GCSE Private Candidate Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the arrangements for private candidates who wish to enter examinations through Holmwood House School. The school will comply with all current requirements set by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the relevant awarding organisations.

2. Definition of a Private Candidate

A private candidate is a candidate who is not enrolled as a student at the school but wishes to sit examinations through the school as an examination centre.

3. Acceptance of Private Candidates

The school reserves the right to:

- Accept or decline applications from private candidates.
- Limit the number of private candidates entered in any examination series.
- Refuse entries where the school cannot meet awarding body requirements.
- Refuse entries for qualifications that include coursework, practical assessments, speaking tests, or other non-exam assessments where the school is unable to authenticate or supervise the required work.

Acceptance of a private candidate does not create a student-school relationship beyond examination administration.

4. Application Process

Private candidates must:

- Complete the school's private candidate application form.
- Provide proof of identity and address.
- Meet all published deadlines.
- Pay all applicable fees before entries are submitted, deadline is 31st January for Summer series and 30th September for November series.
- For late entries, where we agree to them, the late fees will be the responsibility of the parents.
- Provide a photo that will be used to verify identity over the exam season

Applications received after published deadlines may be subject to additional fees or may not be accepted.

5. Examination Fees

Private candidates are responsible for:

- Entry fees charged by awarding organisations.
- Administrative fees charged by the school.
- Late entry fees where applicable.
- Access arrangement assessment costs, where relevant.
- Any other costs incurred as part of the examination process.

Fees are non-refundable once entries have been submitted, except where refunds are permitted by the awarding organisation.

6. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Private candidates requesting access arrangements must:

- Notify the school by the published deadline.
- Provide appropriate evidence of need.
- Cooperate with any assessments required.

The school will determine whether sufficient evidence exists to support an application in accordance with JCQ regulations.

The school cannot guarantee that requested arrangements will be approved.

7. Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)

Holmwood House School doesn’t accept entries for NEA subjects from private candidates as we cannot verify the authenticity of the work or provide the required supervision.

8. Candidate Responsibilities

Private candidates must:

- Read and comply with all examination regulations.
- Attend examinations at the specified time and location.
- Bring valid photographic identification where requested.
- Inform the school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- Follow all instructions issued by examination staff.

9. Safeguarding

Holmwood House School recognises its safeguarding responsibilities towards all private candidates under the age of 18 and any vulnerable adult candidates attending the school for examination purposes.

Private candidates must comply with all school safeguarding procedures while on site. Candidates under the age of 18 remain the responsibility of their parent(s) or carer(s) outside examination sessions, including before arrival at and after departure from the school. The school does not provide supervision beyond the published examination timetable and any designated supervised waiting areas.

All private candidates must provide up-to-date emergency contact details as part of the application process. Any safeguarding concerns arising during an examination series will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection policies and may be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), local authority services, the police, or other appropriate agencies where required.

The school reserves the right to refuse or withdraw examination centre arrangements where safeguarding concerns cannot be appropriately managed or where a candidate's conduct presents a risk to the welfare of others.

10. Malpractice and Candidate Conduct

Private candidates are subject to the same examination regulations, centre policies, and standards of conduct as enrolled students. Any suspected malpractice, including plagiarism, collusion, impersonation, possession of unauthorised materials, use of prohibited electronic devices, disruptive behaviour, or any other breach of examination regulations, will be investigated and reported to the relevant awarding organisation in accordance with JCQ requirements.

Candidates must cooperate fully with any investigation into suspected malpractice. The school reserves the right to withdraw future examination centre services from candidates found to have breached examination regulations or engaged in conduct that compromises the integrity, security, or proper administration of examinations.

11. Examination Day Arrangements

Candidates must:

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the examination start time.
- Follow all instructions from invigilators.
- Comply with JCQ regulations regarding prohibited items.
- Remain under centre supervision where required.

Failure to comply with examination regulations may result in disqualification.

11. Results and Certificates

Results will be issued in accordance with awarding organisation procedures.

Certificates must be collected from the school or sent by an agreed secure method. Candidates are responsible for ensuring contact details remain current.

Relevant fees may apply if the candidate wishes for the certificates to be sent to them directly.

12. Appeals and Reviews

Private candidates have the same rights as other candidates to request:

- Reviews of marking.
- Reviews of moderation (where applicable).
- Access to scripts.

Requests must be made in writing and within the deadlines published by the school and awarding organisation. Relevant fees may apply.

13. Data Protection

The school will process personal information relating to private candidates in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and school policies.