

International School of Creative Arts

Examination Policy

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1. Rationale

The purpose of this examination policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates;
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exams system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in ISCA's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

The exams policy will be reviewed annually.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Head of School.

2. Examination Responsibilities

The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marking
- assigns the appropriate terms of authorisation for members of centre staff

The Exam Officer:

- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice and will follow the guidance in the JCQ document Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that the scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- manages the administration of external exams
- advises the SMT, subject tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- oversees the production and distribution to all centre staff and candidates, 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 candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms data on estimated entries

- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publications for Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special considerations
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of the exams
- ensures candidate coursework/controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule

The Director of Studies:

The Director of Studies ensures that subject tutors:

- Supply information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Exam Officer and/or Head of Centre
- Provide samples of work for internal moderation processes
- Mark in accordance with the ISCA assessment policy
- Implement and participate in moderation procedures
- Maintain JCQ standards throughout examinations and the submission of coursework
- Adhere to deadlines set by the SMT
- Provide guidance and oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- Accurately complete coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets

The Special Educational Needs Lead (SEN Lead)*:

- identifies and arranges to test candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- notifies the examinations officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements to process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- works with the examinations officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

** ISCA is an independent school and does not have any students on education, health and care (EHC) plans; as such we are not required to have a qualified SENCO. Instead, a senior teacher is responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision. For the purposes of this policy, this role will be referred to as the SEN Lead.*

The Invigilator/invigilators:

- assist the examinations officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations

- collect exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- collect all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the exams office

The Candidates:

- confirm and sign entries
- understand coursework, controlled assessment and non-examination assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own
- ensure they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations

3. Examination Procedures

ISCA operates under JCQ guidelines to ensure quality control and the supervision of externally set examinations. All supervisors are trained within these guidelines prior to supervising students under examination conditions.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the SMT.

The types of qualifications offered are AS Levels, A Levels and Cambridge Technicals.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the prospectus for that year.

If there is to be a change of specification, the exams office must be informed by September in the year the course starts. Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Director of Studies for Art and Design subjects and of the Head of School for non-art and design subject.

Exam series

External exams and assessments will normally be scheduled for May/June.

Internal exams (mock exams) and assessments are planned in line with this schedule.

The morning external examination session begins at 9:00am. The afternoon external examination session begins at 1:30pm.

Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the examinations officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

Registrations

Subject tutors are required to send in an email with estimated entries to the examinations officer by the second week of October of the autumn term.

In order to ensure that candidates are registered in time, tutors are required to sign off on a final list of candidates for their subject area by 20th January of the spring term.

The examinations officer registers candidates for exams before 31st January in order to allow time for final changes and/or withdrawals.

The examinations officer will print out statements of entry for

1. tutors to sign off on to confirm that the correct students have been entered for the correct examinations;
2. candidates to sign off of to ensure their personal details have been entered correctly and that they have been entered for the correct exams.

Entries

Candidates are identified for examination entry by the subject tutors. A candidate or parent/carer can discuss with the subject tutor a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The school will consider private entries on request. The school does not act as an exams centre for other organisations. Entry deadlines are circulated to tutors via email, staff bulletins and meetings.

Late entries

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require authorisation by the Head of School.

Retakes

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject tutors and Senior Management Team. Tutors will provide estimated entry information to the examination officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Examination fees

Examination fees for subjects taught at ISCA are part of the school fees and students are not charged extra for examinations.

For the avoidance of doubt, students will be charged to sit examinations in subjects that are not taught at ISCA, for example an A Level in a student's mother tongue such as Chinese or Turkish.

The school reserves the right to recover from parents/carers the costs of examination entry fee(s), should the student fail, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus or sit the final examination(s).

The school will charge the full cost for any students re-sitting an examination.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by ISCA.

Candidates will not be charged for changes or withdrawals made following the proper procedures provided these are made within the deadlines set by the examination officer.

The examinations officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series.

Candidates must pay the charge for a result enquiry, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insists on pursuing it.

Equality Legislation

All staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation. The school will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by legislation, awarding bodies and JCQ. This is the responsibility of Head of Centre, Senior Management Team, SEN Lead and Examinations Officer.

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

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SEN Lead. The SEN Lead will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SEN Lead can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam. All information is written in the student profiles.

Access arrangements

The following is the responsibility of the SEN Lead and the examinations officer

- Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams
- Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the examinations officer with the assistance of the SEN Lead.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the examinations officer.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of School and Senior Management Team. Contingency plans are available in the School's Examinations Contingency Policy and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Estimated grades

The Director of Studies is responsible for submitting estimated grades to the examinations officer when requested.

Managing invigilators

Academic and non-academic staff will be used to invigilate examinations. These invigilators will be used for internal and external exams. Subject tutors for written examinations may not invigilate their exams in their own subjects, whereas art and design tutors may.

Invigilators are timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exam Officer.

Examination days

The Exam Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Tutors are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements in advance.

Invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. The Exam Officer and/or Head of Centre will be present at the start of the exam to confirm the identity of the candidates. Subject tutors may be present at the start of written exams to assist with identification of candidates but are not permitted in the examination venue so they are not exposed to the contents of the examination papers or to offer any advice to the candidates. Examination papers must not be removed from the examination room.

Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do. In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines in order to assist with technical difficulties. For example, tutors of art and design subjects can act as invigilators for art and design exams.

Papers can be distributed by the Exam Officer to subject areas 24 hours after the examination has finished. After an exam, the Exam Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies.

Candidates

Candidates must follow all the JCQ guidance.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates may leave the examination room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the examination room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.

School chase-up staff will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an examination and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Clash candidates

The Exam Officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays if necessary.

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, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the school to that effect. Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the examination, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor/self-certificate form. The examinations officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body before the deadline set by the JCQ.

Internal assessment

Candidates who have to prepare controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessments should do so by the agreed dates. It is the duty of the Director of Studies to ensure that all internal assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time. Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Examinations Officer by Director of Studies. The Examinations Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Appeals against internal assessments

Appeals against internal assessments are outlined in the School's EaRs Policy.

4. Examination Malpractice

The Head of Centre in consultation with the Senior Management Team and examinations officer are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Student Malpractice

The Head of School will:

- Report to the appropriate awarding body at the earliest opportunity all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. If the irregularity is discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication form, investigate any alleged malpractice internally and record the outcome on the authentication form supplied by the awarding body. This initial investigation should take place within 5 days. If an irregularity is identified after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, the Head of School will submit full details of the case to the relevant awarding body at the earliest opportunity, but definitely within 10 days
- Supervise all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice. Ensure that where an investigation has been delegated to a member of staff, the member of staff chosen is independent to the subject involved
- Respond speedily and openly to all requests for an investigation into an allegation of any malpractice

Staff Maladministration

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with the examination body administrative regulations and requirements. ISCA will carry out an initial investigation where it is suspected or a case of actual maladministration has taken place. The investigation should be carried out within 2 days of initial notification. If after the initial investigation it is felt that maladministration is suspected then the awarding body must be notified immediately. Where malpractice is established the disciplinary policy of the school will be enforced and the awarding body notified accordingly.