

# St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School

## Internal Appeals Procedure



***The procedures regarding appeals in relation to Controlled Assessment, Access Arrangements and Special Consideration applications are outlined below.***

It is the responsibility of Heads of Department and the teaching staff to ensure that the procedures and guidelines for examination and assessments issued by the awarding bodies and JCQ are followed.

### **1. Controlled Assessment**

Pupils must ensure that the work they are submitting is their own work and has not been plagiarised either in part or whole. Heads of Department must ensure that teachers explain the requirements and conditions of each piece of controlled assessment.

St Mary's 'Controlled Assessment Policy' outlines clearly the guidelines for conducting, marking and storing of Controlled Assessment.

St Mary's is committed to ensuring that:

- staff mark pupils' controlled assessment/coursework/portfolios fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.
- pupils' controlled assessment/coursework/portfolios will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity.
- work produced by pupils is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body.
- internal standardisation and moderation will ensure consistency of marking.

**Teachers must inform students of the marks they have been awarded for internally assessed work, after internal standardisation. They should also be informed that these marks may change after moderation by the awarding body.**

If a pupil feels that he has adequate grounds for complaint about a particular mark or result he has been given for a piece of controlled assessment/coursework/portfolio, he can request his concerns are investigated fully within the school to ensure that he has been assessed in a fair and consistent manner.

### **What are the Grounds for Appeal?**

- Appeals will only be considered if they apply to the **process** leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded.
- Pupils may appeal if they feel their controlled assessment/coursework/portfolio has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification.
- Appeals should be made as early as possible.

## **Notification of Appeal by Pupil**

Students will have a period of 1 week from the date the mark is disclosed during which they can make an appeal about a controlled assessment/coursework/portfolio mark. This ensures that there will be a window of at least 1 week for the Internal Appeals Procedure to take place in advance of the dispatch of the controlled assessment report.

### **The Internal Appeals Procedure is as follows:**

#### **STAGE 1**

The student will attempt to resolve the issue with the relevant teacher.

**It is assumed that the pupil will have sought clarification as to why his evaluation of an internal assessment award is different from the teacher(s) in advance of any parental contact.**

Issues can be resolved where possible at a teacher/departmental level.

***The following procedures (Stages 2 and 3) will normally be required only when this informal approach fails to resolve the matter.***

#### **STAGE 2**

In the event of the matter not being resolved at Stage 1, the pupil or his parent/guardian should make the appeal in writing to the Curriculum Vice Principal. The Curriculum Vice Principal will investigate and establish whether or not the process used for internal assessment conformed to the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents. The Curriculum Vice Principal may refer the matter back to another teacher in the relevant subject area (eg Head of Department) for cross-marking.

#### **STAGE 3**

If the matter is still not resolved, the Curriculum Vice Principal may refer to the Internal Appeals Panel with the following membership:

- Principal/Vice-Principal or their representative;
- Teacher concerned;
- Examinations Officer;
- Curriculum Leader or teacher nominated by the Principal who is competent in the subject matter of the Appeal, eg Head of Department.

The pupil may be supported in the presentation of his case by his parent/guardian.

The purpose of the panel meeting is to establish whether or not the proper marking and moderation procedures have been put into place, and to assess whether the mark produced was a fair and accurate representation of the application of these procedures.

The candidate should receive a written record of the outcome of the Appeal including the reason for the outcome.

All Internal Appeals should have been considered and resolved at least one week before the date for 'Submission of Samples' to the relevant Awarding Bodies (end of April/beginning of May).

After candidates' work has been internally assessed, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. The moderation process may lead to mark changes, either upwards or downwards, even after an internal review. The internal review process is in place to ensure consistency of marking within the centre, whereas moderation by the awarding body ensures that centre marking is in line with national standards. The mark submitted to the awarding body is subject to change and should therefore be considered provisional. This process is outside the control of St Mary's and is not covered by this procedure.

## **2. Access Arrangements Appeals**

Access arrangements are only granted after a range of assessments of a pupil's needs have been carried out in line with JCQ guidelines. The Examinations Officer will ensure that details of the pupils and their individual approved access arrangements are included in the information provided for each module. Invigilators receive training on access arrangements and how to ensure these are applied correctly.

Concerns about the correct application of an access arrangement should be reported to the Examinations Officer/SENCo/Head of Centre as soon as possible. Concerns can be raised by pupils, parents, invigilators or teachers.

1. A detailed written statement outlining the concern should be provided by the person reporting the concern.
2. The Head of Centre will then conduct an investigation. Where appropriate, invigilators will be required to provide statements.
3. If, during the investigation, it is discovered that a pupil's approved access arrangement has not been implemented because an invigilator did not facilitate the agreed access arrangement (eg did not allow the pupil to have extra time in an examination), then the HoC will complete a maladministration report for the examination board.
4. The Head of Key Stage will also be directed (by the Head of Centre) to complete and submit a special consideration application for that pupil. The Head of Centre will inform the pupil's parent of what steps have been taken.
5. The Head of Centre ensures invigilators are informed about what steps have been taken and will be updated on any feedback from the examination board.

