



EXAMINATIONS POLICY

**Gateway College
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EXAMINATIONS POLICY

Achieving success in public examinations is the key aim of the majority of Gateway students. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the planning and administration of examinations is such that every student is offered the maximum opportunity to achieve success.

Currently the examinations team comprises:

Head of Centre: (HOC)	James Bagley
Examination Officer (EO):	Amanda James
Assistant Exams Officer (AEO):	Jasvinder Heer

It is important for all staff to be aware of the importance of the examinations process and the role that they will play within this process. The HOC takes ultimate responsibility for examinations but we must all strive to ensure that situations do not arise that will jeopardise a student's examination performance in any way. This policy will be published in the staff handbook and updated annually.

This policy document is in three parts:

- Entry for examinations
- Administration of internal and public examinations
- Post-examination follow up

1. ENTRY FOR EXAMINATIONS

1.1 If there has been a change of syllabus/specification from the previous year the subject team/Head of Department must inform the EO by September. No change in specification can be made without prior consultation and agreement with the Assistant Principals.

1.2 The EO will provide a copy of the final exam timetables for all external examinations to all teaching staff. Timetables will also be displayed on the Exams noticeboard.

1.3 November Examinations:

Class lists will be sent to Head of Departments prior to the Awarding Organisation deadline. Students will be entered for November exams using the information returned to the EO on the class list before a set internal deadline. Students who need to pay for their entry must do so by completing the Examination Payment & Entry form (which can be collected from the Exams Office – room A103). Students must pay the appropriate examination fee to the Finance Office (Room A103) by the date specified. If the student fails to pay by this date they will be liable to pay a late entry fee. No student will be entered for an examination unless all exam fees have been paid.

1.4 **External Entries.** The College will not accept external entries from non-College Students.

1.5 Entries for Vocational Programmes. The EO will register all NEW students with the appropriate examination board/regulatory authority by the end of dates as stated in the relevant subject administration documents. The EO will liaise with relevant teams to ensure all deadlines are strictly adhered to. Where a student has not been performing at a reasonable standard and a Head of Department wishes a student's registration to be withdrawn, the team must inform the EO and Management Information Services (room A103) as soon as possible. Students who are subsequently registered late will incur a late entry fee.

1.6 Heads of Department will be sent confirmation of all test entries and registrations, which will be signed and returned to the EO by a set date. Any alterations to original entries (withdrawals and additions) should be made at this stage.

1.7 **Student Exam Entry** information is available through CEDAR, Sharepoint and notices around the building. Students will be asked to print off their own timetables and to contact the Exams Office of any errors.

1.8 The EO will distribute estimated grade sheets to Heads of Department, which should be completed and returned as soon as possible.

1.9 For all examinations, the EO will provide the Head of Department with an Examination Entry summary listing the modules that their students have been entered for. Any queries should be sent to the EO before the internal deadline.

1.10 **Amendments to Entries.** Head of Departments should advise the EO of any late amendments to entries following Awarding Organisation and Exams Office deadlines. Amendments made after these deadlines will be subject to both College and Examination board late fees.

Leavers: When a student leaves the College, the Learner Amendment Form will be acknowledged by the EO who will cancel the examination entries for this student.

1.11 All coursework must be completed by the deadlines set by subject areas. These deadlines must be published by subject areas as well in advance as possible. Students failing to meet published deadlines will be deemed to have failed this component of the examination unless their circumstances can be considered a special circumstance as defined by the appropriate examination board.

Any internal coursework queries should be dealt with by the subject teachers and Head of Department.

1.12 Coursework marks must be notified to the EO by using the forms supplied by the EO and appropriate samples made available to the EO at the appropriate time.

1.13 Vocational course leaders will apply for units by logging all assessment outcomes on CEDAR. The EO will use the information on CEDAR to claim units using the online registration system and following AO deadlines. CEDAR BTEC Tracker must be completed by teachers by agreed EO deadlines.

