



PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS – DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Students are given the right to find out what information the centre holds about them, how this is protected, how this can be accessed and how data breaches are dealt with.

All exams office staff, teachers and invigilators employed by the School responsible for collecting and sharing candidates' data will follow strict rules called 'data protection principles' ensuring the information is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure

To ensure that the centre meets the requirements of the Data Protection Act, 2018 (DPA 2018) within which the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) were incorporated, all candidates' public exam information – even that which is not classified as personal or sensitive – is covered under this policy.

Out of necessity, there is a requirement for the exams office to hold exams-related information on candidates taking external examinations. Candidates' exams-related data may be shared with external organisations or individuals including but not limited to:

- Awarding bodies
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)
- Department for Education
- CEM
- ISI
- ISC
- League tables
- Educational Psychologists

Much, but not all of the shared information is either pseudonomised via the use of candidate numbers or other student identifiers or is statistical and hence is anonymous in character.

This data may be shared via one or more of the following methods:

- hard copy
- email and password protection
- secure extranet sites
- iSams

This data may relate to exam entries, access arrangements, the conduct of exams and non-examination assessments, special consideration requests and exam results/post-results/certificate information.

Merchant Taylors' School ensures that candidates are fully aware of the information and data held about them.

All candidates are:

- informed via issuing Statements of Entry, Statements of Results and other exam related paperwork.
- given access to this policy via the School Website and other School Portals.

Candidates eligible for access arrangements are also required to provide their consent by signing the GDPR compliant JCQ candidate personal data consent form before access arrangements approval applications can be processed online.

Although data is handled in line with the DPA 2018, a data breach may occur for any of the following reasons:

- loss or theft of data or equipment on which data is stored
- inappropriate access controls allowing unauthorised use
- equipment failure
- human error
- unforeseen circumstances such as a fire or flood
- hacking attack
- 'blagging' offences where information is obtained by deceiving the organisation who holds it
- cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections

The School stores data pertaining to Public Examinations using a range of technological and electro-mechanical measures in line with the requirements of JCQ. The School also co-operates with regular JCQ and Awarding Body Inspections, the most recent having taken place: in Autumn 2020.

If a data protection breach is identified, the Deputy Head (Information Systems) will take the necessary steps to contain, recover and assess the ongoing risk. He will also be responsible for communication with the parents and students and then will review our procedures.

Details of retention periods, the actions taken at the end of the retention period and method of disposal are contained in the centre's Transparency Notice for Pupils which is available/accessible from the School Website.

The DPA 2018 gives individuals the right to see information held about them. This means individuals can request information about them and their exam results, including:

- their mark
- comments written by the examiner
- minutes of any examination appeals panels

This does not however automatically give individuals the right to copies of their answers to exam questions.

Requests for exam information can be made to exams@mtsn.org.uk in writing; an initial response will be sent within 5 working days (term time only) or as per the schedule outlined in the DPA 2018.

Third Party Access

Permission will be obtained in writing before sharing personal information of one individual with a third-party organisation.

Candidates' personal data will not be shared with a third party unless a request is accompanied with written permission from the candidate and appropriate evidence (where relevant), to verify the ID of both parties, provided.

Head of Examinations
September 2021
To be reviewed September 2022