsibilities of the relevant staff in terms of organising, administering and overseeing controlled assessment.

#### **1. Senior Leadership Team**

Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments. Ensure assessments comply with the JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject specific instructions.

In the summer term, begin co-ordinating with Subject leaders to schedule controlled assessments. (It is advisable that controlled assessments be spread throughout the academic Years of Key Stage 4 or as appropriate for GCSE courses studied in other Years).

Map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve:

- clashes/ problems over the timing or operation of controlled assessments;
- issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school, etc

Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events.

Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for controlled assessments. (See Appendix C)

#### **2. Subject Leaders**

Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments* .

Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.

Supply to the Examinations Officer details of all unit codes for controlled assessments. Ensure that at least 40% of overall assessment (controlled and/or external assessment) is taken in the exam series in which the qualification is certificated to satisfy the terminal

assessment requirement in accordance with the awarding body specification, where applicable. Submit plans for the Controlled Assessment, outlining the task setting, task taking and task marking, indicating the control level, and highlighting any particular requirements to the member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for the overview of Controlled Assessment.

Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.

Ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.

Ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.

Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualize sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.

Ensure that individual teachers are aware of any eligibility for access arrangements students may have.

### **3. Teaching staff**

Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments* .

Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.

Obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials, including mark schemes are stored securely at all times.

Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specifications allow.

Ensure that students and supervising teacher(s) sign authentication forms on completion of each assessment.

Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates' work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.

Ask the exams officer for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

### **4. Examinations Officer**

Enter students for individual units, whether assessed by controlled assessment, external

examination or on-screen test, before the awarding bodies deadlines for final entries.

Ensure that the Leader of Learning understands the level of control required for their particular assessed unit, as given by the examining body.

Collaborate with SENCO or the specialist SEN teacher to ensure that applications are made for access arrangements for eligible students.

Enter students' 'cash-in codes' for the terminal examination series.

Where confidential materials are received directly by the examinations office, to be responsible for the receipt, safe storage and safe transmission whether in hard copy or CD/DVD format.

Receive/download and distribute marksheets for teaching staff to use, and collect and submit completed marksheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.

On those few occasions when controlled assessment tasks cannot be conducted in the classroom, arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be undertaken, in collaboration with the Deputy Head (Curriculum).

#### **5. Special Educational Needs Coordinator/Specialist SEN Teacher**

Ensure identification and testing of those students who may be eligible for access arrangements.

Collaborate with Examinations Officer to ensure that appropriate access arrangements are made for eligible students.

Work with teaching staff to ensure that requirements for support staff are met.

## **Appendix C**

### **INTERNALLY ASSESSED EXAMINATION WORK** **Internal Appeals Procedure**

The Examination Awarding Bodies require centres offering their examinations to ensure that a published appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions is available to all candidates.

The School and departments within it do their best to maintain consistency and accuracy in assessment and awarding. The guidelines drawn up by the Awarding Bodies are followed as:

1. In the first instance any candidate and/or parent who is dissatisfied with an internal assessment decision should speak to the Subject Leader involved. Often any uncertainty regarding the procedures by which a mark has been awarded can be clarified easily by such a discussion.
2. If an appeal is considered, ideally it should be undertaken before any deadline for submission of marks to the Awarding Body. Once the marks have been submitted it is more difficult to have them changed.

**In this regard it is therefore very important that any deadline for submission of work is kept.**

3. If it has not been possible to appeal before the internally assessed marks are submitted to the board an appeal will still be considered following the same procedures outlined below. It should be noted in this case that it is likely that the process will be prolonged.
4. In the event of a candidate wishing to appeal the reasons should be submitted in writing to:
  - The Head Teacher
  - The Deputy Head Teacher responsible for Curriculum and Examinations
  - The Examinations Officer
5. The Head Teacher will appoint a panel of at least three people to consider the appeal. At least one of these should not have been involved in the internal assessment decision.
6. A meeting to consider the appeal should be arranged between the panel and the candidate who should be supported by a parent/guardian/other adult.
7. A written record of the appeal will be kept by the centre and the Head Teacher and the Examinations Officer will be informed of the outcome.
8. A written record of the outcome of the appeal will be sent to the candidate.

## Appendix D

### BTEC Registration & Certification Policy

Aims:

- To register individual learners to the correct programme within agreed timescales.
- To claim valid learner certificates within agreed timescales.
- To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual learner registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each learner.

In order to do this, Looe Community Academy will:

- register each candidate on the correct BTEC programme (by November deadline) giving estimated completion date
- ensure each registered candidate has a ULN
- provide a mechanism for programme teams to check the accuracy of learner registrations
- make each learner aware of their registration status
- inform the awarding body of withdrawals, transfers or changes to learner details by relevant dates
- ensure that certificate claims are timely and based solely on internally verified assessment records
- audit certificate claims made to the awarding body
- audit the certificates received from the awarding body to ensure accuracy and completeness
- keep all assessment and IV records safely, securely and separately from learners' work for three years post certification
- store uncollected certificates for 12 months before destroying confidentially

A detailed process for carrying out this policy is provided below:

#### **BTEC Registration & Certification Process**

- 1 **Register** all candidates by 1 November onto correct programme via <https://www.edexcelonline.com/main/HomePage.aspx>
- 2 Report Registration list back to teaching staff for confirmation of correct entry
- 3 '**Register**' candidates into SIMS (for internal tracking purposes) via EDI
- 4 '**Enter**' candidates for external exams for March, June, November series, as required
- 5 Enter results of Internal Assessments via <https://www.edexcelonline.com/main/HomePage.aspx> by 5 Jul
- 6 Submit '**Results Entries**' in July if EDI '**registrations**' have been completed
- 7 Receive '**Results**' either via Edi or via website
- 8 Report **results** to candidates according to BTEC exam release dates
- 9 Receive and check **Certificates** by November
- 10 Issue **Certificates**
- 11 store uncollected certificates for 12 months before destroying confidentially

## **Appendix E**

### **BTEC Assessment Policy**

Aim:

- To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage or advantage any group of learners or individuals.
- To ensure that the assessment procedure is open, fair and free from bias and to national standards.
- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of assessment decisions.
- To ensure that Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Lead Internal Verifiers are appointed, registered and appropriately supported across relevant programmes, and kept updated with regard to the introduction of NQFs.
- To ensure that external assessment for NQFs comply with appropriate board regulations
- 

In order to do this, Looe Community Academy will:

- ensure that learners are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment
- assess learner's evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria
- ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable
- not limit or 'cap' learner achievement if work is submitted late
- develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for malpractice
- maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions
- ensure timely registration of Lead IVs across all Principal Subject Areas
- ensure Standardisation of Lead IVs for NQF areas
- ensure annual re-registration of all NQF Lead IVs
- maintain a robust and rigorous internal verification procedure
- provide samples for Standards Verification as required by the awarding body
- monitor standards verification reports and undertake any remedial action required
- share good assessment practice between all BTEC programme teams
- ensure that BTEC assessment methodology and the role of the assessor are understood by all BTEC staff
- provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately.
- Ensure that external assessment papers are stored securely according to regulations
- Ensure that external assessments are administered according to regulations
- Ensure that external assessments are shipped to the appropriate examiner at the earliest opportunity using the appropriate carriage method
- Ensure that all external assessment results are checked and any appeals are submitted in accordance with the appeals policy processes
- Retain all students' work until appeals windows has closed and certificates are issued – work can be returned to students or disposed of after 1 year
- Keep copies of IV documentation for 3 years post certification