



EXAMS AND MALPRACTICE POLICY

MIDDLEWICH HIGH SCHOOL

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1. Introduction and aims

Middlewich High School 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. Main responsibilities

2.1 Head of Centre

The Head of Centre has overall responsibility for Middlewich High School as an exam centre, and 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.

The Head of Centre:

- Is responsible for making sure that all staff comply with the JCQ guidelines
- Is responsible for making sure that all senior leaders and staff involved in exams are familiar with the whole of the JCQ general regulations
- Ensures that at least 1 member of staff (a senior designated contact) is available to manage emergency results-related requests from awarding bodies during the summer holidays
- Reports any potential or actual breach of examination or assessment materials to the awarding body/bodies immediately

The Head of Centre is **Lydia Naylor**.

2.2 Senior designated contact / Senior leader i/c Exams

The senior designated contact / Senior leader i/c Exams has line management responsibility of the Exams team, including the Exams Officer and Data Manager.

The Senior Leader i/c Exams:

- Is responsible for making sure that all staff receive appropriate training, support and time to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments, and that they understand the relevant requirements

- Is responsible for making sure that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Ensures that all reasonable steps are taken to respond promptly to requests for information or documentation made by an awarding body or regulatory authority.
- Support and manage the Exams Officer and Data Manager in their responsibilities.

The senior designated contact / senior leader i/c Exams is **Jay Lobina-Lal**.

2.3 Exams Officer

The exams officer is responsible for the management and administration of both internal and external exams.

The Exams Officer:

- Must read and refer to the JCQ guidelines
- Advise the senior leadership team (SLT), subject and class teachers, 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. Ensure this calendar is 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 make sure that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- Download, print (where appropriate) and store electronic assessment materials safely and securely as per the JCQ guidelines
- Administer access arrangements and reasonable adjustments, 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 expenditure relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manage and organisation of 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 senior leadership team (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
- Is 1 of the key holders to the secure room where question papers and pre-release materials are stored

The exams officer is **Lisa (Leigh) Flavin**.

2.4 Data Manager

The Data Manager supports the Exams Officer in ensuring that there is successful management and organisation of the examination period, as well as providing technical support in the preparation of external result documents and results days.

The Data Manager:

- Must read and refer to the JCQ guidelines.
- Assists in downloading exam results securely and accurately.
- Prepares exam results for release on results days, including producing individual candidate result statements.
- Uploads exam data promptly and accurately to external analysis platforms (e.g., SISRA Analytics).
- Ensures the integrity and security of candidate results data.
- Supports Exams Officer and AHT i/c Exams in quality assuring exam data processes.
- Collaborates closely with the Exams Officer to ensure accurate and timely distribution of exam data and analysis reports.
- Provides data-driven support to SLT, Heads of Departments, and teaching staff for exam results analysis.
- Is 1 of the key holders to the secure room where question papers and pre-release materials are stored

The Data Manager is **Jamie Blinkhorn**.

2.5 Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENDSCO)

The SENDSCO is responsible for:

- Detailing candidates' current difficulties to show how they impact on teaching and learning and performance in examinations, and summarising evidence of feedback from teachers and/or support staff
- Identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments, and notifying the exams officer in good time so they can put exam day arrangements in place

- Processing any necessary applications for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments, in order to gain approval (if required)
- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments required by candidates in exam rooms

Our SENDCO is **Leanne Collins**.

2.6 Raising Standards Leaders (Heads of Department)

Raising Standards Leaders 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

2.7 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supplying information about entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Raising Standards Leader and/or the exams officer

2.8 Invigilator(s)

The invigilator(s) are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer to run exams efficiently, according to JCQ regulations
- Identification of pupils sitting assessments through identification cards
- 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 are returned to the exams office

2.9 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. Access to Fair Assessment

At our school, we are committed to providing diverse qualifications that enable all students to achieve their full potential via the most suitable pathways. Our exams policy is founded on principles of equality, diversity, transparency, consistency, and openness, ensuring that all processes are fair and free from discrimination.

Students and staff are informed about this policy, which is readily accessible online at www.mhs.school. Regular reviews of this policy take place, incorporating feedback from students, teachers, parents/carers, and external stakeholders to ensure ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

What Students Can Expect from Us

Assessments at our school are conducted fairly and in alignment with awarding body standards and guidelines. This includes:

- Ensuring all portfolio-based assessments adhere strictly to qualification standards, delivered by fully trained staff.
- Conducting internal assessments impartially and consistently according to awarding body instructions.
- Administering externally marked tests and examinations in full compliance with awarding body requirements.
- Providing clear and relevant course information to students, parents, and carers at appropriate stages throughout each course.
- Clearly outlining learning outcomes, performance criteria, and assessment expectations at the start of each course and when assignments are issued.
- Offering regular, constructive feedback and multiple assessment opportunities to support continuous improvement.

