BIG CREATIVE EDUCATION APPRENTICESHIPS TRAINING ACADEMY

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Big Creative Academy

[Centre No 13448]

Examinations and Assessment Policy

2021/22

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Approved by:	
Cyrus Armstrong-James Vice Principal	
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This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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Purpose of the policy

Big Creative Academy is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently and in compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.

This exam policy will ensure that:

- all aspects of the exam process is documented, supporting the exams contingency plan, and other relevant exams-related policies, procedures and plans
- all staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- all exams and assessments are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions, thus maintaining the integrity and security of the exam/assessment system at all times
- exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure ways of working are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance.

This policy will be communicated to all relevant staff and is saved on Staff Intranet as well as being issued to Exam Invigilators.

Roles and responsibilities

The Head of Centre

The Principal - has overall responsibility for the Academy as an Exam Centre and is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the Academy is always compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations and assessments. However, the Principal may formally delegate Head of Centre responsibility to a member of the Senior Management Team. Currently the Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality has been acting as the Head of the Centre.

The Examinations Manager

- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications.
- Manages the administration of external and internal exams in line with JCQ regulations.
- Completes/submits the National Centre Number Register annual update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR https://ocr.org.uk/administration/ncn-annual-update/) by the end of October each year
- Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- Informs the Senior Management Team, Curriculum Managers and relevant staff of exams procedures and deadlines as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Recruits, trains and deploys a team of internal/external invigilators; appoints lead invigilators, as required and keeps a record of the content of training provided to invigilators for the required period
- Works with the SENCO to ensure invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates and those acting as a facilitator supporting access arrangement candidates fully understand the respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room
- Supports the Principal in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed (where required) of any conflict of interest declared by members of staff and in maintaining records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected before the published deadline for entries for each examination series
- Oversees the production and distribution 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 students and parents are well informed of their exams and timetables and statement of entries sent out to them.

- Checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with the JCQ guidelines and ensuring these are submitted to the awarding body by the deadline.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.

Administers Access Arrangements by recording exam concessions on the MIS system, collating the evidence and making applications for special considerations following the regulations as set out in JCQ publication: Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration

- Liaises with a qualified access arrangements assessor and Inclusion Manager (SENCO) on all matters relating to assessing candidates and ensures the correct procedures are followed.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and acts upon on any post result requests.

The Senior Management Team / Curriculum Managers/Teaching staff

- Keep updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Attend relevant awarding body training and update events
- Submission of candidate names and details for registration to the Exams Manager.
- Informs the Exams Manager of any changes to information in a timely manner minimising the risk of late or other penalty fees being incurred by an awarding body.
- Notes the internal deadlines in the annual curriculum calendar or as discussed at monthly data checking meetings and directs teaching staff to meet these.

Exams Administrator(s)

- Assisting the Exams Manager in managing and administration of internal and external exams.
- Assisting the Exams Manager in preparing and registering candidates with the exam boards, submitting exam entries and claiming achievements and certification.
- Assisting the Exams Manager in submitting and recording access arrangement applications.

Invigilators

- Assisting the Examinations Manager in the efficient running of exams in accordance to JCQ regulations: ICE_21-22_v6.pdf (jcq.org.uk)
- Collection of exam papers and other material from the Exams office before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring there safe return to the Exams Team.
- Provides feedback on examinations held.
- Attend/undertake training, update, briefing and review sessions as required
- Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate
- Sign a confidentiality and security agreement and confirm whether they have any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions applied to them

Buildings/Facilities Team

- Follow the process to log confidential materials delivered to/received by the Academy to the point materials are issued to authorised staff for transferal to the secure storage facility

Candidates

- Inform the Exams Team of any discrepancy with their examination board documentation.
- Inform the Exams Team of any changes to their personal details.
- Ensure that they comply with the Examination Board and Academy's regulations when sitting examinations.

Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated by the centre, others require prior JCQ awarding body approval.

Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment.

