

2.9 EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

Preamble

Formal examinations constitute an important tool in student assessment, combined with a range of other assessment forms. The use of formal examinations as an integral part of assessment programs allows for the gathering of information about student achievement and development, as well as providing information for a range of additional purposes, including reporting, class formation, course suitability, effectiveness of teaching and learning programs and the collection of performance data as required by the NSW Board of Studies. Formal examinations also provide students preparation for the sitting of external examinations, including the Higher School Certificate Examinations. This policy aims to provide clear guidelines and procedures for staff, students and parents for formal examination processes at James Sheahan Catholic High School.

Role of the Assistant Principal

- ◆ Ensure study guides for all exams are displayed on the Sheahan website a minimum of two weeks before commencement of the first exam
- ◆ Monitor that exams reflect the assessment schedules as published in the relevant Assessment Guidelines booklets
- ◆ Ensure that a 'Report Schedule' has been published, indicating mandatory exam typing and photocopying deadlines and related reporting deadlines
- ◆ Reinforce the above deadlines through timely correspondence with Subject Coordinators
- ◆ Reinforce that the absolute expectation is that all exams will be photocopied and stored ready for use a minimum of seven days before the date of the first exam (the only exception being when meeting this requirement is beyond the faculty's control eg late arrival of external exams)
- ◆ Monitor the communication of exam information to staff and students
- ◆ Ensure exam dates are published on the Sentral Calendars and Sheahan schedule
- ◆ Ensure that Year Coordinators reinforce the exam guidelines as published in Assessment Guidelines booklets with their year (eg Year Meetings)
- ◆ Mediate on exam related disputes that cannot be resolved at a teacher, Year Coordinator or Subject Coordinator level. The Assistant Principal's final decision will be binding, in consultation with the Assessment Committee.

Role and Responsibilities of the Administration Coordinator

- ◆ Prepare exam timetables and the rooming for exams
- ◆ Contact the Bursar to arrange room/ use
- ◆ Allocate supervisors for the exams, including Exam Chief Supervisor
- ◆ Release Year Coordinators as requested under the policy guidelines
- ◆ Organise alternate arrangements for elective subjects not holding an exam
- ◆ Contact the Assistant Principal to arrange Hall set up and pack up
- ◆ Outline to students the expectations of student behaviour during exams. This may be outlined in year meetings, in *Semper Paratus*, on the JSCHS website and by distribution of student exam guidelines

Role and Responsibilities of Year Coordinators

1) General

- ◆ Distribute exam timetable a minimum of two weeks before the exam period
- ◆ Make staff aware of teacher exam guidelines
- ◆ Ensure student and teacher guidelines are displayed at each exam venue
- ◆ Allocate students to exam rooms
- ◆ Move students to the Hall, seat them and begin exam
- ◆ Outline expectations to students at Year Meetings when exam guidelines are distributed.

2) Junior Exams

- ◆ As above

3) Senior Exams

- ◆ Organise the setting up of the
 - Place lists of BOS student numbers around Mercy Hall for Senior Exams
 - Ensure that clocks are placed at the front and side of Mercy Hall and that they are working properly
 - Ensure that two white boards are placed at the front of Mercy Hall and that white board markers and erasers are available
 - Organise the turning off of bells (see John Churchland or PE staff), and checking the availability of the microphone (the PE staff and Admin Centre have keys to the sound room and microphone cupboard)
 - Turn on lights and switch on heating if required
- ◆ Organise subject rolls and seating arrangements
- ◆ Liaise with the Administration Coordinator with regard to receiving release from normal classes (usually 20 minutes) at the beginning of each exam
- ◆ Collect exam papers from the Administration Office and organise their setting out
- ◆ Oversee the taking of exam attendance rolls.

