



# Policy Document

## Exams Policy

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## **EXAMS POLICY**

### **RATIONALE**

Public examinations are a key tool for measuring the success of an organisation. In addition, other internally set and marked examinations 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.

We have a duty to ensure students do as well as they can in exams to ensure they can progress to the next stage of education or employment.

### **Sixth Form (Level 3) and Foundation (Level 4)**

- All students should be entered for appropriate qualifications in all the subjects they are studying.
- If a student's entry is to be withdrawn there must be an initial concern meeting conducted by the Chief Executives and Course Leader. The student and parents/carers should be involved before a final decision is made.
- All students will be monitored carefully throughout their time at READ college, and concerns notified to the Course Leader and Chief Executives as soon as they arise.
- Any proposed major changes to the examination board, style or timing of examinations, eg modular courses, must be discussed and approved by the SLT based on information given by the relevant course leader.
- Amendment of entries which incur a financial penalty from the examination boards will be reported to the Board of Trustees.
- Changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures and alterations arising from administrative processes will not be charged to students.

The school may 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- Students whose entries are withdrawn because of lack of coursework.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.
- If Students fail to attend an examination and do not produce medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances. This will be communicated in writing to students and parents/carers at the start of their course at READ College
- After the release of results, course leaders may request the return of papers or a re-mark at the college's expense. If a student requires this service against the judgment of the course leader, he/she will be charged.

### **Internal Examination Appeals Procedures**

The college is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assess students' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments should be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. Students' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the examination board. Where a set of work is divided between staff, consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation. If students believe

that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this appeals procedure.

The existence of this procedure is made known to students at induction and in this examinations policy, which is available for inspection on request.

1. Appeals should be made as soon as possible, and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examinations series.
2. Appeals should be made in writing to the examinations officer who will investigate the appeal. If the examinations officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, he/she will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise if the examination officer is not able to conduct the investigation for any other reason.
3. The person conducting the investigation will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed with the requirements of the awarding body and examination code of practice of the QCA. This will be done before the end of the series.
4. The result of the appeal will be made known in writing to the parties concerned, together with any correspondence with the awarding body, any changes made to the assessment of the piece of work in question and any changes made for the future.
5. A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. **Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of the college and is not covered by these procedures.** Details of the appeals procedure for the relevant awarding body are available from the examination officer.

### **OCR Level 3 Results**

- When results are published examination staff will distribute results, be available to give guidance to students and prepare data for publication and monitoring purposes.
- This service will be supported by the Chief Executives, Exams Officer and other members of support staff.

### **Internal examinations**

- The exact nature of summative assessment in each subject will be determined ultimately by the subject leader within the rationale and purposes of this policy and other related policies.
- The examinations officer will co-ordinate annual assessments within the college.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY OF DEPARTMENTS**

1. One person will be nominated from each department to take responsibility for exam entries/withdrawals etc.
2. Exam withdrawals need to be approved by the Chief Executives who will advise the Exams Officer.

### **Entries**

All candidates will be entered by the due date set by the board. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the correct lists are issued to the Exam Officer. A decision not to enter a student has to be approved by the Chief Executives. If it is agreed that a student will not be entered or will be withdrawn it is the responsibility of the Chief Executives to inform parents in writing of the decision.

### **Amendments/ Change of tier**

Withdrawals/amendments will be accepted by the Exam Officer (if approved) up to the date set by the board only if it's put in writing.

### **External exams**

The Exams Officer is responsible for the organisation and conduct of all external exams.

1. Final confirmation of entry numbers and levels will be made with the department.
2. All exam papers will be counted in by the Chief Executives and Exams Officer and locked away under secure conditions.
3. All sealed exam papers will be checked by the Exams Officer.
4. No exam papers can be removed from the exam room before the end of a session.
5. All exams will be conducted according to the rules laid down by exam boards and within the start and finish times determined by the board.
6. Any misconduct or irregularity must be reported to the Exams Officer and Chief Executives immediately, who will then inform the exam board concerned.
7. In the absence of the Exam Officer at the end of any exam, papers will be collected and taken to the college office and given into the care of the Chief Executive with responsibility for Exam Storage Facilities (J. Read).
8. Students will not be allowed to leave an exam unless their exam paper has been picked up and secured by an invigilator.

### **Coursework**

It is the responsibility of each course leader to ensure all coursework is despatched at the correct time. Coursework will be despatched using the same method as for exam papers. Copies will be taken of audio or video coursework (arranged by the course leader) and kept in college. The department must have a copy of the marks awarded in case coursework goes missing in the post. All coursework must be securely kept and not returned to students for 1 year unless regulations allow work to be returned.

### **Misconduct**

This should be reported to the Exams Officer in the first instance, or in her absence the Chief Executives, who will decide what action to take.

### **Invigilation**

Conduct of invigilators

1. The Exams Officer will ensure that each exam session will have a designated invigilator in charge.
2. The Exams Officer will check attendance according to seating plan.
3. Invigilators must not take any work into the exam room but give full attention to the conduct of the examination.

### **Results**

1. Results will be available for collection on the day notified by the exam boards only.
2. Subjects should check for the possibility of a re-mark/re-grade by 2nd September and provide the Exams Officer with the details. All re-mark requests must be approved by the Chief Executives.
3. If a result is queried the Exams Officer will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark.
4. Results will not be given to students or parents over the phone, emailed or faxed.

### **Special needs**

It is the responsibility of the SENCO to liaise with the Exams Assistant about the arrangements for candidates with additional needs.

Please see Access Arrangements Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy and Special Consideration Policy for further details

### **EXTERNAL EXAMS**

#### **APPEALS**

Decision about appeals for external exams need to be based upon:

- evidence that a student's result is significantly below expectations.
- students who are close to grade boundaries and a change would significantly benefit the college or departmental results.
- evidence that the overall results do not match the teacher assessment and there is a concern that the quality of marking was not adequate.
- concern that results between the two centres at Level 3 or Level 4 are significantly different as there were different markers.
- evidence that coursework has been significantly changed and the moderators report does not explain this.

Papers should be recalled when there is a concern that the department are not fully aware of why there has been underachievement for certain ability ranges or on certain papers.

Decisions to get re-marks or to appeal results needs to be approved by the Chief Executive responsible for exams (J. Read).

The overall budget for appeals will need to be considered as these are expensive.

## **ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL RESULTS - DEPARTMENTAL**

The Exams Officer will provide Heads of Subject with:

- the exam results of all students at all levels
- % results for their subjects.
- comparative data on national results
- results in the subject over the previous three years against national averages and FFTD targets.
- comparisons of performance for boys and girls in each teaching group and overall.

Heads of Subject will use this data to interpret their results in a meeting with the Chief Executives. A report will be made for the Trustees to include the following:

- Are all groups of students performing appropriately, or are some underachieving?
- Are groups of students underachieving in parts of the exam and not others?
- Are there elements of the exam where the department could improve?
- Do exam results match departmental predictions?
- Are students making appropriate progress in each year?
- Are there differences in the performance of different teaching groups?
- Have staff met their targets for their groups?
- What actions should be taken to improve results in the future?

## **INTERNAL EXAMINATIONS**

Students undertake internal assessment during 2 windows each year – December and March for Foundation Students, and January and June for Sixth Form Students.

These examinations act as milestones to a student's achievement and also the performance of each department.

Where appropriate, internal examinations will be conducted as mock exams, to prepare students for the OCR/Trinity examinations process. The assessment schedule, staffing and results will be co-ordinated by the Exams Officer and distributed to students once marks have been verified (where appropriate and in line with guidance from exam boards on summative feedback).