

Charles Darwin School Examinations Policy

Persons Responsible:

Governors: Full Governing Body

SLT: Louise Kelly

Written by: Mrs L Clough, Exams Officer

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Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this Examinations Policy is:
 - 1.1.1. To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates.
 - 1.1.2. To ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.
- 1.2. It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.
- 1.3. This Examinations Policy will be reviewed annually.
- 1.4. This Examinations Policy will be reviewed by the deputy head and the exams officer.

2. Exam responsibilities

2.1. Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- 2.1.1. advises on appeals and re-marks.
- 2.1.2. The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*.
- 2.1.3. Appoint a suitable, qualified SENCO who can determine appropriate access arrangements for candidates with Learning difficulties and disabilities.

2.2. Senior Leadership Team

- 2.2.1. Assist SENCO with advice on information for appropriate qualifications in accessible format for candidates with a learning disability and ensure qualifications meet their needs.
- 2.2.2. The Centre will assess these learners to ensure they have the potential to complete the intended course, including examinations and assessments. This will include the appropriate support to be made available under Access arrangement and reasonable adjustments to facilitate their access to the examinations and assessments.
- 2.2.3. The centre will check that the SENCO is suitably qualified and understands their duties under the Equalities Act 2010. And that correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of JCQ Access arrangements.

2.3. Exams Office Manager / Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

2.3.1. advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards.

- 2.3.2. oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors, and candidates of a calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- 2.3.3. ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- 2.3.4. consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 2.3.5. provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- 2.3.6. receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- 2.3.7. administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations.
- 2.3.8. identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- 2.3.9. accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- 2.3.10. line manages the exams office staff and invigilators and organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- 2.3.11. submits candidates' coursework /controlled assessment marks/non-examination assessment, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework/controlled assessment and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- 2.3.12. arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- 2.3.13. maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

2.4. **Deputy Head**

- 2.4.1. Organisation of teaching and learning.
- 2.4.2. External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

2.5. **SENCO**

- 2.5.1. The Senco in association with SLT will gather the evidence of need and normal way of working for all candidates eligible for Access arrangements
- 2.5.2. Applications will be submitted to examination boards by the deadlines and all paperwork will be held on file.
- 2.5.3. The need for Access arrangements will be re-evaluated s a candidate moves from KS4 to KS5 to ensure that these adjustments continue to be relevant and suitable for purpose.
- 2.5.4. Will provide copies of their Assessor Qualifications and follow the correct procedures in Chapter 7 of the JCQ Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

2.6. **Heads of Department**

- 2.6.1. Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- 2.6.2. Involvement in post-results procedures.
- 2.6.3. Accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment/non examination mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- 2.6.4. Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

2.7. Teachers

2.7.1. Submission of candidate names to heads of department / faculty.

2.8. Learning Development

- 2.8.1. Administration of access arrangements.
- 2.8.2. Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- 2.8.3. Provision of additional support, with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment, to help candidates achieve their course aims.

2.9. Lead Invigilator/Invigilators

- 2.9.1. Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- 2.9.2. Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.

2.10. Candidates

2.10.1. Understanding coursework/controlled assessment/non-examination assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own.

2.11. Administrative Staff

- 2.11.1. Support for the input of data.
- 2.11.2. Posting of exam papers.

3. The qualifications offered

- 3.1. The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre and the senior leadership team. Any general complaints concerning the selection and availability of qualifications should be put in writing and sent to the Head of Centre, who will address these in consultation with SLT.
- 3.2. The qualifications offered at KS4 maybe GCSE, Cambridge National, BTEC, Functional skills and LIBF,
- 3.3. The qualifications offered at KS5 maybe AS and A levels, BTEC, Cambridge Technical, Functional skills, LIBF Qualifications and Extended Project.
- 3.4. The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from

the previous year, the exams office must be informed by the start of each academic year.

3.5. At key stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

3.6. At post-16

It is expected that all pupils will be enrolled on two-year courses, with a qualification at the end of year 13. Candidates may also be enrolled on BTEC, Cambridge Technical and Extended Project as well. They may complete a 1-year qualification if this is appropriate for their needs.

3.7. Rules and regulations

All Qualifications will be administered using the correct guidelines for the Qualification. In general the JCQ rules and regulations will apply, when LIBF qualifications are taking place LIBF regulations will apply. The relevant regulations can be found on the school website and will be available to pupils and parents on application to the school office.

4. Exam seasons and timetables

4.1. Exam seasons

- 4.1.1. Internal exams may be scheduled in December, March and June.
- 4.1.2. External exams may be scheduled in November, January and June.
- 4.1.3. Pre-Public exams in GCSE are held under external exam conditions.

4.2. Timetables

The Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams once these are confirmed.

5. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

5.1. Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of sixth form, heads of subject, subject teachers, and the deputy head. Advice must be taken from the SENCO on the suitability of entries for learners with a disability.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The centre may accept external entries from former candidates only.

5.2. Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via internal post and email. Late entries are authorised by heads of sixth form, heads of subject and exams officer.