Subject Coordinator

1) General

- ◆ Organise the typing and photocopying of exam papers as per the coloured Report Schedules published twice a year. Check two random exam papers a minimum of two days before the scheduled sitting date to ensure the accuracy of typing and photocopying
 - ◆ Ensure that all exam content has been taught to all students in the relevant course and ensure that all course teachers are fully aware of the exam paper contents and have discussed the exams with their classes
 - ◆ Ensure that all exam papers have used the standardised exam cover sheet as located in “Secure Staff Access” on the Sheahan website and the staff handbook (Section 2.9)
 - ◆ Double checks that exam papers are ready for distribution two days before each exam and organise subject rolls and seating arrangements
 - ◆ Ensure that a detailed study guide is sent to the IT Coordinator to be placed on the JSCHS website a minimum of two weeks before the commencement of the exam period. Detailed guides provide students more opportunity to study effectively and to achieve greater success. As such, the following components are desirable in study guides:
 - Exam time length
 - Exam Weighting
 - Exam structure
 - Exam content – examinable modules, options, etc
 - Detailed guide as to what the students need to know and revise
 - “Better responses will” (if applicable)
- (NB. It is not necessary to distribute the standard Formal Assessment Notification scaffold as the exam timetable serves as two weeks’ written notice of a Formal Assessment Task)
- ◆ Follow up subject relevant student behaviour issues arising from exam sessions
 - ◆ Supervise students sent from an exam venue due to behaviour issues
 - ◆ Organise the processing of Warning Letters (for failure to complete a Formal Assessment Task) if required
 - ◆ Coordinate the marking and return of exam papers within two weeks of their sitting (A shorter time frame may be imposed due to report processing deadlines {as per the Years 7-9 end of year exams})
 - ◆ Coordinate the recording and processing of marks on the School’s Reporting Package and the determination of result estimates if required and appropriate
 - ◆ Organise the sitting of missed exams as per the Missed Exam Policy and Assessment Guidelines booklets

2) Junior Exams

- ◆ Deliver exam papers and rolls to the venue or venues at the start of each exam session and place on desks prior to exam starting
- ◆ Provide instructions for the distribution and collection of exam papers at the end of exam sessions.

Role and Responsibilities of Teachers

1) General

- ◆ Wherever possible arrive at the exam venue before the scheduled start and assist with the distribution of papers
- ◆ At the commencement of an exam assist the Year Coordinator to organise students to line up around the inside walls of Mercy Hall for seat allocation or, if a classroom is being used, in an orderly line outside the room
- ◆ Before seating students, ensure that bags are left at a designated area (bags should not block entry or exit points)
- ◆ Ensure that the exam subject, exam length, reading time, starting time and completion time for the exam are displayed in large, legible print on the whiteboard in clear view of all students
- ◆ Ensure that exam rooms are set up in single straight rows, to allow for active supervision
- ◆ Take an attendance roll immediately after students have commenced the exam
- ◆ Actively supervise exams (reading or marking during supervision duty is inappropriate)
- ◆ Monitor student equipment and enforce equipment rules. Pens, equipment, paper, calculators and acceptable reading materials (junior students only) are permitted at the student's desk.
- ◆ Confiscate personal reading material relating to the examined subject or of an offensive nature or inappropriate for a Catholic school context. Inappropriate material, if considered highly inappropriate or offensive, should be reported to the relevant Year Coordinator and/or Subject Coordinator
- ◆ Enforce behaviour expectations and the consequences for failure to follow these expectations.
- ◆ Isolate students who are continually disruptive during an exam,
- ◆ If isolation is not feasible or if the student shows no sign of cooperating, their exam paper should be collected and the student sent to the Front Office so as to be directed to the relevant Subject Coordinator (Clerical staff are not responsible for student behaviour management and are only responsible for directing students)
- ◆ If a student becomes volatile, defiant or abusive a member of the Executive should be notified in cases where the relevant Subject Coordinator is not contactable
- ◆ Enforce that all students remain until the designated exam finishing time
- ◆ Collect exam papers and answers before allowing students to read. MP3 players or any communication devices cannot be used during an exam time (exam paper collection should follow the Subject Coordinator's written instructions)
- ◆ An exam question may be read to a student but no further assistance may be given unless prior Special Provisions arrangements have been made.

