

# Exams Policy – Westwood College

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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 by the governors every two years.

## 1. EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES

### Headteacher (Head of Centre)

Overall responsibility for the school 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*.

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## **Exams Officer**

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and makes available 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 and candidates of an annual calendar 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
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration along with SENCO, 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
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

## **Headteacher**

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

## **Subject Leaders**

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- submits candidates' coursework marks, despatches and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets/OMR's and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

## **Entrust Careers a & Participation Service**

- Guidance and careers information.

## **Teachers**

- Notification of access arrangements and any potential exams dispensation e.g. separate invigilation,

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specific seating requests, anxiety counselling (as soon as possible after the start of the course).

- Submission of candidate names to SEND DEPT.

## **SEND**

- Administration of access arrangements along with EO using Access Arrangements online (A.A.O.)
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- 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.

## **Lead invigilator/invigilators**

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.
- Assisting the Exams Officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations

## **Candidates**

- Confirmation and signing of entries. Receipt of Exam information booklets and copies of all JCQ notices and guidelines.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

## **Administrative staff**

- Maintains log of receipt of materials from exam board, notifies Exams Officer and Site Supervisor when such materials have been delivered and securely stores them in reception until collected for storage in the exams secure storage facility.
- Secure storage in reception of parcelled, completed scripts for collection by Parcelforce.

## **2. THE STATUTORY TEST AND QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED**

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre, subject leaders, heads of sixth form and the SLT.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, A levels and BTEC's and some entry Level.

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 September in the year prior to the first examination. All subject leaders will complete a course information form.

### **At key stage 4**

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

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At post-16

It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12 whilst they are still available for certain specifications. Introduction of new AS and A2 specifications for first teaching from 2015.

### 3. EXAM SEASONS AND TIMETABLES

#### 3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in December/January and March/April.

External exams are scheduled in June and also in November if GCSE re-sits are required. BTEC on-screen tests are scheduled on demand.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the subject leaders and the SLT.

#### 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 RE-TAKES

#### 4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the subject leaders, subject teachers and the SLT.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal provided the approval of the subject leader is obtained and the request is made by a centre-determined deadline. The Senior Learning Mentor is kept informed of all changes for their students.

The centre accepts discretionary entries from external candidates.

#### 4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to subject leaders via internal post.

Late entries are authorised by SLT.

#### 4.3 Retakes

Candidates are allowed appropriate retakes per subject in GCSE.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers and the subject leaders.

(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 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

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Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the candidate or the departments.

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.

This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to GCSE candidates and parents/carers along with their examinations entry letter.

GCE retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates.

(See also section 4.3: Retakes) Westwood College will reimburse fees where the overall award grade improves, in line with the exam board policy.

If a candidate requests an enquiry about a result the candidate must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, (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 needs**

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SEN 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.

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

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

## **7. MANAGING INVIGILATORS AND EXAM DAYS**

### **7.1 Managing invigilators**

The recruitment of invigilators and initiating a request for Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) clearance is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

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Securing the necessary (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Office Manager.

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.

## 7.2 Exam days

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.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Exam Officer/Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

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

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to subject leaders 24 hours after the end of the exam in accordance with JCQ guidelines (to take into account any overnight supervision of candidates elsewhere).

## 8. CANDIDATES, CLASH CANDIDATES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

### 8.1 Candidates

In addition to JCQ regulations' regarding behaviour, mobile phones and electronic devices, 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.

Candidates may leave the exam room for a medical reason/genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.

The exams officer 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.

### 8.2 Clash candidates

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

### 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, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding

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body within seven days of the last exam in the specification.

## **9. COURSEWORK AND APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS**

### 9.1 Coursework

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

Subject leaders will despatch all coursework on time and will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom along with a proof of posting.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject leaders for submission to the AB's, or submitted by subject leaders on-line.

### 9.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is published on the College website.

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 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.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the SLT.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the SLT.

### 10.2 EARS

EARS may be requested by centre staff (with candidates' consent) or candidates themselves if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. If subject leaders do not believe that there has been an error in marking but the candidate or candidate's parent/carer still wishes to proceed, the candidate must pay the EAR fee. EARS requested by centre staff are paid for by the department.

### 10.3 ATS

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

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the candidate's expense. Charged as in 11.2 EARS.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent

of candidates must be obtained.

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

## 11. CERTIFICATES

Certificates are presented in person.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

The centre retains certificates for one year.



17.03.16

Head of centre

Lesley Armstrong

Exams officer