5.3. Retakes

Candidates who have not achieved a 4 grade in English or mathematics must retake these qualifications if they join the Sixth Form at Charles Darwin School.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers, head of post-16, deputy head and the heads of faculty. (See also section 6: Exam fees)

6. Exam fees

- 6.1. GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.
- 6.2. AS initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.
- 6.3. A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.
- 6.4. Late entry or amendment fees may be paid by the Departments, the Candidates, or the Centre.
- 6.5. Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes, provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.
- 6.6. Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework/controlled assessment requirements.
- 6.7. Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes maybe paid by the candidates. (See also section 4.3: Retakes)
- 6.8. Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not recommend the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry. (See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

7. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements

7.1. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

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.

7.2. Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO and the educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

The SENCO 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 SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

7.3. Access arrangements

- 7.3.1. Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer and the SENCO.
- 7.3.2. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the exams officer. This cannot be carried out without a completed Data protection permission from the pupil and carer.
- 7.3.3. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams officer and the SENCO.
- 7.3.4. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the exams officer with the SENCO.

8. NEA and coursework Grades

8.1. The heads of faculty and the heads of subject will submit these grades to the exams officer when requested.

9. Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

9.1. Managing Invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision.

They will be used for external exams. The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office and the Personnel manager. Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

9.2. Exam Days

- 9.2.1. The exams 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.
- 9.2.2. Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.
- 9.2.3. The lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 9.2.4. Senior staff will be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates in large examination halls but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.
- 9.2.5. Learners taking examinations in smaller rooms will be asked to show their sixth form ID tags or school planner to assist with identification.
- 9.2.6. In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- 9.2.7. Exam papers must not be read by invigilators or Teaching Staff or removed from the exam room. Papers will be distributed to heads of department/faculty 24 hours after the exam session.

10. Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration

10.1. Candidates

- 10.1.1. The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices always apply.
- 10.1.2. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- 10.1.3. Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 10.1.4. Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return to the exam room as soon as possible, a member of staff **must** accompany them.
- 10.1.5. The exams office or other personnel will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 10.1.6. Members of SLT and the Head of Year may be present at the start of the examination to assist with identification of candidates. Invigilators may also ask pupils for identification via their school planners.

10.2. Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue, and arranging overnight stays.

10.3. Special consideration

- 10.3.1. Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.
- 10.3.2. Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor or a medical certificate.
- 10.3.3. The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

11. GCSE controlled assessment/Non examination assessment - Staff responsibilities

11.1. Senior leadership team (MBo)

- 11.1.1. Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments and non-examination assessment. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.
- 11.1.2. At the start of the academic year, begin coordinating with heads of department/subject to schedule these assessments. (It is advisable that assessments be spread throughout the academic years of key stage 4).
- 11.1.3. Map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve:
 - clashes/ problems over the timing or operation of assessments.
 - issues arising from the need for facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.)

11.1.4. Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events

11.2. Heads of department/faculty

- 11.2.1. Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.
- 11.2.2. Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.
- 11.2.3. Ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities regarding controlled assessment and non-examination assessment.
- 11.2.4. Ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.
- 11.2.5. Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualize sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.

11.3. **Teaching staff**

- 11.3.1 Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting controlled assessments and Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (GCE & GCSE specifications)
- 11.3.1. Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes, or additional information on the awarding body's website.
- 11.3.2. Supply to the exams office details of all unit codes for controlled assessments and non-examination assessment.
- 11.3.3. Obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are always stored securely.
- 11.3.4. Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.
- 11.3.5. Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
- 11.3.6. Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.
- 11.3.7. Retain candidates' work **securely** between assessment sessions (if more than one).
- 11.3.8. Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. If an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the Centre. For summer examinations retain work until 23rd

 November. For November examinations retain work until 12th April and for January examinations retain work until 12th June.
- 11.3.9. Ask Learning Development for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

11.4. Exams office staff

- 11.4.1. Enter students for all individual units and "cash-in code", whether assessed by controlled assessment, non-examination assessment, and external exam or onscreen test, before the deadline for final entries.
- 11.4.2. Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD, Electronic or hard copy format.
- 11.4.3. Download and distribute mark sheets for teaching staff to use and collect and send mark sheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- 11.4.4. On the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out, at the direction of the senior leadership team.

- 11.4.5. Arrange for external invigilators to assist subject staff if required.
- 11.4.6. Create, publish, and update an internal appeals policy and review of marking for controlled assessments/Centre assessed Marks.

11.5. Learning Development Department

- 11.5.1. Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.
- 11.5.2. Work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

12. Coursework/Controlled assessment/non-examination assessment and Appeals against Internal Assessments

12.1. Coursework

- 12.1.1. Candidates who must prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.
- 12.1.2. Heads of department will ensure all coursework/controlled assessment/non-examination assessment is ready for despatch or upload at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.
- 12.1.3. Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers and the heads of faculty.

