Merchant Taylors' School

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS – DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Centre 17632

The Centre will provide relevant personal data, including candidates' names, dates of birth and gender, to awarding bodies for the purposes of conducting examinations and awarding qualifications.

All Exams Office staff, teachers and invigilators employed by the Centre who have access to candidates' data will follow the data protection principles, ensuring that 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 necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure
- accountable

To ensure that the Centre meets the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), all candidates' public examination information – even information that is not classified as personal data or special category data – is covered by this policy.

The Exams Office is required to hold examination-related information about candidates taking external examinations. Candidates' examination-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
- ALPS
- ISI
- ISC
- Educational Psychologists

Any person involved in administering, teaching or completing examinations/assessments is advised that, where malpractice is suspected or alleged, personal data about them will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved. Personal data about them may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies.

Much, but not all, of the information shared is either pseudonymised using candidate numbers or other student identifiers or is statistical data that does not identify individuals and is therefore anonymous.

The Centre may compile cohort-based data for publication on its website or for inclusion in national school performance and league tables.

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

- hard copy
- email using password-protected files
- secure extranet sites
- iSAMS

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

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

- informed through the issue of Statements of Entry, Statements of Results and other examination-related paperwork.
- given access to this policy via the school website.

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
- inadequate 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
- cyberattack involving ransomware infections

The Centre stores data relating to public examinations using a range of technological measures in line with JCQ requirements. The Centre also co-operates with regular JCQ and Awarding Body inspections.

If a data protection breach is identified, the Senior Master will take the necessary steps to contain and recover from the breach and assess any ongoing risks. The Senior Master will also be responsible for communicating with parents and students and reviewing the Centre's procedures. The Head of Centre is responsible for notifying the relevant awarding bodies of such breaches within 72 hours of discovering the breach.

The DPA 2018 and UK GDPR give individuals rights in relation to the personal data held about them, including the right to access their personal data. Individuals may request access to personal data relating to them, including information relating to their examination results, such as:

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

This excludes the candidates' results on restricted release results day.
This does not however automatically give individuals the right to copies of their answers to exam questions.

Requests for examination information should be made in writing to exams@mtsn.org.uk. The Centre aims to acknowledge requests within five working days (term time only). Requests will be dealt with in accordance with the applicable timescales under data protection legislation.

Please refer to the Centre's Transparency Notice for Pupils, available on the school website, for further information.

Third Party Access

Personal information will not normally be shared with a third-party individual or organisation, other than those listed above, without the candidate's written permission.

Where a third party requests access to a candidate's personal data, the request must be accompanied by written permission from the candidate and, where relevant, appropriate evidence to verify the identities of both parties.

Head of Examinations
October 2026
To be reviewed October 2027