

Examinations Policy

Rationale

The Mission Statement of St Paul's School for Girls states that every aspect of school life is permeated by the belief of the school community:

- a) in a loving God, as revealed by Jesus Christ
- b) that all persons are sacred because each is made in the image of God and is therefore deserving of respect.
- c) that all creation is an expression of the goodness and love of God revealed through it.
- d) that all are entitled in justice, to be given the opportunity to develop fully as persons and thus have equality of access to the curriculum.

Each girl is encouraged and stimulated to aim for excellence and thus achieve the best possible personal and academic standards. The examinations system within school is no exception providing the girls with the opportunity to achieve their best within the constraints of the public examination system

Public examinations provide vital summative assessment. This assessment gives information to students, parents, other education institutions, local authority and government agencies and employers about knowledge, understanding and skills achieved. To this end the school participates willingly in the administration of these examinations in the best interests of the girls and the school. In addition other internally set and marked examinations may take place at other stages in a student's progress through the school in order to prepare for public examinations, inform teacher assessments and check student learning.

The Examinations Policy will be reviewed annually and should be viewed along with the school's Appeals Policy.

Purpose

To ensure that:

- Girls undertake examinations knowing what is expected of them in terms of preparation and behavior
- Girls are guided in their decisions about whether to make or withdraw an examination entry and do so with full knowledge of the implications for their careers or further education
- Staff understand fully their obligations and responsibilities with relation to examinations
- The school meets the requirements of examination security and is properly equipped to undertake the administration of examinations, including data processing and a results service
- Accurate examination data is available to inform target setting
- Curriculum planning, target setting and careers links take into account up-to-date information on the current examinations system

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Guidelines

Responsibilities for public examinations:

- **Headteacher**, overall responsibility for the school as an examinations centre
- **Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum)**, leads on the curriculum, teaching and learning and therefore the opportunities for external validation of courses followed at key stages 3,4 and post 16
- **Assistant Headteacher (Raising Standards Leader)**, leads on the timings and entries.
- **Assistant Headteacher (Assessment)**, leads on assessment, examinations systems in school and examination data.
- **Assistant Headteacher (PSHE)**, leads on guidance and careers information.
- **Heads of Department and Heads of Year**, guidance and pastoral oversight of students who are unsure about examination entries or where alteration of the initial entry is made, involvement in post-results procedures
- **Exams officer**, administration of entries, relevant paperwork, organisation of examination sessions and post examinations procedures ; support for the input of data, communication with the examination boards, posting of examination papers and the post results procedures.

Overall Administration

- The Examinations Officer will work with Subject Leaders and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure that the school is appropriately registered as a centre for all qualifications currently offered including GCSE, GCE, OCR Nationals, DCDL, Diplomas, Functional Skills and BTEC.
- All examination procedures including the entries, storage and distribution of examination materials, organization of the examination sessions and results and post results will adhere to the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) regulations.
- The school does not accept entries from external candidates.
- A candidate's Special Needs requirements are determined by the SENCO and communicated to the Examinations Officer, candidate and parents.
- Any requests for Special Consideration should be discussed with the Head of Year and communicated to the Examinations Officer and Assistant Headteacher (Assessment)
- Decisions about the level for which a candidate is entered are made by subject departments. This decision should be made clear to the candidate and their parents by the department.
- The Examinations Officer will ensure that staff are made aware of deadlines relevant to examinations. This will normally occur via staff

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briefings, the staff bulletin or written information from the examination boards.

- Candidates are responsible for checking their statements of entry and communicating any problems to the Examinations Officer.
- Subject Leaders are responsible for checking that entries are both timely and accurate and that estimated grades are submitted. Any costs incurred from erroneous entries or late entries arising from the failure of the Subject Leader to meet the deadlines set or to check entries accurately will be met from the Department's funding.
- Where a candidate fails to attend for an examination without written medical evidence to support their absence any costs incurred will be payable by the candidate.

Invigilators

- A team of invigilators is used for external examinations. They are organized by the Examinations Officer.
- All invigilators are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB/DBS) check which is instigated by the Headteacher on their appointment to the post.

Examination Room Procedure

- Candidates are expected to arrive in good time for their examinations. They are responsible for checking their examination timetable.
- If a candidate is too unwell to attend the examination they should contact school and see a doctor on the day of the examination to obtain a doctor's note. This information should then be passed to the Examinations Officer who will submit applications for Special Consideration as appropriate.
- Candidates are not allowed to leave the examination room before the timetabled end of their paper.
- Candidates are issued with the JCQ examination guidance which is also clearly displayed in the examination rooms.
- Invigilation numbers must adhere to ratio of pupils 1/30 for all external exams as defined by JCQ regulations
- Contingency plan in place to delegate tasks to other members of staff should the Examinations Officer be unavailable.

Results and Certificates

- Candidates will receive their results from school in person on results days or via mail if they provide the school with an appropriately stamped and addressed envelope.
- Certificates can only be collected by the candidate unless there is notified written permission for a member of their family to come and collect them.
- Certificates will only be retained by the centre for 12 months if they are not collected.

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- Certificate will be distributed to those pupils receiving prizes at Awards Evening.

At Key Stage 4 and Post-16

- All students should be entitled to and enabled to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body provided that they have met the Examination Board's requirements.
- Any teacher who has concerns over whether a student's entry in their subject is to be withdrawn must discuss the situation with the Head of Department, Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum), Raising Standards Leader and Head of Year in the first instance.
- The student, parents/carers, the subject leader, subject teacher and Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum) and Raising Standards Leader should be involved before a final decision is made.
- An exit form must be completed and copied to all relevant staff.
- All students will be monitored carefully throughout their time at the school, and serious concerns over coursework and examinations must be notified to the Head of Department and Head of Year as soon as they arise.
- Any proposed major changes to the examination board, style or timing of examinations, e.g. modular courses, must be discussed and approved by the Senior Leadership Team based on information given by the relevant subject leader. This must be communicated to the Senior Leadership Team and Examinations Officer with due reference to Examination Board administrative deadlines and no later than 1ST October of the school examination Year.
- Amendment of entries which incur a financial penalty from the examination boards will be charged to subjects if they arise from that subject's error or omission

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

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

At post-16

- It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12
- Under normal circumstances, students will be permitted one re-sit in each subject at AS and A2 at the candidate's expense. Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with the student, subject teacher and subject leader, Head of Sixth Form and examinations officer

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- After the release of results a request the return of papers or a re-mark subject may be made. Where teachers make the request this will be at the Department's expense. If a student requires this service she will be charged.

GCSE and A level Results Service

- When results are published appropriate staff will distribute results, be available to give guidance to students and prepare data for publication and monitoring purposes
- This service will be supported by members of the administrative staff.

Internal examinations

- The exact nature of summative assessment in each subject will be determined ultimately by the subject leader within the rationale and purposes of this policy and other related policies
- The examinations officer will co-ordinate any requests for whole year group examinations in KS3 to ensure an even distribution of testing across the allotted time span.
- The cost of internal examination papers is the responsibility of subject areas