Policies

Chesham House School

Examinations Policy

POLICY – Examinations

Education Universal

Policy Author	Laura Dickie, Head of Policy Tonia Lewis, Education and Quality Improvement Lead Rebecca Smith, Headteacher
Approval Date	September 2026
Policy Approver	Jo Dunn, Compliance, Regulation and Quality Director
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Policy Level	Education
Staff groups affected	All Education

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the service's established governance and quality assurance systems. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy remains compliant with legislation and regulatory frameworks sits with the Proprietor Representative and Regional Lead.

A formal review of this policy will be undertaken no later than three years from the date of approval**,** or sooner if changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational requirements necessitate it.

The Head of Policy will support this process by identifying relevant changes in legislation, regulation, national standards and emerging best practice. The Head of Policy will also incorporate learning from inspections, audits and practice developments into future revisions whilst overseeing all proposed amendments to the universal content to ensure accuracy, consistency and compliance.

Rebecca Smith, Headteacher
September 2026
Proprietor Representative: Andrew Sutherland
Regional Lead: Richard George

Terminology

Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

Term	Definition
'Establishment' or 'Site'	A generic term referring to the school/college owned by CareTech.
Student	Any child or young person under the age of 18, or young adult over 18 who receives education.
Headteacher	The senior person with overall responsibility for the school/college.
Teacher	Members of staff who have teaching responsibility for students at the school/college.
Parent/Carer	Parent or person with parental responsibility.
Regulatory Authority	The independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services (e.g., Ofsted, Estyn, Education Scotland).
Social Worker	The worker allocated to the individual student; if none is allocated, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	The local authority/agency responsible for placing the student or commissioning the service.
Local Authority	The local authority for the establishment's location.
Staff	All staff working at the location, including employed staff, students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors.

1. Local School/College Profile

Chesham House School is an independent SEMH day school providing education for students ages 10-18.

At Chesham House School we believe that every child can succeed and we have to find a way to support them to achieve. We foster this through our values of Respect, Resilience and Aspiration. We build strong relationships that are based on respect, integrity and unconditional positive regard. To create a culture that is inclusive; a positive and encouraging environment for all pupils, without exception, to support them in becoming ready for the wider world.

2. Purpose

This policy sets out how Chesham House School plans, delivers, and quality-assures examinations and assessments so that every student can show what they know and can do. It is for the staff team, senior leaders, students, and—where relevant—visitors and contractors who support the running of assessments.

In practice, this means we organise examinations with integrity, put reasonable adjustments in place early, and communicate with clarity. For students under 18, we involve parents and carers appropriately. For 18+ students, we work directly with the student and with consent parents and carers whilst offer advocacy where needed. In all cases, we protect dignity, privacy, and safety, and we run a consistent process that can be relied upon.

This policy also enables Chesham House School to meet its statutory duties, uphold safeguarding responsibilities, comply with data protection requirements, and maintain high-quality, trauma-responsive provision across all sites.

3. Scope

This is an organisational policy. It applies across every England based site, service, and function involved in assessment: general qualifications, vocational and technical awards, on-demand digital tests, practical, portfolios, controlled assessments and non-examined assessments. It covers assessments delivered on-site and those undertaken off-site where the site registers or supports students.
Each site implements the universal standards set out here and aligns its local practice with the national frameworks referenced in **Appendix A.**

4. Local Adaptation Requirement (Adapt Locally)

Where the policy invites local adaptation (Adapt Locally), we are asking the site to set out operational specifics such as: named roles, secure storage locations, rooming plans, communication routes, deadlines, and local contact details. Local content

should be succinct, current, and fully consistent with national requirements and the universal standards in this policy.

- Keep additions factual and necessary.
- Ensure they are reviewed annually alongside the policy.
- Where no local equivalent is required, the universal content stands.

5. Legal and Regulatory Context

Chesham House School operates within the statutory duties, safeguarding expectations, and inspection arrangements of the nation in which it is based. The universal standards in this policy are applied in line with the national frameworks listed in **Appendix A**.

6. Policy Statement & Principles

Our position is straightforward: assessment must be valid, reliable, and fair—and the student experience must be safe, respectful and trauma-responsive. We plan carefully, communicate clearly, and act consistently.

