

White Trees
independent school



Qualifications & Examinations Policy

See also, 'Who We Are, What We Do & How We Do It' & Curriculum Policy

Our vision is to provide pupils with the confidence, skills and ambition to achieve a successful and productive life. We aim to ensure they leave the school with a 'new day, new opportunity' ethos and are capable of becoming positive members of their communities. To do this, we have 3 principles that underpin our policies, practices and everything we do:

- Everyone can learn, achieve and has the potential to be successful
- Positive relationships are key to success and are underpinned by mutual trust, respect and caring for one another
- We have high expectations in everything we do

Wonderful
Excellent
Lovely
Clever
Outstanding
Magnificent
Enthusiastic

(Acronym created by White Trees pupils)

Policy owner	Head Teacher	Last review	November 2024
Date Created	November 2019	Next review	November 2025

Introduction

All candidates are 'recruited and registered' as current learners within the school. The Examinations policy is decided by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with reference to the guidance and regulations supplied by the JCQ and the Awarding Bodies. The Examinations Officer is responsible to the Executive Head Teacher for the day-to-day administration of the examinations system.

All candidates should note that the Awarding Bodies are often unable to process appeals and queries relating to the examinations process, timetabling, internal assessment or complaints from students or parents. All queries of this type must be raised in the first instance with the school Examinations Officer.

Should a complaint relating to the administration of some part of the exams process be made against the Examinations Officer, this must be raised with the Executive Head Teacher.

At the time of the exams, candidates are identified by both a senior member of staff and the invigilator who can both confirm who they are. Candidates must be aware of the JCQ 'Warning to Candidates', a copy of which is posted inside and outside of each examination rooms. During examinations, candidates must follow all instructions given to them by the Examinations Officer or any Invigilator present.

Candidates must also be aware of the regulations regarding the submission of coursework, particularly those relating to the proper acknowledgement of sources. Failure to do so can result in the Awarding Bodies or the JCQ setting penalties which can include official reprimands, loss of examination marks or in extreme cases the loss of all examination results and banning from future examinations.

The school undertakes to run the examinations system in accordance with the published JCQ guidance, given in the Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations (I.C.E.) document, and others.

Registration and certification

The Examinations Officer will verify the identity of all candidates then collate, organise and register our learners with the appropriate body and on their appropriate courses each year. This will be done well in advance of final deadlines, with accessibility needs and requirements also robustly applied for and in place as appropriate. It is also down to the exams officer to apply for, receive and distribute results and certificates (dependent on qualification).

Mobile Phones and Examinations

The possession of a mobile phone in an examination room, whether switched on or not, is an offence under JCQ regulations. School policy is that mobile phones must not be brought into the examination room. Failure to observe this regulation may result in the loss of all results for the exam.

Internal Assessment

Under the Joint Council Code of Practice, the Awarding Bodies require school centre's offering their examinations to:

Policy owner	Head Teacher	Last review	November 2024
Date Created	November 2019	Next review	November 2025

White Trees School Qualifications & Examinations Policy

- Have a published appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions;
- Make this document available and accessible to candidates. The Awarding Body will moderate the assessed coursework/oral tapes and the final mark awarded is that of the Awarding Body. This mark is outside the control of the school and is not covered by this procedure.

The school will ensure that

- Work submitted by the candidate for assessment has been authenticated as original work according to the guidance issued by the Joint Council;
- At the beginning of the school year, candidates are given written guidance about the Awarding Bodies regulations on the production of coursework, the school's deadlines for submission as well as information about the school's appeals procedure.
- Within each department, candidates are given adequate and appropriate time to produce the coursework;
- Internal assessments are conducted by staff who have an appropriate level of knowledge, understanding and skill;
- The consistency of the internal assessment is secured through the departmental mark scheme or marking criteria and internal standardisation, as necessary;
- The staff responsible for internal standardisation of a subject will endeavour to attend appropriate training sessions given by the relevant Awarding Body.
- Pupils have the opportunity to feedback on their experience with a relevant member of staff who records it (APPENDIX 1);
- Progress, achievements and awarded credits (where applicable) are tracked and recorded;
- Data on pupils is up to date, accurate and kept safely and securely

Examination Coursework Procedure

Coursework is defined as any piece of written or practical work which is marked by the school or an external examiner.

Pupils must read and understand fully the Notice to Candidates from the Joint Council for Qualifications about Coursework Regulations.

Irregularities in coursework discovered prior to the student signing a declaration of authentication will not be reported to the Awarding Body but dealt with as an internal disciplinary matter.

The work will not gain any credit. An irregularity in coursework discovered after the signing of the declaration of authentication by the student will be reported to the Awarding Body which may lead to disqualification from the subject.