1.14 **Special Arrangements.** The Additional Learning Support Manager has overall responsibility for completing special arrangement applications for submission to the Awarding Organisation (e.g. requests for extra time, enlarged papers). It is the responsibility of the Additional Learning Support Manager to liaise with Assistant Principals and/or Heads of Department, and inform the EO of any special arrangements for students with known learning disabilities and/or disabilities as early as possible in the academic year, and no later than the subject specification requirements and JCQ Deadlines. Special Arrangements are granted for all exams if they are approved.

Where a student experiences a short-term illness or disability requiring a special arrangement, the EO must be notified immediately.

2. ADMINISTRATION OF INTERNAL AND PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

2.1 The Premises Manager will be informed by the EO of all rooms required for an examination at least 5 working days in advance of the examination. The Premises Manager will ensure that each room is prepared with the appropriate numbers of desks and chairs in position.

2.2 Setting up rooms. The EO and AEO will be responsible for ensuring that the room allocated for an exam is set up and the question papers and additional materials (including desk cards) are available for collection by the invigilator. Wherever possible the EO and AEO will set out desk cards prior to the exam, but this is ultimately the responsibility of the invigilator.

2.3 The EO will produce a list of room changes required. This will be based upon the current version of the college timetable. Where staff have moved from the room identified on the timetable, the EO will not be responsible for arranging an additional room change.

2.4 **Invigilation.** An invigilation list will be prepared by the EO. This will be published at least 2 weeks prior to the examination(s). All staff **must** check this list and notify the EO of any difficulties.

Circumstances may arise (e.g. staff illness) resulting in a member of staff being called upon at short notice. The EO or AEO will inform members of staff of late alterations in person.

2.5 Invigilation duties are specified by each examination board in "Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations". A copy of this publication will be available for consultation in each examination room.

2.6 Starting the examination

The member of staff responsible for the start of an examination should report to the Exams Office 30 minutes before the published start time of the exam:

- Ensure that the desk cards and any additional materials are on the student's desk before students are allowed to enter the room.
- Check that each student is sitting at the correct desk. Every student should have proof of identity. For most students (daytime and evening) this will be their College ID Card, which should be visible on the desk. When a student does not have proof of identity, they *may* not be allowed into the examination room.
- Check and distribute the question papers. Subject specialists can be asked for support with any complications.
- Record the starting and finishing time of the examination in such a way that all students can clearly see the start and finish times.
- Announce any errata.
- Make a note of any absentees on the attendance sheets. The EO is not responsible for chasing up absentees on the day of the exam. If Head of Department/teacher wish to chase up students who may not be in a certain exam, they need to make prior arrangements within the department to chase up any students who may not have arrived.
- Sign the seating plan. **It is now a requirement of all examination boards that each invigilator sign the seating plan recording the time they were invigilating.**
- A student who arrives after the examination has begun will be allowed to enter and sit the examination **up to 15 minutes** after the published start time. After this time, a student will be considered very late and will be refused entry.
- A student who arrives **up to 15 minutes** after the published start time for the examination may be allowed the full exam time at the discretion of the EO and following JCQ requirements.
- Within JCQ guidelines and using their own professional discretion, in exceptional circumstances the EO may offer an opportunity for very late candidates to sit the exam, including whether to offer the full exam time.

2.7 Finishing the examination

The person invigilating at the end of the examination should:

- Warn students when 10 minutes of the examination remain
- Finish the examination at the correct time
- Ensure all students have completed the Candidate Number Box
- Collect in answer papers/booklets in candidate number order and hand them to the EO
- Collect all other materials and give them to the EO

2.8 Checking. The Examination team will check and arrange for all papers to be ready for posting.

2.9 **Clashes.** The EO will identify clashes and make the appropriate arrangements (i.e. notify the examination boards and the student(s) concerned). Students will be informed by the EO of rescheduled sessions due to clashes in units. Students will also be informed that they will be supervised between sessions and that failure to comply with the relevant regulations will mean disqualification. Head of Departments/teachers will be asked to inform students that if they have not had confirmation of an exam clash, to see the EO immediately. Ultimately it is the student's responsibility to double check arrangements with the EO when they have a

clash to avoid problems on the day of their exam. Students will be advised of this procedure via their Progress Coach/tutor.

Overnight supervision may be necessary in cases of multiple clashes. The EO will normally deal this with in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.