- **Integrity & compliance:** We protect exam security, follow instructions precisely, and prevent malpractice or maladministration.
- **Fairness & inclusion:** We identify access needs early, evidence them appropriately, and implement approved adjustments faithfully, without undermining assessment validity.
- **Trauma-responsive practice:** We reduce uncertainty, offer familiarisation and choice where feasible, keep environments calm, and ensure all adults involved can recognise and respond to heightened stress.
- **Student voice:** We involve students in decisions about how support is delivered. For **under-18s**, parents/carers are engaged appropriately; for **18+ students**, the student leads, with advocacy if needed.
- **Privacy & dignity:** We handle personal information with care and keep sensitive processes discreet.
- **Transparency:** We publish what communities reasonably need to know and invite feedback to improve.

7. Roles & Responsibilities

Strong exams delivery relies on clear roles and dependable handovers.

- **The Headteacher** owns this policy, sets expectations, and ensures resources and training are in place.
- The **Exams Officer** plans and runs the operational cycle: entries, timetables, secure storage, materials, staffing, and liaison with awarding bodies.
- The **SENCo** coordinates identification, evidence, applications, and the delivery of agreed adjustments and assistive technology.

Teachers ensure students are taught the assessment objectives, authenticate student work and meet deadlines. Invigilators create and maintain the right conditions in the

room and follow scripts exactly, applying adjustments as approved. The DSL is available for advice and action where safeguarding issues arise around assessment. The wider multi-agency team—therapists, clinicians, social workers or advocates—contribute insight and evidence, and help us plan trauma-responsive approaches that genuinely work.

Students commit to exam conduct, use agreed supports appropriately, and tell us promptly if they are unwell or worried. Parents/carers (for under-18s) and with consent over 18s, help ensure readiness and share information early.

8. Qualifications & Assessments Covered

We run a range of general and vocational/technical qualifications. Some are exam-heavy; others rely on portfolios, practical's or synoptic tasks. We also deliver on-demand or adaptive digital tests where appropriate. This policy covers both externally assessed examinations and internal assessment components that contribute to external awards.

We currently use the follow exam boards for a range of qualifications including GCSE, Entry Level and Functional Skills

AQA
NCFE
Eduqas
Pearson

9. Planning Cycle & Entries

Each year we map the curriculum to assessment objectives and windows, and we hold termly meetings that analyse mock data, professional judgement and student wellbeing. We make entries by published deadlines and communicate them in writing. For under-18 students, parents/carers are informed.

Fees and re-sit arrangements are set out clearly so there are no surprises. Timetabling and rooming prioritise calm, accessibility and security, with contingency built in should things change at short notice.

10. Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments

Our aim is simple: no unnecessary barriers. We identify needs early, build a balanced evidence picture (including normal way of working), and apply for approval where required. Once approved, we implement adjustments consistently—extra time, a reader or scribe, supervised rest breaks, assistive technology, specialist furniture, small rooms or sensory supports—always in ways that protect the validity of the assessment.

Because stress can affect performance, we embed trauma-responsive practice: pre-examination familiarisation, visual schedules, predictable routines, and the option

to sit in a preferred location when feasible. Invigilators are briefed on individual considerations and how to de-escalate while maintaining exam conditions. For under-18 students, parents/carers are engaged.

Evidence for access arrangements is gathered in lessons and collated by the SENCo. All collected evidence is stored securely and kept confidential. Access arrangements are submitted using the CAP portal and evidence remains on site ready for inspection.

11. Student Preparation & Communication

We make the process clear and confidence-building. Students receive plain-language information about formats, timings, conduct, permitted materials and where to go. Mocks mirror live conditions and incorporate agreed adjustments so nothing is new on the day. We teach simple regulation strategies—breathing, grounding, movement breaks—and we publish clear contact points for questions or worries. For under-18 students, we provide parent/carer briefings so adults at home can support preparation.

12. Timetabling, Rooming & Resources

We choose rooms that are quiet and predictable, with good signage, visible clocks and minimal visual clutter following JCQ requirements. Seating plans are designed discreetly so students who need particular positions can have them without drawing attention. Where justified, we provide small group or individual sittings. Invigilation ratios are appropriate to the assessment, and supervision arrangements are respectful and safe.