2) Exams in Classrooms

- ◆ Students should not be allowed to leave an exam room unless it is essential. If it is necessary for a student to leave the room to go to the toilet, the teacher should write an out-of-class note setting the allowable time for the student to be absent from the room and ensure the student does not leave or re-enter the room with any writing materials, bag or communication devices.
- ◆ If a student needs to attend the sickbay and there is any concern that the student may collapse or be ill than a student from a non-exam room should be located to accompany the student. A teacher may need to ask a teacher in the nearest available room to watch the exam whilst these arrangements occur.
- ◆ After the exam, all exam papers, rolls and unused papers should be returned to the Subject Coordinator.

3) Exams in Mercy Hall

- ◆ The Administration Coordinator will designate a teacher (Exam Chief Supervisor) who will assist the Year Coordinator (Senior Exams) or Subject Coordinator (Junior Exams) in the setting out of exam papers, marking of rolls and general commencement of the exam
- ◆ After the exam, the Exam Chief Supervisor should return all exam papers, rolls and unused papers to the relevant Subject Coordinator/s and supervise the exit of students from the student car park.

Expectations of Students

Exams are a major form of Assessment and are reported at both the yearly and half yearly report times. It is the expectation that students take them seriously. Exam regulations are in addition to those that apply in the year group Assessment Policy handbooks.

- ◆ Students are to follow all supervisor instructions
- ◆ Students should not enter an exam room unless instructed by a supervisor
- ◆ Students late to exams will not be given an extension of time unless there are extenuating circumstances
- ◆ Students should arrive before the scheduled exam starting time or as soon as reasonably possible if arriving from another classroom
- ◆ All school bags will be left at an area designated by the supervising teacher/s, for example at the rear of Mercy Hall or the front of an exam room
- ◆ Under no circumstances should student bags block an exit or act as a hindrance to students leaving the exam area in an emergency
- ◆ Only the following items may be taken to the examination desk: a clear water bottle, pens, equipment, paper and, for Junior students only, appropriate reading material. Note: pencil cases and calculator covers are NOT permitted at the examination desk. Implements should be contained in a clear plastic bag or sleeve
- ◆ If a student is finished the exam before the scheduled time, their paper must be handed up before he/she starts reading. Personal reading material must be placed on the floor prior to the handing up of the exam paper and answers
- ◆ Mobile phones and any other electronic device including music listening devices are to be turned off and left in the student's bag at the back of the Hall. Students may not have phones or electronic devices on their person or exam desk during exams
- ◆ Watches must be placed on exam desks
- ◆ No student may leave his /her desk until the end of the examination without supervisor permission
- ◆ Students are required to remain for the designated length of the exam
- ◆ Students who miss exams due to truancy will receive zero on their report for that examination and a zero mark will be recorded if the exam constitutes a Formal Assessment Task. The Subject Coordinator for the exam will notify parents of this consequence
- ◆ If a student is continually disruptive during an exam they will be isolated or sent to the relevant Subject Coordinator if the disruption continues
- ◆ There will be no talking in exams from the moment the exam paper is issued. If students are continually disruptive during exams they will be isolated and a mark will be awarded on the attempted work. No additional time or marks will be provided to compensate for exam time lost by a student as a result of their own unacceptable behaviour
- ◆ The School's policy regarding malpractice, as outlined in the Assessment booklets, will apply in formal examinations
- ◆ Students must wear school uniform during exams.