4. External Examinations

4.1 Invigilation

It is the responsibility of the Exams Officer (EO) to recruit and train a sufficient number of invigilators to uphold the integrity of all examinations. All appointments will be made in line with the school's Safer Recruitment Policy to ensure a safe and secure environment for all students.

Invigilators will receive appropriate initial training, along with ongoing updates to ensure they are well-equipped to maintain exam integrity. As part of their role, they are also required to complete basic safeguarding training. The EO will ensure that each exam session is staffed with the required number of invigilators in accordance with JCQ and awarding body regulations.

During exams, invigilators must not bring personal work into the exam room and are expected to remain fully attentive to the conduct of the examination at all times. To support communication, two-way radios will be available for direct contact with the EO. Mobile phones are not to be used during examinations unless in an emergency, and only to contact the EO directly.

4.2 Departmental Responsibility

Raising Standards Leaders or nominated staff member will liaise with the Exams Officer (EO) regarding entries and all other exam related matters. Departments will be responsible for ensuring that deadlines are met and that entries are checked with the EO.

4.3 Late Entries

All possible action must be taken to avoid late entries. Where the late entries are due to departmental reasons, the department concerned will be responsible for the late fees.

4.4 Amendments

Amendments (including change of tier) and withdrawal requests must be made via email to the EO before the specified deadline. Any requests received after the EB deadline may be charged back to the department.

4.5 Examination Conduct and Procedure

The Exams Officer (EO) is responsible for the organisation and smooth conduct of all external examinations. This includes ensuring that entries are submitted to awarding bodies in a timely manner, managing results, and overseeing the Enquiries About Results (EAR) process. The EO acts as the primary point of contact for awarding bodies and any other external exam-related enquiries.

The EO ensures compliance with the JCQ publication *Instructions for Conducting Examinations*, in conjunction with guidance provided by the relevant awarding bodies. All external examinations are also subject to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

4.5.1 The Entry Process

- The EO will request entry information from Raising Standards Leaders (RSLs)
- Final confirmation of entry details will be returned to the RSL for verification.
- The EO will then submit all entries to the awarding bodies before the published deadlines.
- Individual statements of entry will be distributed to candidates, who are responsible for checking their details and raising any queries as necessary.
- The EO will manage any timetable clashes and ensure that candidates are informed of any additional arrangements, such as supervised breaks.
- Examination rooms will be booked in advance, and any required room changes will be communicated to relevant staff.
- Delivery of exam materials will be checked upon arrival and stored securely in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

4.5.2 On the Day of the Exam

- Students will gather at the designated location, where they will be supervised by allocated staff members.
- As a part of the seating plan, on each student's desk is an ID card with a recent (where possible) student picture. This allows formal identification of all students.

- Examinations will be formally started by the EO or an appointed member of staff.
- At the start of each examination, students will be reminded of the emergency evacuation procedure.
- Registers will be taken by the EO or their nominee at the start of each exam or assessment, and shared with the Attendance department.
- Candidates must remain in the examination room for the full published duration of the exam, except with those who have specific access arrangements.
- Any incidents occurring during the examination must be reported to the EO immediately and recorded on the Exam Room Incident Sheet.
- Any suspected misconduct will be investigated and, if appropriate, reported to the awarding body in line with the current JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*.
- At the end of the exam, invigilators will collect and collate all exam papers, which must be returned to the EO. Under no circumstances should exam papers be left unsupervised.
- The EO will check and securely pack all completed scripts, ensuring they are stored safely pending collection by the awarding body.

4.6 Secure Storage

All confidential examination materials will be logged and stored in accordance with the current JCQ publication *Instructions for Conducting Examinations*.

4.6.1 Materials Received in Centre

Upon delivery, reception staff are responsible for checking that the centre details are correct before accepting the examination materials. Once accepted, the delivery is logged on the Exam Materials Receipt Log, and the Exams Officer (EO) is notified immediately.

4.6.2 Transfer to Secure Storage

The EO signs the receipt log to confirm the delivery and transfers the materials to the designated secure storage area. Upon arrival, the EO checks the contents of the delivery against the delivery note to ensure everything is present and undamaged.

All materials are then stored securely in accordance with JCQ requirements. If there are any discrepancies or signs of damage, the EO will notify the relevant awarding body immediately. Our secure storage facility is held under electronic digital lock, as well as a physical lock to the isolated room.

4.7 Evacuation Procedure

In the event that the fire alarm sounds during an examination, the following procedure must be followed to ensure the safety of all candidates while maintaining the integrity of the examination.