For digital exams, we test the network and power, confirm device readiness, and plan failovers. We hold spares and have agreed steps for switching to contingency modes if systems fail.

Classrooms are designated as exam rooms before each exam series. This is communicated to staff and students prior to exams commencing. All equipment needed for exams is placed in an exam room box and taken to the designated room to be delivered whilst room checks are being completed.

13. Secure Materials & Confidentiality

Security is non-negotiable. Confidential materials are stored in approved secure conditions with a clear chain of custody. We log receipt, opening, distribution and return; materials are never left unattended. Digital permissions are controlled, and audit logs are retained. Coursework and portfolios travel by secure methods, and we record every hand-off.

The secure storage is located on the middle floor of the building with only designated key holders being able to access the secure room and safe. The key holders for Chesham House School are Rebecca Smith – Head of Centre, and Jade Williams – Exams Officer.

All exam papers are collected by ParcelForce on the day of the exam taking place, or no later than 24 hours after the exam has ended as per its designated commencement

time. In the event of a secure collection not being made by ParcelForce, exam papers are to be dispatched from a local Post Office using the ParcelForce service.

14. Invigilation & Conduct of Assessments

Invigilators set the tone—calm, consistent and reassuring. They are trained and refreshed annually, and they follow scripts word-for-word. We check student identity using approved documentation or a verified list. We display permitted materials and manage prohibited items discreetly. Any incident is recorded in real time and escalated promptly so decisions can be made with full information.

Invigilation training is completed annually as per JCQ requirements. The Exams Office platform is used to support delivery of training and is lead by the Exams Officer. All staff are trained in invigilation training and receive supplemental training if required for access arrangement delivery.

15. Coursework, NEA, Controlled Assessment & Portfolios

Internal assessment is handled with the same rigour as external exams. Students and Teachers sign authentication statements, and we use both professional judgement and appropriate tools to guard against plagiarism or collusion. Supervision levels match task requirements, and we schedule checkpoints so problems surface early. Internal standardisation ensures marking is consistent before anything is submitted. Storage is secure, and digital backups are maintained. We meet moderation deadlines and respond to queries quickly.

16. Plagiarism, Malpractice & Maladministration (including digital/AI misuse)

We teach students what good academic practice looks like and we are explicit about risks—plagiarism, unauthorised collaboration, improper use of calculators or devices, and misuse of digital/AI tools. If concerns arise, we investigate promptly, fairly and confidentially. Students can be supported by a trusted adult or advocate. We keep clear records, notify awarding bodies where required, and communicate outcomes in writing with an explanation that students can understand.

The Head of Centre will lead any malpractice investigation and be transparent about any decisions made.

17. Conflicts of Interest

People matter, and relationships can be close in specialist settings. Staff declare any actual or potential conflict—such as assessing or invigilating a close relative. We record declarations and put mitigation in place, for example assigning a different assessor or adding an additional invigilator. The register is reviewed regularly.

In the event of a conflict of interest, staff are required to complete the required documentation which would be reviewed on a need-to basis.

18. Special Consideration (illness, bereavement, significant distress)

Life does not pause for exams. If a student is unwell or experiences significant distress at or near the time of an assessment, we consider whether a special consideration application is appropriate. We gather evidence sensitively, involve the student (and parents/carers where applicable), and explain the options clearly, including any limitations. Decisions are recorded and communicated promptly.

In the event of a special consideration application being required the Exams Officer will submit this claim to the relevant awarding body alongside any evidence collected. Once an awarding body has made a decision on whether or not special considerations is appropriate, the decision would then be communicated to the relevant student.

19. Emergencies & Contingency (including digital delivery)

We plan for the unexpected: severe weather, transport disruption, power or network failure, staff absence, room issues, public health concerns, or cyber incidents. Our contingencies aim to keep assessments safe and fair—continuing where possible, postponing where necessary, and always protecting security.

At minimum, we identify alternative rooms and invigilators in advance, hold spare devices and charging, keep an offline plan for digital exams where permitted, and set out how scripts are secured in evacuations. Communication with students, staff and families is prompt and clear.

Specific details for exam contingency plans can be found in Chesham House Schools Exam Contingency policy.