## **3. Special Consideration Appeals**

If a parent feels his/her son is entitled to Special Consideration, the onus is on the parents to complete the Special Consideration form prior to the start of the applicable examination series (Appendix 1).

If a parent does not complete the Special Consideration form, the school will not be held responsible for an application not being made. As per JCQ guidance, "Candidates or their parents/carers should, in the first instance, discuss the application of special consideration with the school or college concerned."

#### **When should the Special Consideration form be completed:**

- In all cases, the Special Consideration form must be completed in full, contain supporting evidence and **be submitted at the latest by the final examination module to be completed by the pupil in the associated examination series.**
- In some instances, the school may already be aware of issues which would merit an application for Special Consideration (eg recent bereavement of an immediate family member or long-term illness of a pupil), however, to ensure that all records are accurate and that an application can be made with all relevant evidence, parents/guardians should complete the Special Consideration form.
- In the case of an issue which occurs during an examination series, **the parent/guardian must complete the form and submit it as soon as possible.**

#### **Appeals regarding Special Consideration**

- If a parent raises a concern about Special Consideration, the parent must put the concern in writing for the attention of the Head of Centre.
- The Head of Centre will investigate and contact the appropriate Awarding Body if necessary.
- The Head of Centre will update the parent in writing after the investigation.
- If a parent has not completed the school's Special Consideration form, the school will not be held responsible for an application not being made. As per JCQ guidance, "Candidates or their parents/carers should, in the first instance, discuss the application of special consideration with the school or college concerned."
- Special Consideration cannot be applied after the examinations series. Only in exceptional circumstances would such an application be made or even accepted by an Awarding Body.

**It should be noted that Appeals are expected to occur infrequently and should be resolved internally at a very early stage.**

## Appendix 1: Special Consideration Form

This form must be submitted to the school **before the final examination module to be completed by the candidate in the associated examination series.**

Please submit this form via email to [info@stmarycbgs.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stmarycbgs.belfast.ni.sch.uk) with the subject box containing the words 'Request for Special Consideration', along with supporting evidence. Uploaded photographs of the completed form will be accepted.

Alternatively, you can submit the completed form with the accompanying evidence in a sealed envelope clearly marked 'Request for Special Consideration' to the school office.

1. Please state on the form the precise nature of the adverse circumstances, and the date(s) when the circumstances affected the candidate.
2. Please provide a list of relevant subjects, and details of particular assessments where you believe the candidate's performance was likely to have been adversely affected.
3. **Evidence is required to support the application. Please ensure that this is securely attached to the form/email.**
4. Parents/guardians must read the guidance on Special Consideration below before completing the form.  
**Please tick the adjacent box to confirm that you have read the information.**
5. Please complete the form in full and sign the declaration. The application will not be considered if the form is not completed in full or if the declaration is not signed.

**TICK**



## JCQ Guidance on Eligibility for Special Consideration (see JCQ 'A Guide to the special consideration process')

### Those eligible for Special Consideration

Candidates will be eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but performance in the examination, or in the production of coursework or non-examination assessment, is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. These include:

- Temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the assessment;
- Bereavement at the time of the assessment (where whole groups are affected, normally only those most closely involved will be eligible);
- Domestic crisis arising at the time of the assessment;
- Serious disturbance during an examination;
- Accidental events at the time of the assessment such as being given the wrong examination paper, being given a defective examination paper or CD, failure of practical equipment, failure of materials to arrive on time;
- Participation in sporting events, training camps or other events at an international level at the time of the assessment, e.g. Representing their club or country at an international level for sport on the day of an examination;
- Failure by the centre to implement previously approved access arrangements for that specific examination series.

### Those NOT eligible for Special Consideration

- Candidates will not be eligible for special consideration if preparation for, or performance in the examination is affected by:
- Long term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting revision time, unless the illness or circumstances exacerbate what would otherwise be a minor issue at the time of the assessment (i.e. difficulties over and above those that previously approved access arrangements would have alleviated);
- Bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, unless an anniversary has been reached at the time of the assessment or there are ongoing implications such as an inquest or court case;
- Domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays (including school/exchange visits and field trips) at the time of the assessment;
- Minor disturbance in the examination room caused by another candidate, such as momentary bad behaviour, a mobile phone ringing, or a momentary fire alarm;
- The consequences of committing a crime, where formally charged or found guilty. (However, a retrospective application for special consideration may be considered where the charge is later dropped or the candidate is found not guilty.)
- The consequences of taking alcohol or recreational drugs;
- The consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations;
- The failure of the centre to prepare candidates properly for the examination for whatever reason;
- Quality of teaching, staff shortages, planned building work or lack of facilities;
- Misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place;
- Misreading the instructions of the question paper and answering the wrong questions;
- Making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with the examination timetable;
- Submitting no coursework or non-examination assessment at all, unless coursework or non-examination assessment is scheduled for a restricted period of time, rather than during the course;
- Missing all examinations and internally assessed components/units;
- Failure to cover the course because of joining the class part way through;
- A disability or learning difficulties (diagnosed or undiagnosed) unless the disability or circumstances exacerbate what would otherwise be a minor issue at the time of the assessment, i.e. Difficulties over and above those that previously approved access arrangements would have alleviated;
- Failure by the centre to process access arrangements by the published deadline.