Invigilators

- Upon hearing the alarm, invigilators must immediately instruct students to remain silent, close their question papers and answer booklets, and leave all belongings, including examination materials, on their desks.

- The time at which the alarm sounds must be noted.
- Invigilators should retrieve the examination registers for all sessions currently underway.
- The evacuation must be supervised in an orderly manner, ensuring that no invigilator is responsible for more than 30 candidates.
- Candidates should be escorted to the designated assembly point on the tennis courts and remain in silence.
- A register must be taken once assembled, and any absentees must be reported to the Exams Officer (EO) without delay.
- Invigilators must remind students that they remain under examination conditions throughout the evacuation and while awaiting further instructions.
- If it is deemed safe to do so, the examination will resume.
- The EO will inform the relevant awarding bodies of the disruption and will request special consideration where appropriate.

Students

- Students must remain silent upon hearing the alarm and follow all instructions given by the invigilators.
- They should immediately close their question papers and answer booklets, leaving all materials and personal belongings in the examination room.
- Students are to exit the building in silence, under the direction of the invigilators, and proceed directly to the tennis courts.
- Once at the assembly point, they must remain silent and await further instructions from staff.

5. Non-Examined Assessments

NEA/CA/coursework will be conducted in accordance with JCQ and Exam Board guidelines and alongside staff responsibilities outlined in the Non-Examined Assessment Policy.

In accordance with section 5.3(k) of the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, It is the teachers and assessors responsibility to ensure that they only accept work for qualification assessments which is the students own. Both staff and students are aware of the risks of using AI and they are clear on what constitutes as malpractice.

It is departmental responsibility to ensure that assessed work is dispatched in accordance with Exam Board deadlines. Labels and packaging material can be obtained from the EO. All relevant paperwork should be complete and enclosed with the assessed work. Candidates should be made aware of marks well before submission to exam boards giving them sufficient time to challenge the process.

If a candidate disagrees with a mark awarded, they have the right to appeal via the Internal Appeals Policy.

6 Malpractice, Cheating and Plagiarism

At Middlewich High School, we are committed to upholding the integrity of all assessments and examinations. This policy outlines how malpractice and maladministration are defined, prevented, identified, and reported in accordance with the *JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures* and relevant awarding body requirements.

Malpractice refers to any act, default or practice that:

Breaches JCQ regulations or awarding body requirements;

Fails to follow correct procedures in assessment delivery;

Compromises the fairness, integrity, or validity of an assessment or qualification;

Damages public confidence in the qualification system or the reputation of the school or awarding body.

This section of the policy applies to both **candidate malpractice** (e.g., plagiarism, unauthorised use of AI, use of unauthorised aids, or communication during exams) and **staff malpractice** (e.g., improper conduct during assessment administration or breaches of security).

6.1 Preventing Malpractice

Middlewich High School takes all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice, including:

Ensuring staff are trained in JCQ requirements and awarding body regulations;

Following guidance in key documents such as the *JCQ General Regulations, ICE, Access Arrangements, NEA Guidance, and AI Use in Assessments*;

Issuing students with guidance on malpractice, including the risks and responsible use of AI tools;

Reminding students of exam conduct expectations during pre-exam briefings, led by the Exams Officer.

6.2 AI and Assessment Integrity

Students are issued with clear information regarding:

What AI is and how it may be used appropriately;

The risks and consequences of AI misuse;

How to acknowledge any use of AI tools; AI misuse is treated as malpractice in line with JCQ guidance.

6.3 Reporting and Investigating Malpractice

Suspected malpractice can be reported by any member of staff and should be referred initially to the Exams Officer, who will escalate to the Head of Centre if necessary.

Where appropriate, the Head of Centre will:

- Notify the relevant awarding body using JCQ Form M1 (candidate) or M2 (staff);
- Investigate in line with JCQ procedures, maintaining evidence and informing any candidates or staff involved of their rights;
- Notify parents/carers;

- Submit a report to the awarding body outlining findings and actions taken.

6.4 Communication of Outcomes

Once a decision has been made by the awarding body, the Head of Centre will:

- Inform the individual(s) involved of the outcome, including any sanctions;
- Provide information on their right to appeal, referring to the awarding bodies' *Appeals Process Guide*.

6.5 Cheating and Plagiarism

A fair and accurate assessment of a student's work can only be made when that work is entirely their own. Any form of cheating or plagiarism undermines the integrity of the examination or assessment process, and as such, will be taken seriously.