- Coursework must be handed in by the agreed published subject deadline.
- All Pupils are given the same and sufficient time to complete the work.
- Pupils are given clear instructions as to the time and place for handing in the work.
- The work must be handed in by the pupil to the designated teacher and not given to another pupil to hand in.
- If the pupil is absent from school on the deadline day, a parent/carer or friend must bring the work to school to be handed in to meet the deadline.
- If it is impossible to deliver the work to school, the appropriate teacher or, in case of absence, his or her representative, must be contacted by phone on the deadline day for advice.
- If the coursework has not been completed by the deadline, the incomplete work must be handed in on the deadline day to receive a mark. There will be no further opportunity to complete this work for an improved mark.

Policy owner	Head Teacher	Last review	November 2024
Date Created	November 2019	Next review	November 2025

White Trees School Qualifications & Examinations Policy

- Normally there will be no extension of a coursework deadline if a pupil is absent for a day or two during the period that the coursework is being completed.
- If there are any special circumstances e.g. a prolonged absence covered by a medical certificate, there is a possibility of an extension but this must be negotiated with the subject teacher.

Internal Appeals Procedure

The grounds for appeal relate only to the procedures used in arriving at internal assessment decisions or the production of externally assessed work and do not apply to the judgement themselves.

The appeal must be made in writing to the school's Examinations of the coursework being assessed. The grounds for the appeal must be clearly stated. The candidate can be supported in the presentation of his/her case by a parent/carer/friend.

The Executive Headteacher will nominate a member of staff, normally the Examinations Officer, to lead the enquiry provided that the Examinations Officer has played no part in the original assessment process. An experienced subject teacher will also be on the panel to act as an independent member.

The panel will examine the evidence for the procedures used in the assessment, decide upon their appropriateness and that the procedures have been properly followed as required by the Awarding Body concerned. The enquiry will be completed by the end of June of that examination series. The panel's findings will be reported back to the candidate/parent/carer, in writing, at the beginning of July. Records of the request for the appeal, the evidence, deliberations of the panel and the result will be kept by the Examinations Officer and made available to the Awarding Body if required.

Emergency Evacuation of an Examination Room

In an emergency, the lead invigilator must take the following action:

- Tell the candidates to stop writing and leave the question papers and scripts on their desks.
- Evacuate the room in an orderly fashion without talking. The candidates must not attempt to collect bags or coats.
- The invigilator should collect the exam register and evacuate the candidates by following the emergency exit signs.
- Assemble the candidates at the fire assembly point but away from other pupils.
- When assembled, check the candidates against the exams register.
- The examination candidates must not have contact with other pupils and must not have mobile phones in their possession.
- Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room.
- Make sure there is no discussion about the examination. Inform the candidates that they are still under examination regulations.
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
- At the end of the emergency, the examinations officer or a member of the senior management team will inform the candidates when they may return to the examination room.
- On return to the examination room, the candidates will be allowed the full working time left for the examination.
- After the examination, the lead invigilator will make a full written report of the incident and give it to the examinations officer.

Policy owner	Head Teacher	Last review	November 2024
Date Created	November 2019	Next review	November 2025

Centre Contingency and Adverse effects

Centre Contingency Plan

1. Should there be a situation where the centre is **unable to operate** and offer qualifications to pupils, the Senior Leadership Team would update their process and policies and seek a partnership with one of the many local secondary schools and colleges who already have centre approval. This would be at the expense of the school, who's parent company, White Trees Group, has the infrastructure to adapt financially to adjustments identified.
2. If the Head of Centre and/or Leadership Team member who is designated to oversee examinations be **absent or unable to fulfil their duties**, then a membership of the Leadership Team, inclusive of Head of Operations or Deputy Headteachers would be required to assist to ensure examinations can be carried out or alternative arrangements will be made.

*Full Contingency Plan is in Examinations Folder and has been distributed to Leadership Team.

Exam fees

All exam fees of all types are paid by the centre, for all qualifications. This includes late entry, re-sit or amendment fees.

Equality legislation & equal opportunities

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation, as outlined in our equality policy. All our pupils have education, health & care plans for their special educational needs. All qualifications are available to all pupils. The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the overall responsibility of the head teacher (head of centre).

Access arrangements

All candidates have special educational needs and an education, health & care plan for their social, emotional and mental health difficulties, and other associated needs. A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the Leadership Team at each site including the SENCO. Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the Leadership Team at each site. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer with the support of the SENCO. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams officer. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the exams officer and head of centre.

Conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties. In the case of an individual, the conflict of interest could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if it is not properly managed. The most important feature of the policy is the requirement that an individual disclose any activity that might give rise to a potential conflict of interest. If there is any doubt whether or

Policy owner	Head Teacher	Last review	November 2024
Date Created	November 2019	Next review	November 2025

not it represents a conflict of interest, it must be reported. Any conflict of interest, or potential conflict of interest, must be disclosed to a member of the leadership team with delay.

Artificial Intelligence Policy (AI)

AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced assessments which leads towards qualifications. Our policy aims to ensure the integrity of assessments which lead to qualifications, in line with the JCQ. The policy applies to all students, teachers and staff who use AI in our schools.

Guidelines:

- As a school we recognise that AI can be used for the aid of academic purposes and that our students need to be prepared for the workplace once they leave full time education. However, it is important that students do not wholly rely on AI to complete their work.
- AI will not replace direct instruction from teachers.
- The use of AI will be monitored and guided by teachers to ensure the School's curriculum and objectives are adhered to.
- As a school we will ensure that any use of AI in Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) material is compliant with the guidelines set out by JCQ https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/AI-Use-in-Assessments_Feb24_v3.pdf
- As a school we will ensure that all examinations are secure from the use of AI, as set out in our Examination Malpractice Policy. We will not use any AI in examination with the prior written approval from JCQ. AI based assistance or software will only be allowed if approval has been granted from JCQ and used in accordance with the regulations.

Malpractice (pupils)

This can include (this list is not exhaustive):

- plagiarism – presenting material from secondary sources as original, e.g. unacknowledged copying and pasting from the internet, copying. Pupils should be taught an appropriate format of referencing to ensure they do not inadvertently commit plagiarism.
- copying others' work
- deliberate destruction of another's work
- fabrication of results or evidence, e.g. making false claims about having participated in a practical activity
- false declaration of authenticity, e.g. claiming work of another pupil, declaring collaboratively produced work as own etc.
- the unauthorised use of AI in Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) and examinations.

White Trees Independent School aims to:

- identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or pupils.
- respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
- standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
- impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on pupils or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
- protect the integrity of this centre and all qualifications

In order to do this, the centre will:

- seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and ongoing personalised support to inform pupils of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice. Pupils should be made aware of what constitutes plagiarism

Policy owner	Head Teacher	Last review	November 2024
Date Created	November 2019	Next review	November 2025

White Trees School Qualifications & Examinations Policy

- show pupils the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
- ask pupils to declare that their work is their own. Pupils must sign declarations for each assignment submitted
- ask pupils to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- ensure that staff are aware of what constitutes assessment malpractice
- conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation (any such investigation will be supported by the head of centre and all staff linked to the allegation)

Malpractice procedure (pupils)

Minor concerns about authenticity, e.g. work which has been poorly referenced through neglect (not deliberate deception) should be dealt with by the assessor in the first instance. Where an assessor has serious concerns about the authenticity or validity of a piece of work (e.g. deliberate deception, repeat offence) he/she should immediately inform the head of centre.

The procedure

To be led by the head of centre:

1. inform the pupil of the alleged malpractice
2. give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made
3. inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgement made
4. document all stages of any investigation.

Where malpractice is proven, the school will inform the pupil's parents. They will work with the pupil's head of centre to apply an appropriate consequence, which may include:

- application of schools' behaviour policy
- individualised arrangements for supervision
- other agreed actions

Malpractice & maladministration (staff)

This can include (this list is not exhaustive):

- improper assistance to candidates
- inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work
- where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made
- failure to keep candidates' work secure
- fraudulent claims for certificates
- inappropriate retention of certificates
- assisting pupils in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the pupil
- producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the pupil has not generated
- allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the pupil's own, to be included in a pupil's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework
- facilitating and allowing impersonation
- misusing the conditions for special pupil requirements, for example where pupils are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud

Policy owner	Head Teacher	Last review	November 2024
Date Created	November 2019	Next review	November 2025

White Trees School Qualifications & Examinations Policy

- fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the pupil completing all the requirements of assessment. Where staff malpractice is suspected, you must:
- Inform the staff member's leadership team line manager
- The alleged malpractice will then be investigated as per the school's procedure, as per the disciplinary & conduct procedures
- Any malpractice or attempted malpractice must be recorded and relevant exam boards must be informed.

Recognition of Prior Learning

All of our pupils join us at different stages of the education journey; some in key stage 3 but many if not most in Key stage 4. In some instances it will be appropriate to recognise that a pupil has already accrued a secure knowledge of the subject being covered and the school is in a position to recognise that. It will be used sparingly and only in situations where staff are supremely confident and have clear reasons to evidence secure knowledge.

Published on	
By	
Chair of Gov Sig/Date	
Head Teacher Sig/Date	

Policy owner	Head Teacher	Last review	November 2024
Date Created	November 2019	Next review	November 2025