

# **Darland High School Examinations Policy (incorporating Word Processor Policy)**

June 2025

## **Statement of Intent**

Every child attending Darland High School has access to a range of courses leading to nationally recognized accreditation, in line with the aim that every child should maximize achievement and realize potential.

## **Links to other policies**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with these policies:

- Policy on Controlled Assessments
- Examination Appeals Policy

## **Examination Entries**

The school will decide on how many qualifications each candidate will take. It is expected that when a candidate starts a course leading to the award of a qualification, they should not be allowed to 'drop' the subject until the assessment for that qualification has been completed. In some circumstances, it may be prudent not to enter a candidate who has been following a Key Stage 4 subject course, for the final examinations for that qualification. The decision not to enter a candidate for the final examination can be based on one or more of the following factors:

- Failure by the candidate to complete sufficient coursework to achieve a Level 1 grade in the final qualification.
- Failure by the candidate to have completed the required controlled assessments.
- Prolonged absence from school leading to the candidate having an incomplete grasp of the course content that would lead to a failure to achieve a Level 1 grade in the qualification.

It is the responsibility of the Faculty coordinator to discuss any case or request to 'drop' a subject with the subject teacher, the candidate's parents and the Headteacher before the decision is made. The Headteacher will have the final decision in any disagreement between the aforementioned parties.

Teachers in consultation with candidates and parents/guardians decide the level for GCSE or other entry. The final decision in this matter rests with the Headteacher.

## **Exam fees**

Examination fees for recommended entries of Internal candidates are met by school unless the candidate fails to attend the examination without valid reason. In this eventuality the candidate becomes liable for all or part reimbursement of fees.

Should an approved course leading to a nationally recognised qualification, offer the opportunity to sit modules before the summer exam season in Year 11, it is the decision of the school as to whether this opportunity should be taken for cohorts or sub-cohorts of candidates. If the school wishes to enter candidates for modules and terminal examinations before the summer exam season for Year 11, the Faculty coordinator must write to the parents of the candidates this affects giving them due notice of the forthcoming exam modules together with a reminder on the charging policy on re-sits. The school will pay the entry costs of any examination modules taken early, but will not be liable for any charges for re-sits that the candidates may choose to take later in the course.

## **Access**

Access arrangements and any special consideration are decided as a result of consultation between the ANCO, Subject Leader and the Examinations Officer.

## **Conduct of Examinations**

The Examinations Officer is responsible for all administration of examinations including recruitment, training and monitoring of invigilators. Candidates will be given copies of their examination timetable well before the start of any examination season and will be given a presentation in assembly by the examinations officer before the start of the Year 10 Trial Examinations at which the rules and regulations for the conduct of examinations will be outlined.

The Examinations Officer and Faculty Coordinator will be present at the start of each examination.

Candidates will sit examinations in the Hall or Gym, except for those practical examinations, which require specialist rooms. External invigilators will invigilate the examinations. Those with access arrangements will sit their examinations in designated areas and be invigilated separately.

Candidates wishing to sit their examinations in rooms other than the Hall or Gym for reasons of social and emotional anxiety, must have this accommodation for their needs approved by the Headteacher before the start of the exam series where they are due to sit exams. Parents of candidates requesting this accommodation, must apply to the headteacher and will normally support the request with a letter from a doctor or CAMHS officer.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring of Faculty examination procedures will take place throughout the year by Faculty Coordinators.

Coursework submission guidelines including outline deadline dates will be set for the candidates at the beginning of Year 10. These will be communicated in the Guidance booklet issued to all Year 10 candidates at this time. This information will also be placed on the Darland App.

The Policy will be reviewed regularly and updated by Governors and the Leadership Team.

## **Access to scripts**

From time to time, the school will recall individual copies of exam scripts from examination bodies, in order to inform teachers as to the application of mark-schemes by examiners. When scripts are returned for use as teaching aids, they will be anonymised. All candidates will have the opportunity at the beginning of the exam season, to decline their permission for the school to use their scripts in this way.

## **Exam contingency**

The priority when implementing contingencies will be to maintain three principles:

- delivering assessments to published timetables
- delivering results to published timetables
- complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards.

The national examination timetable applies to GCSEs and all other externally assessed tests / exams

### **a. Disruption of teaching time – centre is closed for an extended period**

Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, the school will ensure learners are prepared, as usual, for examinations.

- In the case of modular courses, the the school may advise learners to sit examinations in the next available series

- The school will have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning.