20. Results, Post-Results and Appeals

Results days are planned to be supportive and well-organised. We publish how results will be issued and where to get advice. Post-results services—clerical checks, reviews, access to scripts—are explained in plain language with deadlines and costs made clear.

21. Appeals and Review

Students have the right to request a review or appeal relating to internal assessment decisions or the outcomes of externally assessed examinations. The universal expectation is that each site maintains clear, accessible procedures for internal assessment appeals and post-results services in line with awarding body requirements. These procedures must be published locally, explained to students in advance, and be applied consistently, transparently and within published deadlines.

Learners receive their GCSE results in line with the posted National release. The Exams Officer and Head of Centre are available to answer any queries or questions on the day of results being posted.

22. Certificates

When certificates arrive, we check and log them, store them securely, and issue them promptly. Uncollected certificates are retained for a year, and we signpost students to replacement routes if needed.

All certificates are posted out to students using the address listed on file and sent recorded delivery.

23. Complaints

If something has not gone as it should, we want to know. Concerns about examination administration can be raised through the site complaints process. We handle complaints respectfully, quickly and with a focus on learning and improvement.

Parents/Carers/Students can locate Chesham House Schools Complaints policy on the school website or collect it from the school directly. All complaints are handled in line with Chesham House Schools policy and procedure.

24. Data Protection & Confidentiality

We collect only what we need, keep it secure, and retain it for defined periods. We publish privacy information that explains how assessment data is used and shared with awarding bodies and regulators. Students can request accessible versions of information and can ask questions about how their data is handled.

25. Quality Assurance, Training & Audit

Quality is built in, not inspected in. Each year we train invigilators, Teachers and the examinations/administration team, with refreshers ahead of every series. We carry out spot checks and observations of live exams and internal assessment processes, and we hold a post-series review to capture what worked and what needs to improve. Actions are tracked to completion and reported to leadership and governance.

26. Multi-site, Off-site & Third-Party Centres

Where students sit assessments away from the home site, we check suitability, accessibility and security in advance, and we document who is responsible for what. For workplace assessments, we brief employers or placement providers and quality-assure evidence and assessor decisions so standards are consistent.

27. Publishing, Ownership & Review

We publish this policy on the School website and provide it in accessible formats on request (for example, large print, easy-read or other languages). We also share student-friendly information about exam conduct, prohibited items, access arrangements and key dates for results and appeals.

Ownership sits with the Headteacher and operational leads for examinations and access arrangements. We invite student feedback (and, for under-18s, parent/carer input, over 18s parent/carer input with consent and we review the policy annually,

informed by quality assurance activity, incident logs, student voice and post-results analysis.

Equality Impact Statement

This policy has been developed to promote equality, safeguard individual's rights, and ensure fair and inclusive practice across all services. The potential impact of the policy on children, young people, young adults, families, and staff with protected characteristics has been considered in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No negative impacts have been identified. Staff must apply this policy with sensitivity to individual need and make reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access, safety, wellbeing, and participation for every individual. Any emerging risks of differential impact should be reported and addressed through ongoing review and quality assurance.

Appendices

Appendix A – Legal and Regulatory Framework in England

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Legislation, guidance and regulatory frameworks underpinning Examinations in England.

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

- **Means:** Prescribes the Independent School Standards proprietors must meet (including assessment, welfare/health/safety, premises, information /complaints, leadership) for independent schools.
- **Requires:** Sites evidence compliant assessment and information practices, safe conditions for examinations, and leadership oversight that meets the standards inspectors test.
- **Our stance:** We map examinations policy and evidence directly to relevant ISS parts (assessment, welfare/health/safety, information/complaints, leadership).
- **Implementation example: ISS evidence map (exams)** showing where timetables, seating plans, access-arrangements files, secure-storage logs and complaints/appeals information meet the ISS parts.
- **Links:** https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283

Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) + remit toolkits — for use from 10 Nov 2025