An awarding body will be informed if a student is found to have engaged in any of the following behaviours:

- Copying, giving, or sharing information or answers, unless as part of an approved joint project;
- Receiving unauthorised help from another person;
- Using unauthorised aids during a test or examination;
- Submitting work generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI) as their own (see section 6.6)
- Copying another student's answers during a test or examination;
- Communicating with another student during a test or examination.

In line with section 5.3(K) of the JCQ *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, teachers and assessors are only permitted to accept work for assessment that is the student's own.

All allegations of cheating or plagiarism will be subject to a full investigation, which will be conducted in accordance with the procedures set out by the relevant awarding body. Should a student believe they have been wrongly accused, they have the right to appeal through the school's Complaints Policy.

Please note: This list is not exhaustive, and other behaviours may also be considered malpractice.

6.6 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 Gemini. Middlewich High School 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, they should retain a copy of the question(s) asked and the AI-generated response(s). Pupils must submit this along with the work to be assessed.

Staff should:

- Be aware that AI tools are still being developed and tested
- Use AI tools with caution as they may provide inaccurate, inappropriate or biased content
- Make pupils 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

Staff must not use AI as the sole means of marking candidates' work.

Word processors used by students must not include AI tools.

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.

7. Results

Results will be available for distribution on the dates published by the relevant awarding bodies. Full details, including collection times and locations, will be communicated to each cohort in advance.

Results will only be released directly to the candidate. If a candidate is unable to collect their results in person, they may nominate someone to collect them on their behalf, provided written authorisation is submitted in advance. All results must be signed for upon collection. Please note that under no circumstances will results be issued over the phone.

7.1 Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts

Please refer to the school's Internal Appeals Policy for full details.

Enquiries may be initiated either by the school or the candidate, but only with the explicit written consent of the candidate. Students are required to complete and sign an *Enquiry About Results* form before any requests are submitted to the awarding bodies.

Where enquiries are raised by the school, costs will be covered by the relevant department or the school. If the request is made by the student, payment must be made in full prior to submission, in line with the fees set by the awarding body.

8. Access Arrangements and Modified Papers (Including Medical and Emotional Needs)

Details on available access arrangements are outlined in the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*. Please also refer to the school's Access Arrangements Policy.

The SENDCO and Exams Officer (EO) will work in partnership to ensure appropriate provision is in place for candidates with additional needs. The SENDCO is responsible for maintaining evidence for each student and submitting formal requests for access arrangements before the relevant deadlines.

Access arrangements must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the school setting and may be applied on a subject-specific basis. Modified papers will be requested by the EO in advance of the deadline, based on information provided by the SENDCO.

The SENDCO and EO will also coordinate arrangements for candidates with temporary medical or emotional needs. All supporting evidence will be retained by the SEND team and made available for inspection if required. Access arrangements must be submitted via the Access Arrangement Request Form.

9. Special Consideration

Where a candidate experiences trauma, bereavement, illness, or any other disruption prior to or during an examination, the Exams Officer may apply for Special Consideration with the awarding body. Clear and credible evidence must be provided to demonstrate that the candidate has been significantly disadvantaged. Additional documentation may be requested to support the application.

10. Payment

All examination-related payments, including entries and services such as EARs, will be managed in accordance with the school's Charging Policy.

11. Contingency Planning

Please refer to the school's full Exam Contingency Plan.

In the event that the Exams Officer is unavailable during a critical stage of the examination process, the Data Manager will assume the responsibilities of the EO until their return or until a new EO is appointed. All duties will be carried out in compliance with this policy and JCQ regulations.

If the school site becomes unavailable due to an emergency, candidates will be relocated to The Civic Hall. Secure conditions will be maintained while the awarding bodies are contacted and alternative arrangements are confirmed.

12. Conflict of Interest

In accordance with the *JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres*, the Exams Officer is responsible for recording and managing any potential conflicts of interest among staff.

Examples of potential conflicts include:

- Centre staff taking qualifications at their own centre, including internally assessed components;
- Staff teaching or preparing close family members or friends (including step and foster relationships);
- Exams Office staff having close personal relationships with candidates at this or another centre;
- Centre staff undertaking qualifications at other centres.

All conflicts of interest must be declared, and appropriate mitigating actions will be recorded to ensure the integrity of the qualification process is protected.

13. Child Protection/Safeguarding

At Middlewich High School we recognise the responsibility we have under Section 175 of the Education and Inspections Act 2002, to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Governing Board in our school approve the S175/157 return to the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) on a yearly basis. We maintain an attitude that 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. All Invigilators are recruited following our Safer Recruitment Policy and receive ongoing safeguarding training as per our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. A record of training is held by the Personnel Officer.

14. Annual Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with JCQ and awarding body requirements and to reflect any updates regarding AI or assessment regulations.