3. POST-EXAMINATION

3.1 Within 7 days of any examination, the EO will inform the examination board of any special consideration/exceptional circumstances arising from an absence or illness. The students concerned must provide appropriate medical evidence within 5 days of the examination. For Appeals the Head of Department/teacher will be required to complete the forms giving the names of students of comparable ability. Special Considerations/Exceptional Circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will comply with JCQ regulations.

3.2 The EO will identify any absentees where fees need to be recovered. No Registration fees will be refunded whilst fees are outstanding.

3.3 During the post exam period the EO will attempt to resolve any other queries that arise, e.g. missing papers, coursework marks missing. During holiday periods this may require the EO contacting a Head of Department or other member of staff at home.

RESULTS

Main August results

3.4 Prior to the results days in August the EO will arrange for the electronic collection of the examination results and perform the necessary basic analysis in conjunction with the Management Information Services Manager. If any queries arise the EO will attempt to resolve them prior to the actual publication of the results.

3.5 On results days in August the EO will ensure that all students can receive their marks electronically via CEDAR.

3.6 Results will only be given to third parties with prior written notification by the student. Evidence of the collector's identification will be required.

Procedure for the recording of Individual Unit Results

Individual unit results for all modular courses are filed in the Exams Office and circulated to Head of Department, Assistant Principals and the Principal on the date they are issued from the Exam board.

When unit results are returned via EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) from the Exam board, this is recorded in the REMS exams module. Results that are not collected via EDI will be recorded in REMS within 2 weeks of the published results day. Results will be collated and recorded in the student's ILR (Individualised Learner Record) within 6 weeks of the date results are issued.

3.7 Re-marks and appeals. The EO will liaise with the Head of Department/Assistant Principal /subject teacher and the Head of Centre to determine whether the College feels it is appropriate to make an appeal. When a student wishes to make an individual appeal, the student will be responsible for the payment of all fees before the deadline date, (approximately 3 weeks after the results day).

3.8 Examination board feedback. The EO will distribute moderators' reports and any other examination reports that are received as a result of the examination process to the Head of Quality.

3.9. Certificates. The EO will arrange for all certificates to be collated and placed into individually named envelopes. These will only be available from the Exams Office when all certificates have been received. Students should arrange for these certificates to be collected and signed for within 12 months of the examination. After 12 months any remaining certificates will be destroyed and students will need to apply for replacement certificates via the Awarding Organisation.

3.10 Detailed exam analysis. The EO and MIS Manager will provide additional examination analysis as required, using the software available. This will include gender and ethnicity data. Plus Advanced Level Performance System (ALPS) value added data will be provided to the Principal and the Board in November via CEDAR Monitoring and Reporting Services.

3.11 Photocopies/Marked Scripts are available to students on request to the EO after the publication of results. Students will be provided with information relating to the procedure involved regarding the process of applying for re-marks or access to scripts by the EO at the point of collection of results.

3.12 APPEALS PROCEDURE

Gateway College staff are committed to assessing student work fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification guidelines for the qualification concerned. Staff will have the appropriate understanding, knowledge and training to conduct these assessments in accordance with the requirements of the relevant specifications for each subject.

After the work has been assessed by Gateway College staff it is usually moderated by the Awarding Organisation to ensure consistency between centres. Such external moderation may change the marks awarded for internally assessed work. This is outside the control of Gateway College and is not covered by this procedure.

If you are unhappy with an assessment mark given by a Gateway College teacher for a piece of work which is directly related to your qualification, such as a portfolio submission, coursework or design piece, you have the right to appeal. You are entitled to a clear explanation of why you received that particular grade. You must therefore, in the first instance, speak with the teacher who awarded the grade.

If you are still dissatisfied with the assessment for any reason, then you may have grounds for making an appeal. Appeals should be made in writing within 4 weeks of the date that you received the mark that you have a grievance with. Please come to the Exams Office if you would like to make an appeal and we will discuss with you

what you need to do and the information we require from you.

You will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal.

You may like to talk this over with your Progress Coach/tutor or Assistant Principal. Alternatively, if you have any questions regarding this policy, please come to the Exams Office.