**b. Learners unable to take examinations because of a crisis - school remaining open**

In the event of learners being unable to attend the school to take examinations as normal, the school will liaise with learners to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations. JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website.

- The school will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- The school will apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates **where they have met the minimum requirements**. JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website.

**c. School unable to open as normal during the examination period**

If the school is unable to open as normal for examinations, they will inform each awarding body with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible. As part of general planning for emergencies, the school will cover the impact on examinations. The headteacher will decide whether it is safe for the school to open. The head will take advice, or follow instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the school is able to open.

- School will open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible
- The gym and/or sports hall will be used as alternatives to the main hall should the main hall be inaccessible. These alternative spaces are housed in a separate building and have a dedicated entrance.
- Should the entire school site be inaccessible, All Saints' Primary School in Gresford has offered up their hall as our designated alternative. The feasibility of relocating exams to All Saints' Primary will be fully explored and arrangements shared with candidates
- Schools will use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other schools or use other public building, if possible)
- School will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series wherever possible
- School will apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.

**d. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

- If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts the school will seek advice from awarding organisations and collection agency regarding collection. School will seek approval from awarding bodies before making their own arrangements for transportation.
- school will ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

**e. School unable to distribute results as normal**

If the school is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services, school will **contact awarding organisations about alternative options. i.e.:**

- school will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site
- school will make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- school will share facilities with other schools if this is possible.



**f. Exams officer absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle**

In the event of the examinations officer being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, in order to minimise risk to examination administration and avoid any adverse impact on students, school will

- Refer to the Exam Entries / Exam Day Contingency Plan (as maintained by Examining Officer)
- Consult with the Headteacher when necessary

**Word Processor Policy**

This policy is updated annually on the publication of JCQ regulations and guidance documents, **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for Conducting Examinations**.

A word processor **cannot** be granted because:

- a candidate prefers to type rather than write
- can work faster on a keyboard
- they use a laptop or tablet at home.

**Allowing the Use of Word Processors in Examinations - Pupils with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD)**

Pupils will be allowed to use a laptop or tablet in examinations under the following conditions:

- They have a diagnosed learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;
- A need has been established and its use is recommended by an Educational Psychologist / specialist assessor approved by the School.
- A candidate has been using the laptop or tablet as their normal way of working in any subject where they intend to use a laptop or tablet in an examination and has had specific practice and rehearsal in the use of a laptop or tablet under examination conditions (e.g. in mock exams).

**Allowing the Use of Word Processors in Examinations - Pupils without SpLD**

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working (in the classroom, mock examinations, school tests) within the centre and be appropriate to their needs.

Only candidates with the following conditions who would benefit from the use of a word processor may be considered:

- a medical condition affecting the speed or legibility of handwriting;
- a physical disability affecting the speed or legibility of handwriting;
- a sensory impairment;
- illegible handwriting;
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;
- temporary medical condition e.g. broken arm.

**Where the use of a word processor in examinations/assessments meets JCQ criteria, we will:**

- Provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to their needs
- Acknowledge that controlled assessment or coursework can normally be completed on word processors unless prohibited by the specification

- Permit a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers

### **Provision of Laptop or tablets to Exam Candidates**

We will ensure that JCQ regulations are strictly adhered to and provide a laptop or tablet according to the following regulations.

A word processor:

- must be checked before the candidate's examination(s) to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination or have access to mains power;
- must be used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- must have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick must not be used by a candidate. Where required, the centre must provide a memory stick to the candidate, which is cleared of any previously stored data;
- must be in good working order at the time of the examination;
- must be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. Where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated in another room, a separate invigilator will be required;
- must either be connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. This must be done after the examination is over. The candidate must be present to verify that the work printed is his or her own. Word processed scripts must be attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers;
- must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused;
- must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- must not be connected to an intranet or any other means of communication;
- must not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc;
- must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- must not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using speech recognition technology (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking;
- must not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software;
- must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

### **Candidates will be advised:**

To ensure that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer: e.g. 12345/8001 – 6391/01.

If software does not allow this, once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed script, they will be advised to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate will be supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

To number each page appropriately.

To use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking.

That invigilators will remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals. Alternatively, an IT technician can set up 'autosave' on each laptop or tablet. This way, if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost.

### **Failure to Comply**

Failure to comply with the regulations contained in the JCQ documentation has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result(s).

Failure to comply is defined as:

- putting in place access arrangements that are not approved; or
- permitting access arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence.

