



The Castle Partnership Trust

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Exam Entry Policy

Date: December 2014

PURPOSE

To ensure clear guidance for staff, students and parents relating to the principles of examination entry.

KEY POINTS

- Students will be entered for any examination in which they have fulfilled the requirements of the course, eg coursework, attendance.
- Examination entry fees will normally be met by the school. These will include the first re-take. Parents/carers will be required to pay for subsequent re-takes.
- Should a student fail to arrive for an examination, the parents will be requested to pay the entry fee unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Students who commence a KS4 examination course will normally be entered for the examination in that subject. In exceptional circumstances, it may be agreed jointly between the students, parents, Head of Department and Deputy Head with responsibility for examinations that entry in a particular subject will not be made.
- For students taking their second language GCSE: arrangements will be met by the English as an Additional Language (EAL) co-ordinator with support from the Area Leader for Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) and the Exams Officer. Procedures are in place to assess students' ability to sit the exam successfully.

EARLY ENTRY

Early entry is one element of any secondary school's approach to ensuring all students succeed in public examinations. Early entry can play a significant role in improving the attainment and achievement of students. Students are given additional opportunities to achieve or improve grades achieved in Year 10 before the final examination period in Year 11. The motivational benefits of students experiencing success throughout their GCSE course are significant. In addition, reducing the total amount of examinations students need to sit at the end of Year 11 enables students to focus on other subjects. At The Castle Partnership Trust we have analysed year on year the benefit to students of early entry and are committed to continuing this where it is right for the student.

This policy has been written in light of recent publications questioning the use of early entry (*Mathematics: Made to Measure, DfE, 2012; Early entry to GCSE examination, Ofsted, 2011*) and outlines the Trust's approach to early examination entry.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Students will always be allowed, and may actively be encouraged, to re-sit an examination at a later date even if good progress has already been made so that there is no ceiling to achievement.

Early entry will not be used in a way that encourages the 'banking' of notional pass grades (for example a C in GCSE Mathematics) but be used as a stepping stone to promote higher achievement.

Early entry should maximise students' opportunities to succeed in any given subject. It should, therefore, enhance students' sense of enjoyment and may play a role in their choice to continue to study that subject after GCSE.

EARLY ENTRY IN PRACTICE

The following processes should be completed prior to entry.

- Students should be informed by the class teacher of that subject.
- Opportunity to discuss the entry is given during the Year 10 GCSE Launch Evening and Parents' Evening.
- Departments and the Deputy Head with responsibility for the curriculum provide a clear rationale of the selection process for early entry.

The following processes should be completed following the receipt of results.

- Results analysis will be undertaken to ensure that the outcomes of early entry are contributing strongly to raising achievement for all students.
- Choices of post-16 courses will be reviewed in light of any early entry practices at KS4 to ensure that early entry does not negatively affect students' ability to undertake further study in that subject.

Final decisions regarding early entry will be taken by the Headteacher at each school. A decision will be taken on each student's individual circumstances, taking into account the professional judgement of staff and the availability of resources.