

Woodrush High School

Examinations Policy



Policy author / reviewer	C Stables
Responsible LGB committee	Teaching and Learning
Date ratified	March 2020
Status	Recommended
Date of next review	Oct 2020

Contents

1. Exam responsibilities
2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered
3. Exam seasons and timetables
4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes
5. Exam fees
6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements
7. Estimated grades
8. Managing invigilators and exam days
9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration
10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments
11. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)
12. Certificates
13. Receipt & Storage of examination/assessment material

Purpose

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the Centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This exam policy will be reviewed annually.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the senior leadership team, exams officer and the governors.

1. Exam responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an Exam Centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks.
- 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*.

Exams officer

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

- 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.
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of key dates for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- with the assistance of the SENCO 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*.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- submits candidates' coursework marks and samples, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the HoDs, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- ensures training is provided for any new/temporary examination staff and examination invigilators with regards to changes to the examination process published by JCQ. This includes the management and organisation of examinations and the collection and storage of examination papers. This will occur in September and April each year.
- packaging and posting of exam papers via Parcelforce.

Assistant Headteacher:

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at KS4 / post-16.
- Accounts for income and outgoings relating to all exam costs/charges.

Heads of Faculty

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of Controlled Assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets and packaging of coursework samples to send to exam boards.
- Accurate completion of estimated entries, entry and predicted grades and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

Heads of Year/Progress Leaders:

- Responsibility for orderly admission and dismissal of students into and from exam hall.
- Ensures late/absent candidates sit examinations within the parameters set by JCQ and examination boards, in conjunction with the examination secretary

Progress Leaders

- Guidance and careers information.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to heads of department / faculty.

SENCO

- With the assistance of the Exams Officer 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*.
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Provides TAs to act as readers, scribes, prompters and practical assistants.
- provision of additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to help learners achieve their course aims.

Lead invigilator/invigilators:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- managing exam, ensuring exam security and the well-being of the students.
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the examinations office.

Candidates:

- understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- arriving to exams on time and with the correct equipment.

Site Manager:

- arranging for desks and chairs to be laid out.
- ordering heaters if required.

Administrative staff:

- support for the input of data.
- ensure all parcels and packages sent from examination boards are received, recorded and passed accordingly to the examination secretary.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Assistant Headteacher and the Heads of Faculty.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, AS Levels, A2 Levels A levels, VCerts and BTEC.

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 30th September in any given year.

At KS4

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

At post-16

It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12 in subjects offering AS examinations. A2 Examinations or a new full A-Level will be completed in year 13 following from these courses.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Pre Public Examinations (PPE's) are scheduled in February

External exams are scheduled in May and June.

All PPE's exams are held under external exam conditions.

3.2 Timetables

The exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the subject teachers.

Decisions about a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal are made by the Centre.

The Centre accepts external entries from former students only.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Faculty.

Late entries are authorised by Heads of Faculty.

4.3 Retakes

Candidates who do not achieve a grade 4 in English or Mathematics GCSE must retake these qualifications if they remain in the school post 16.

Other retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates and the subject teachers.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

5. Exam fees

GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

AS initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

A2 and A-Level initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Centre or by the relevant department.

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.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates.
(See also section 4.3: Retakes)

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.
(See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements

6.1 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.

6.2 Special Educational Needs

A candidate's special educational 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.

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO and the exams officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the exams officer and the SENCO.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams officer with the SENCO.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the exams officer with the SENCO.

7. Managing invigilators and exam days

7.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision.
They will be used for all exams (internal and external).

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams officer.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Check (DBS) (formerly Criminal Record Bureau Check CRB) check 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 officer.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.
Invigilators are invited for training 2 times per year to support amendments made by JCQ (September and April)

7.2 Exam days

The exams officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users (**although exams will take priority**) and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject leaders/Heads of Faculty, or their representative, must be present before the start of the examination to assist with identification of candidates and to deal with any subject specific issues.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers **must not be read** by subject teachers until all candidates within the centre have completed the examination or removed from the exam room before the end of a session.
Papers will be distributed to heads of department/faculty on the day following the exam session.

8. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

8.1 Candidates

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the Centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

For exams longer than one hour, candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until at least one hour after the published starting time. They will not be allowed to return.

Parents/Carers are responsible for candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all.

8.2 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision if required by JCQ regulations.

8.3 Special consideration

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.

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.

The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

9. Controlled Assessment and appeals against internal assessments

9.1 Controlled Assessment

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Heads of Department will ensure all coursework is ready (relevant forms completed and packaged) for despatch at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams officer by the subject teachers.

9.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams officer and will be included in a booklet: *Exam Guidelines for Parents and Students*.

The main points are:

- 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.
- candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification.
- 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.
- the Head of Centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

10. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

10.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the Centre / by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae) or by direct email if requested in writing by the candidate in advance.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

Results can only be given out on results day and only the exams officer, Head of Centre or their nominee will have access to results before the official results day.

10.2 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 will be charged. (See section 5: Exam fees)

10.3 ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of photocopied papers within three days of receipt of the results.

If a result is queried, the HoD will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the Centre's expense.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

Re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

11. 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 have been authorised in writing to do so.

Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees.

A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The Centre retains certificates for one year only.

12. Receipt & Storage of examination/assessment material

Upon delivery reception staff will sign for packages addressed to the exams officer and record the delivery in the Exam Receipt Logbook. This will also be used for packages and deliveries sent via normal post and addressed to the examinations officer.

Reception will contact the Examinations Officer or Examinations Assistant as soon as the packages arrive.

The Exams Officer/Assistant must collect and sign for deliveries from reception as a matter of urgency.

Papers must then be moved to exams office as a priority, checked against the timetable and stored in date order in the specially allocated secure storage (as per JCQ regulations)

In instances where there are no access arrangements agreed by the awarding bodies, question paper packets can be opened within 60 minutes of the published starting time for the examination. Examination papers can be opened within 90 minutes for candidates with access arrangements. This should still be as close to the start time of the exam as is reasonably possible. Students with access arrangements should have papers checked 24 hours before the start of the examination to ensure any modified scripts or extra resources are held in school.

In order to avoid potential breaches of security, care must be taken to ensure the correct question paper packets are opened. At least 2 members of staff (Preferably the exams officer and lead exam invigilator) must check the time, date and any other paper details before a packet is opened.

Any new staff or temporary staff will be trained in the receipt and storage of examination papers by the examination secretary as set out in section 1 above.