12.2. Reviews of marking-Centre assessed marks

- 12.2.1. The school will inform candidates of marks so they can request a review of marking.
- 12.2.2. Requests for a review must be made in writing.
- 12.2.3. Reviews will be carried out by a competent assessor who has had no previous involvement in the marking.
- 12.2.4. The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome.
- 12.2.5. The outcome of the review will be logged as a complaint and a written record retained on file. (See appendix2)

12.3. Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject (appendix1). The main points are:

- 12.3.1. Appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded.
- 12.3.2. Candidates may appeal if they feel their work has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently, or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- 12.3.3. Appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the head of centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- 12.3.4. The head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams officer, and recorded for awarding body inspection.

13. Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

13.1. Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre / by post to their home addresses. In some circumstances results maybe emailed to candidates if the above methods are not possible, this must always be organised in advance.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the exams officer. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the exams officer.

13.2. Enquiries About Results (EARs)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they may be charged.

(See section 6: Exam fees)

13.3. Access to Scripts ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate and advise on the submission of a review of-marking. Written consent of the candidate must be obtained.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The consent of candidates must be obtained.

13.4. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person and collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they produce written authorisation.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for four years.

14. POLICY ON INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS FOR EXTERNAL QUALIFICATIONS

- 14.1. In accordance with the Code of Practice for the conduct of external qualifications produced by QCA, Charles Darwin School is committed to ensuring that:
 - 14.1.1. Internal assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills;
 - 14.1.2. Assessment evidence provided by candidates has been produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the specification;
 - 14.1.3. The consistency of the internal assessment is secured through internal standardisation as necessary;
 - 14.1.4. Staff responsible for internal standardisation attend any compulsory training sessions.

14.2. Written appeals procedure

Each awarding body publishes its arrangements for appeals against its decisions. In addition, an appeal can be made to the School concerning internal assessment:

- 14.2.1. The appeal applies only to the procedures used in arriving at internal assessment decisions and does <u>not</u> apply to the judgement themselves; you cannot appeal against the mark or grade only the procedures used
- 14.2.2. The parent or guardian must make the appeal in writing to the School's Examinations Officer: appeals should normally be made by 30th April for examinations in the summer series. This deadline may be extended in exceptional circumstances in situations where the coursework/controlled assessment marking and moderation schedule extends beyond this time.
- 14.2.3. The enquiry into the internal process will normally be led by the Examinations Officer and the *Head of Faculty* provided that neither has played any part in the original internal assessment process;
- 14.2.4. The teacher making the assessment will be able to respond to the appeal in writing, and a copy will be sent to the *appellant*;
- 14.2.5. The enquiry will consider whether the procedures used for the internal assessment were in conformity with the published requirements of the Awarding Body and the 'Code of Practice'.
- 14.3. The *appellant* will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including:
 - Relevant communications with the Awarding Body.

 Any steps taken to further protect the interest of the candidates.
- 14.4. If the *appellant* is unhappy about the response in writing, he/she can ask for a personal hearing, where the panel will consist of two persons not previously involved, normally the *Head Teacher and a member of the Governing body*.
- 14.5. Enquiries about Results (Review of Marking)

In cases of Enquiries about Results, where the school does not uphold a request for such an enquiry, the student may normally pay to have an enquiry carried out. Where

the student wishes to challenge the decision not to hold an enquiry or consequent appeal, a similar procedure to that mentioned above will be carried out.

Note: Each awarding body specifies detailed criteria for the internal assessment of work. In addition, the awarding body must moderate the assessment and the final judgement on marks awarded is that of the awarding body. Appeals against matters outside the School's control will not be considered in the School's appeals procedure.

14.6. Appeals against Centre decisions concerning Access Arrangements and special consideration.

- 14.6.1. Charles Darwin School is committed to providing Access arrangements for candidates that allow them to access assessments and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.
- 14.6.2. Access arrangements for a candidate should not give them an advantage over other candidates but put them on an even footing.
- 14.6.3. Arrangements in place will be monitored to ensure that they are suitable for the candidate.
- 14.6.4. If a candidate is unhappy with their current arrangements they should apply to the Senco to have these arrangements reviewed.
- 14.6.5. All access arrangements must be determined using the guidance and information provided by JCQ each year.
- 14.6.6. Special consideration, applied for after examinations are complete will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- 14.6.7. Candidates must inform the exams office of circumstances that may have affected their performance and provide the necessary evidence, including a Doctor's note or self-certification form before this can be applied for.
- 14.6.8. If evidence is not provided it may not be possible to submit a special consideration application.

Reviews of marking - centre assessed marks (GCSE controlled assessments, GCE coursework,

GCE and **GCSE** non-examination assessments)

Charles Darwin School is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff mark candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. Charles Darwin School is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

- I. The School will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.
- 2. The School will inform candidates that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.
- 3. The School will, having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate.
- 4. The School will provide candidates with sufficient time in order to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision.
- 5. Requests for reviews of marking **must** be made in writing.
- 6. The School will allow sufficient time for the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline.
- 7. The School will ensure that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review.

- 8. The School will instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
- 9. The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.
- 10. The outcome of the review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the review of the centre's marking bring any irregularity in procedures to light, the awarding body will be informed immediately.

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. This process is outside the control of Charles Darwin School and is not covered by this procedure.