

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

Rationale

Public examinations provide vital summative assessment, generally at the end of a key stage. 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 students 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 both prepare for public examinations and check student learning.

Exam Seasons

External exams are scheduled in May and June with a GCSE English and Maths re-sit opportunity available in November.

Entry Details

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Leaders.

A candidate can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal which will then be considered by the Subject Leaders and submitted to the Examinations Officer.

All individual examination timetables will be issued to candidates via their school email address, and sent to the candidate's parent / guardian.

The Examinations Officer will accept withdrawals, amendments and changes of tier up to the date set by the awarding body if submitted on the appropriate form.

The deadlines for late entries are circulated to staff via email and memo, they can be found on the school website and candidates have the details included with their timetables.

Retake decisions are made in consultation with the subject teacher, candidate and Subject Leaders before being submitted by the candidate to the Examinations Officer.

External candidates – a candidate who has studied at Aston within the last 3 years can apply to re-take written exams. The expectation is that candidates must not have been involved in malpractice during their previous examinations. Practical and coursework components cannot be accommodated, neither can new subjects not previously studied.

Entry Deadlines

Below are the exam board deadlines for examination entries. Internal deadlines will be applied in advance of these. Any entries / amendments made after the deadlines incur additional late fees.

GCSE November:	4 October
GCE & GCSE Summer:	21 February

School Closure

Should the school be closed when an exam is scheduled e.g. due to snow, then every effort will be made to ensure the exam can still take place. Should the exam not take place, students will be entered to take the exam again at the next possible opportunity. Should there not be another opportunity i.e. the candidate should be achieving their final grade in that session the school will apply for special consideration for that exam paper.

Non-Examined Assessment

A copy of the JCQ Information for Candidates – non-examined assessments can be found on the school website.

External coursework deadlines:

GCSE November:	6 November
GCSE Summer (AQA):	7 May
GCE Summer:	15 May
GCSE Summer (OCR & Edexcel):	15 May

Internal deadlines will be applied in advance of these. Candidates will be given their internal result and have the opportunity to appeal this result before the marks are submitted to the exam board.

Plagiarism

The school actively upholds the aims of the JCQ in preventing plagiarism and the regulations below are given to students electronically:

The work which you submit for assessment must be your own. You must not copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you. If you copy the words or ideas of others and don't show your sources in references and a bibliography, you will be committing plagiarism —and that's cheating.

- Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts or ideas and trying to pass them off as your own. It is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously. Don't think you won't be caught. There are many ways to detect plagiarism:
- Markers can spot changes in the style of writing and use of language;
- Markers are highly experienced subject specialists who are very familiar with work on the topic concerned — they may have read the source you are using (or even marked the essay you have copied from!);
- Internet search engines and specialised computer software can be used to match phrases or pieces of text with original sources and to detect changes in the grammar and style of writing or punctuation.

Penalties for breaking the regulations

If your work is submitted and it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following penalties will be applied:

- the piece of work will be awarded zero marks;
- you will be disqualified from that unit for that examination series;
- you will be disqualified from the whole subject for that examination series;
- you will be disqualified from all subjects and barred from entering again for a period of time.

Your awarding body will decide which penalty is appropriate.

Results

November results are to be distributed to the students via their school email address by lunchtime on results day.

All Summer results are available electronically to students via their school email address on the morning of results days. Where possible, it is expected that students in Year 11 would attend school on results day for discussions.

Results day dates and additional information is published on the school website and the exams noticeboard.

Fees

A first attempt at a unit is paid for by the school, however, subsequent re-sits are payable by the student at the exam board rates plus a small administration charge.

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

- Students whose entries are withdrawn because of lack of coursework
- Students who make a decision to sit or not to sit an examination after the late entry / withdrawal deadline
- Students who fail to attend an examination and do not produce medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Clashes

When students have more than one exam scheduled to take place at the same time it may be possible to split the exams between exam sessions on the same day. The allocation of supervisors is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer. Candidates will be notified in writing of the arrangements made.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an examination, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the examination itself, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the examination invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within 10 days of the exam.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

Candidates who may require access arrangements are identified during the admissions process and via teacher referral. Making these special arrangements and submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO.

Invigilators are notified of any students with special arrangements via the seating plans.

POST RESULTS

After the results are issued there can be a number of issues:

Missing and Incomplete Results

The most serious category is missing, or incomplete, results and these should be identified by students immediately and further advice sought from the Examinations Officer.

Enquiries About Results (EARS)

If any result is not as expected, then there are a number of possibilities.

If a university place depends upon the grade the student can request a Priority Service 2 (review of marking).

If a university place does NOT depend on the grade then the student can request:

- a photocopy of a script
- a clerical check
- a review of marking

The centre will uphold an EAR, provided the candidate makes the required payment at the time of request. Details of fees are found in the post results pack received at the time of results via the school website.

Return of original scripts

Students can request their original script back for general interest, or to inform future learning.

These services, for the most part, have an associated fee, which must be paid by the student before the requests can be made to the exam board.

Each service has a strict deadline that is detailed in the post results packs issued to students with their results.

CERTIFICATES

Once certificates arrive in the centre, on the dates shown below, they are recorded and organised for student collection. Certificates are kept in the centre for twelve months, if they are not collected within this time they can be destroyed by a secure method. Exam boards will not replace uncollected or lost certificates and it is the candidate's responsibility to collect and keep them safe as they will be needed when gaining places in further education and by employers.

November exams:	28 February
Summer exams:	7 November

Certificates are collected and signed for in person at the centre. Candidates are informed via their form tutor or in writing if they are no longer attending the centre, when the certificates become available for collection.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates may be posted (special delivery) if the candidate or authorised third party is unable to collect them.