Exam Chief Supervisor (as identified on the supervision timetable for exams in Mercy Hall)

- ◆ Assist the Year or Subject Coordinator with setting out of exam papers and materials
- ◆ Assist with the seating of students
- ◆ Check that the exam details have been written on the two white boards by the Year or Subject Coordinator – reading time, start and finish times
- ◆ Organise the orderly collection of exams and delivery to relevant Subject Coordinators
- ◆ In the case of Senior exams, supervise the Senior Car Park at the end of exams and monitor the orderly departure of student in their vehicles.

Exam Assessment Notification

- ◆ Exams listed in the relevant Assessment Booklets are considered Formal Assessment Tasks
- ◆ Exam timetables distributed by the Year Coordinator and placed on the JSCHS website a minimum of two weeks before the scheduled exam period will serve as the required two weeks' notice of a Formal Assessment Task
- ◆ Subject Coordinators should still ensure that all course teachers discuss in detail the structure and content of exams with their students and ensure that students are strongly encouraged to refer to the study guides on the JSCHS website as part of their exam preparation.

Missed Exam Policy

- ◆ Students who miss exams in the formal exam period due to school arranged activities must see the relevant Subject Coordinator before the event and make alternative arrangements (see 'Absence during Formal Exam Time' in Assessment Guidelines booklets)
- ◆ Students who miss exams in the formal exam period with genuine reasons (this does not include family holidays), and whose parents have notified the school with regard to these reasons need to see relevant Subject Coordinators immediately upon return to school and submit an Illness/Misadventure form. As per the Assessment Guidelines booklet, the Subject Coordinator will determine what arrangements will occur, without penalty
- ◆ Student who do not have valid reasons for missing an exam supported by a parent note (Years 7 - 9) or documentary evidence (Years 10 - 12) will receive a '0' (zero) mark and 'Absent' will be recorded on their report
- ◆ Students may sit exams prior to the actual official exam period only in exceptional circumstances. A written request must be sent to the Assessment Committee via the appropriate Year Coordinator for consideration
- ◆ For exams that constitute a part of the Preliminary or HSC Assessment, normal BOS policies and procedures must be followed.

Study Prior to an Exam

- ◆ Students are seated as for the exam
- ◆ Students may bring appropriate study material with them. Quiet study may include reading a novel, magazine or course notes. Silent study must be enforced
- ◆ Students will be expected to obey all the directions of the teacher in charge of the Study Session
- ◆ If a study period is followed directly by an exam all study materials must be placed on the floor before the commencement of the exam
- ◆ Staff on duty are responsible for monitoring study and the behaviour of students

Security of HSC Trial Exams

Due to security breaches at schools throughout the State in 2006, a policy for the security of HSC Trial Exams allows a detailed procedure and areas of responsibility to be firmly established at JSCHS. In many areas we are bound by the requirements of the CSSA.

CSSA/ARC/Independent Papers

- ◆ The papers are received via mail and will be collected and checked by the relevant administration staff, who will then notify the Assistant Principal and Subject Coordinators of their arrival.
- ◆ The Subject Coordinator will:
 - Decide on the use of the relevant paper
 - Check the content and answers
 - Change the papers within CSSA and copyright guidelines
 - Organise the printing, checking and storage in the secure area of appropriate papers
 - Ensure modifications are made to CSSA papers in the security area (Administration building)
 - Check the correct number of papers are ready at the security area
 - Return the original CSSA paper to the security area
- ◆ The Year Coordinator distributes the papers at the beginning of the appropriate exam. Papers, questions and answers are collected after the exam and given to the Subject Coordinator. They are not released to students until the end of the secure period. In addition, the Subject Coordinator or delegate will be present at the beginning of the exam.
- ◆ The standardised exam cover page, located in the 'Staff Access' area of the Sheahan website, must be used other than for purchased Trial and Preliminary papers.

Exam Cover Sheet Requirements

- ◆ All exam papers must use the standardised exam cover sheet as located in 'Staff Access' on the Sheahan website
- ◆ All exam papers must display the school logo, subject name and year, exam duration, mark value and assessment weighting.

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