Please refer to the Access Arrangement policy for further guidance.

All access arrangements must be the student's normal way of working and cannot be awarded just for an exam.

Exam Entries

Candidates are selected for exam entries as per the course they are enrolled on via the Academy's MIS system.

Candidates cannot request a level change, a subject entry or a withdrawal. The Curriculum Manager will inform the Exams Manager of any changes. Changes to a candidate record is alerted to the MIS & Exams Manager via a form.

Late entries are processed by the Exams Team and the Curriculum Manager will be informed of the late fees being incurred.

Exam Timetables and Briefing Candidates

The Exams Team will circulate a timetable for all external exams along with a statement of entry. Students should check their statement of entry and notify the Exams Office of any discrepancies.

The Exams Team will issue the following information to candidates as necessary:

- Exam timetable clashes
- What equipment is/is not provided
- Food and drink in exam rooms
- Unauthorised items in exam rooms
- When and how results will be issued
- The post-results services and how the Academy deals with requests from candidates
- When and how certificates will be issued

Exam Fees

- Registration and examination fees are paid by the Centre.
- Late Entry fees are paid by the Centre.
- Re-take fees are paid by the Centre apart from students on full cost courses.
- Re-take fees will be decided as per fees set by the awarding body.

Equality Legislation

All Exams Team staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation. The Academy 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.

Exam Days

The Exams Team will book all exam rooms for external examinations. The questions papers, and relevant stationary will be provided to the invigilator on the day.

The Buildings/Facilities Team are responsible for setting up of the allocated rooms either the previous day if the rooms are available or on the day at least an hour before the starting time of the examination.

The Exams Team will use an exam day checklist to ensure each exam session is fully prepared for, unplanned events can be dealt with and associated follow-up is completed.

Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ. Subject staff may be present prior to the start of the exam to assist with the identification of the candidates.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of an awarding body's published finishing time or in the case of a timetable variation until all candidates within the centre have completed the examination.

The Exams manager will ensure any exam irregularities are reported to relevant Awarding Organisations; please refer to Invigilation Policy.

After the exam, the Exams Manager will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts in line with JCQ and awarding body regulations.

Exam Seating Arrangements

The seating arrangements must prevent candidates from overlooking (intentionally or otherwise) the work of others. The minimum distance in all directions from centre to centre of candidates' chairs must be 1.25 metres.

A reliable clock (analogue and/or digital) must be visible to each candidate in the examination room and must be big enough for all candidates to be able to read clearly.

Display material (such as maps, diagrams, wall charts and projected images) which might be helpful to candidates must not be visible in the examination room.

The centre must create a seating plan that shows the exact position of each candidate in the examination room. Any changes made to seating arrangements during the examination must be noted on the seating plan. The seating plan must be available to an awarding body upon request.

Exams Invigilation

A training session must be held for any new invigilators and those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions. An update meeting must be held for the existing invigilation team so that they are aware of any changes.

A record of the content of the training given to invigilators and those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions must be available for inspection and retained on file until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.

A teacher, a tutor or a senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined, is not an invigilator during the examination.

Exams team must keep signed records of the seating plan, the invigilation arrangements and the centre's copies of the attendance registers for each examination.

Coursework and Appeals for Internal Assessments

It is the duty of Curriculum Managers to ensure that all internal assessments are ready for dispatch for external moderation/verification as requested by the Awarding Body in a timely manner. The Exams Manager will assist by keeping a record of dispatch.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Exams office by the Curriculum Manager and signed off by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality at an Assessment Validation meeting. Any appeals will be dealt with the accordance with the Internal Appeals Procedure.

Claims Process

All internally assessed course marks are recorded by relevant Curriculum Managers using an internal tracking spreadsheet. An exams results timeline forms part of the curriculum calendar and includes stages and deadlines of result input onto the MIS system. This is followed by an Assessment Validation meeting chaired by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality to finalise the results before claims are submitted to the Awarding Organisation. The final results are printed on paper and signed off by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality which is held on file for Audit purposes.

Once the final sign off takes place, the Exams Manager then imports the grades onto the main MIS system and thereafter claims are submitted electronically/manually to the Awarding Organisation.

Results

Candidates receive their individual results via email to their student account. Text messages are sent reminding them to check.

Enquiries about results (EAR)

EAR's can be requested by the Curriculum Manager, or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

If the Centre requests an EAR, the candidates will not be charged. However, if a candidate requires this against the advice of staff, they will be charged.

Consent of the candidates will be required.

Access to Scripts

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject tutors to request return of written exam papers within 14 days of receipt of results.

Staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter the consent of the candidates is required.

An EAR cannot be requested once an original script has been returned.

Certificates

Exams Team will quality check when certificates are received to ensure accuracy of grades recorded and log these on the MIS system.

Candidates will be informed via a text message stating that their certificate is ready for collection. Candidates will receive their certificates in person where possible. Candidates would need to produce their Academy ID or any form of identity in order to collect the certificate.

Certificates can be posted to a candidate provided they requested this via an email to the Exams Team.

If a certificate is to be collected by a third party, the candidate needs to provide a letter authorising this and provide the name of the third party who will collect. They could confirm this through email to the Exams Team as well.

Certificates for off- site courses will be posted to the candidate and proof of posting kept on file.

Archiving

Exam documentation including seating plans, special consideration applications, late arrival and malpractice reports and outcomes are kept until results are released. These are disposed of in confidential waste after the retention period has ended. Exam results are kept electronically for 6 years.

Malpractice

The Academy has a duty to ensure the integrity of qualifications and to take action on dealing with breaches of security and malpractice. Staff are aware of and adhere to JCQ and Awarding Organisation regulations.

All offences in connection with examinations and other forms of assessment e.g. Plagiarism, Collusion, Cheating, will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and will be processed in accordance with the Student and/or Staff Disciplinary procedures.

Invigilators, staff or students who suspect malpractice in an examination or assessment must report this to the Exams Manager who will inform the awarding organisation immediately. Please refer to the "Invigilation Policy" appendix for further information.

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality will conduct a full investigation to establish the facts and the circumstances of any alleged malpractice and submit a full report to the Awarding Organisation.

Further detail, including decisions and appeals, can be found in the appendix "Assessment and Verification Procedure and Policy".

Offsite Exams and External Assessments

Whenever possible the academy will seek to host exams and assessments in one of our registered sites. However, where there is a case for running exams and assessments at a non-registered location such as a work place, this will be allowed under the following conditions:

- Sites will be registered by the Exams Manager with the appropriate Awarding Body in compliance with their rules and regulations following a request by curriculum staff to run an offsite exam or assessment.
- The staff member requesting an offsite exam or assessment will ensure the venue is appropriate and meets all the Awarding Body rules and regulations in relation to accommodation of exams and assessments and confirm this to the Exams Manager at the point of their initial request.
- The staff member supervising the hosting and invigilation of the exam or assessment will collect the exam paper/s from the Exams Manager on the morning of the Exam.
- The staff member supervising the hosting and invigilation of the exam or assessment will ensure that all Awarding Body exam and assessment rules and regulations are JCQ compliant.
- The Exams Manager will shall ensure that any exams taking place offsite adhere to the Awarding Body regulations. JCQ rules state that all off site venues must be registered, but only the first time they are used. This applies to all offsite exams and assessments and would apply to work-based learners being assessed in the work place.

Declaration of Interest 2021/2022

To comply with the regulations, the Academy is required to manage Conflicts of Interest and inform the relevant Awarding body/bodies for any of their qualifications of:

- any members of staff who are taking qualifications at the Academy which include internally assessed components/units;
- any members of staff who are teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally assessed components/units; and maintains clear records of all instances where:
    - exams office staff have members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments either at the centre itself or other centres;
    - Staff are taking qualifications at the Academy which do not include internally assessed components/units;
    - Staff are taking qualifications at other centres.