4. Candidate Malpractice

"Candidate Malpractice" means malpractice by a candidate in the course of any examination or assessment, including the preparation and authentication of any controlled assessments or coursework, the presentation of any practical work, the compilation of portfolios of assessment evidence and the writing of any examination paper. Investigations will normally be carried out by the Head of Centre acting on behalf of the Awarding Organisation. Internal and external assessment will be carried out to the standards set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) <http://www.jcq.org.uk/> and Awarding bodies. The College will follow the JCQ guidance for malpractice. See Appendix 1 – Procedures for investigating malpractice.

4.1 Examples of Candidate malpractice

- The alteration or falsification of any results document, including certificates;
- A breach of the instructions or advice of an invigilator, supervisor, or the Awarding Organisation in relation to the examination or assessment rules and regulations;
- Failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to maintain the security of the examinations or assessments;
- Collusion: working collaboratively with other candidates, beyond what is permitted;
- Copying from another candidate (including the use of technology to aid the copying);
- Allowing work to be copied e.g. posting work on social networking sites prior to an examination/assessment;
- The unauthorised use of a memory stick or similar device where a candidate uses a word processor;
- Facilitating malpractice on the part of other candidates;

4.2 Examples of staff malpractice/maladministration

- Breach of security - Any act which breaks the confidentiality of question papers or materials, and their electronic equivalents, or the confidentiality of candidates' scripts or their electronic equivalents.
- Deception - Any act of dishonesty in relation to an examination or assessment such as manufacturing evidence, improper assistance in completing coursework or fabricating records.
- Maladministration - Failure to adhere to the regulations regarding the conduct of controlled assessments, coursework, examinations and non-examination assessments, or malpractice in the conduct of examinations/assessments

and/or the handling of examination question papers, candidate scripts, mark sheets, cumulative assessment records, results and certificate claim forms, etc. Failing to ensure that candidates' controlled assessment, coursework, non-examination assessment or work to be completed under controlled conditions is adequately completed and/or monitored and/or supervised.

4.3 Sanctions for candidate malpractice

Awarding bodies may, at their discretion, impose the following sanctions against candidates:

- Warning: The candidate is issued with a warning that if the offence is repeated within a set period of time, further specified sanctions will be applied.
- Loss of all marks/disqualification for a unit
- Disqualification from all units within that series.
- Disqualification from a whole qualification
- Disqualification from all qualifications taken in that series.

4.4 Sanctions for staff malpractice/maladministration

In the case of staff misconduct the Human Resource Management Policy would be followed and disciplinary action taken where appropriate.

4.5 Informing staff and students about malpractice

The exams policy and procedures for malpractice are covered the Teaching and Learning Handbook which is part of the new staff induction. Staff are provided with training to deliver internal assessments in line with Awarding Organisation expectations. Students are informed of assessment expectations, rules, plagiarism and malpractice policy through induction and the Learner Handbook.

Appendix 1

Procedures for investigating malpractice

The JCQ guidelines will be followed for investigating and sanctioning malpractice. Where suspected malpractice is identified by a Centre, the Head of Centre must submit the details of the case at the earliest opportunity to the relevant Awarding Organisation. The Form JCQ/M1 should be used. All suspected and actual Incidents of malpractice or maladministration will be reported to the relevant Awarding Organisation immediately. The person investigating an allegation of malpractice within a centre must organise an investigation into the alleged malpractice and then submit a report to the Awarding Organisation. There must not be a conflict of interest between the person conducting the investigation and the individual(s) accused of malpractice. The person conducting the investigation must have no personal interest in the outcome of that investigation.

The investigation must determine:

- Who was involved in the incident, including candidates, members of staff and/or invigilators; The facts of the case, as established from evidence and/or statements from those involved.

The report submitted to the Awarding Organisation must include:

- A clear account, as detailed as necessary, of the circumstances;
- Details of the investigations carried out by the centre;
- Written statements from any teachers, invigilators or other members of staff concerned, which must be signed and dated;
- Written statements from the candidates concerned, which must be signed and dated;
- Any other evidence relevant to the allegation.