- **Means:** Sets how Ofsted inspects independent schools and FE & skills providers; inspections consider assessment integrity, inclusion and safeguarding with remit-specific toolkits/operating guides.
- **Requires:** Sites demonstrate well-led, secure, inclusive examinations (reasonable adjustments delivered), with clear impact; evidence aligns to the toolkit evaluation areas used in inspection.
- **Our stance:** We organise an inspection-ready exams bundle aligned to EIF and the relevant toolkit (independent schools or FE).
- **Implementation example: Bundle index** cross-referencing exam processes (security, invigilation, access arrangements, incidents, post-results) to EIF/toolkit headings.
- **Links:**https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework-for-use-from-november-2025

JCQ — Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE), General Regulations for Approved Centres, and Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) — 2025–26

- **Means:** Establishes the definitive operational rulebook for exam delivery (**ICE**), the centre-level governance and compliance framework (**General Regulations**), and the national rules for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments/special consideration (AARA) for JCQ member awarding organisations' qualifications delivered in England.
- **Requires:** Centres follow ICE for secure storage, room set-up, invigilation, start/finish and incident handling; maintain annual policy reviews, cyber-security training certificates and CPD per General Regulations; and implement AARA with evidence of need and normal way of working (incl. 2025–26 update: trial

and exhaust supervised rest breaks before 25% extra time where the impairment is not a learning difficulty; candidates must be informed AAO will process their data).

- **Our stance:** We deliver **to ICE on the day, prove centre-level compliance to General Regulations, and run AARA** exactly as specified (evidence → approval → delivery → impact).
- **Implementation example:** Exam Delivery Pack (ICE quick-ref, JCQ posters/notices, room checklist, seating plan, two-person security log, late/very-late protocol, incident form) + Exams Governance folder (policy review log, cyber-training certs, CPD, contingency, inspection checklist) + AARA bundle (teacher evidence, mock trials incl. rest-breaks where applicable, AAO submissions log, delivery plan, post-series review).
- **Links:**https://www.jcq.org.uk/knowledge-hub/intructions-for-conducting-examinations/

Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition — updated 4 Dec 2025

- **Means:** The regulatory conditions for awarding organisations (AOs) that drive centre requirements on setting/delivering assessments, confidentiality, reasonable adjustments, special consideration, malpractice, marking/results and appeals.
- **Requires:** Sites comply with AO rules derived from the Conditions (e.g., security, incident reporting, access arrangements delivery, post-results/appeals) and keep auditable records.
- **Our stance:** We maintain an annual exams compliance log showing how AO/centre agreements, training, security, incidents and post-results actions meet the Conditions.
- **Implementation example:** Signed centre-agreement register plus termly checks against Conditions G (assessments), H (marking/results), I (appeals/certificates).
- **Links:** https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook

Equality Act 2010 (Reasonable Adjustments Duty) — in force from 1 Oct 2010

- **Means:** Imposes a duty to make reasonable adjustments so disabled students are not substantially disadvantaged, including in examinations and assessment.
- **Requires:** Sites ensure adjustments are appropriate, evidence-based and do not compromise assessment validity; decisions are individual and proportionate.
- **Our stance:** We plan early, match adjustments to normal way of working, and test delivery (rooms, tech, staffing) before live exams.
- **Implementation example: Access-arrangements file**: needs/evidence, AO approvals, tech test logs, invigilator briefings and student feedback notes.
- **Links:** https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/20

SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (statutory guidance) — last updated 12 Sep 2024

- **Means:** Statutory guidance for schools and FE on identifying and meeting needs; integrates planning for access arrangements via normal way of working and multi-agency input.
- **Requires:** Sites evidence early identification, graduated response and the link from support in learning to support in assessment.
- **Our stance:** Exam access planning is embedded within SEND processes and reviewed after mocks before AO submissions.
- **Implementation example: Timeline** from SEND plan → mock adjustments → AO application → live delivery → impact review.
- **Links:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR — Royal Assent 23 May 2018; up to date

- **Means:** Sets lawful, fair and secure processing of examinations data (including special-category data and exam-related rights/exemptions).
- **Requires:** Sites publish privacy information, define lawful bases for sharing with AOs/Ofqual/Ofsted, secure transfers, operate retention schedules and handle SARs correctly.
- **Our stance:** We maintain a clear exams privacy notice, least-privilege access, secure transfer chains and a SARs/rights workflow.
- **Implementation example:** Exams data asset register covering datasets, lawful bases, sharing, retention, SAR timelines and breach response.
- **Links:** https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents