



**Woodbrook Vale School  
Policy Document**

**Examinations Policy**

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## **Purpose of the policy**

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 School's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

Woodbrook Vale School is committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity in everything that it does and to ensuring that differences between all of our learners and staff are valued and respected.

This exam policy will be reviewed every two years.

## **1. Exam responsibilities:**

### **Headteacher**

Overall responsibility for the School, as an Exam Centre. Delegated responsibilities to Exams Officer to:

- Advise on appeals and re-marks.
- Report all suspicions, or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

### **SLT Link**

- Line Manager for exam procedures

### **Exams Officer**

Manage the administration of public exams and exam results:

- Advise the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Faculty, Subject Teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various Awarding Organisations.
- Contribute to the production and distribution to staff, and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicate regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events. Inform Premises staff of the exam timetable for the setting up of exam rooms.
- Ensure that candidates are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- Consult with Teaching Staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Administer access arrangements and make 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*.
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes.
- Room and seat all students for external exams and Year 11 mock exams.
- Line manage the invigilation team; their recruitment and training. Monitor the whole invigilation team responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Submit candidates' coursework marks, track despatch and store returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding organisations correctly and on schedule.
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forward appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams together with the recording of any achievement.
- Implement this policy in accordance with all other School policies, procedures and regulations on Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, Quality Assurance, and Data Protection Act.

## **Heads of Faculty**

- Ensure that course information is correct, and that the correct course and current codes are used for exam entries
- Provide guidance and pastoral oversight to candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Comply with Awarding Organisation and specification requirements.
- Provide direction to candidates on post-results procedures.
- Accurately complete all exams documentation/coursework marksheets /declaration sheets and adhere to deadlines.
- Inform the Exams Officer of changes to course/entry/levels.

## **Form Tutors**

- Provide guidance and support to students when taking examinations (timetabling, seating, equipment)

## **Subject Teachers**

- Provide details of additions or removals from candidate lists via the head of department.
- Return completed Exams documentation to the Exams Officer in order to meet the internal deadlines to avoid Awarding Organisation penalty fees.

## **SEN Co-ordinator**

- Oversee identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Liaise with the Exams Officer to organise exam access arrangements.
- Provide additional support - with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, IT equipment — to assist candidates in achieving their course aims.

## **Invigilators**

- Check the examination room prior to the arrival of candidates to ensure that:
  - Heating, lighting, ventilation and levels of extraneous noise are acceptable.
  - No display materials that might be helpful to candidates are visible.
  - A reliable clock of readable size is visible to each candidate.
  - Ensure notices are displayed in accordance with JCQ regulations.
  - The seating arrangements prevent candidates, intentionally or otherwise, from overseeing the work of others.
- Be fully aware of the regulations according to "The Instructions for Conducting Examinations".
- Ensure that a signed record is kept of the seating and invigilation arrangements for any examination session that they participate in.
- Carry out checks on the identity of candidates on their arrival.

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that:
  - The official examination stationery is issued to candidates and that no other stationery, including paper for rough work, is provided.
  - Candidates take into the examination room only those articles, instruments or materials which are expressly permitted.
  - Candidates have all the necessary material provided by the Awarding Organisation to enable them to complete the examination.
- Open the packet of examination papers and issue the papers to candidates.
- Give clear instructions to candidates about the conduct of the examination to ensure that they fully understand what they are required to do.
- Supervise the candidates throughout the whole time the examination is in progress, and give complete attention at all times to this duty.
- Complete the Attendance Register during the examination and inform the Exams Officer of any absentees.
- Know the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency such as an emergency evacuation.
- At the end of the examination, to collate all scripts in candidate number order and ensure that they are handed to the correct person.
- Collect all unused stationery in the examination room and return it to the Exams Office.
- Ensure that the room is left in a tidy condition.
- Work to promote and apply the School's safeguarding policy and procedures.

### **Candidates**

- Check personal exam entries on receipt of timetable by email and inform the Exams Officer of any discrepancies.
- Understand coursework regulations and sign the relevant declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Take responsibility for compliance with Awarding Organisation and JCQ regulations with respect to coursework, controlled assessment, written examinations, and online tests.
- Attend all timetabled assessments.

### **Parents**

- Ensure their child has checked their exam timetable and raised any queries with their subject teacher and the Exams officer
- Ensure that their child has read and understood the JCQ 'notices to candidates' detailing the conduct expected during the exam or submission of coursework
- Ensure their child attends all timetabled exams.

## **2. The qualifications offered**

The qualifications offered at this School are decided by the Senior Leadership Team.

The subjects offered in any academic year may be found in the School's published prospectus for that year and on the School website. If there has been a change of syllabus/specification from the previous year course information must be changed with Student Records and the Exams Officer must be informed by the 1<sup>st</sup> October for all qualifications.

## **3. Exam seasons, timetables and clashes**

### **3.1 Exam seasons**

Heads of Faculty have responsibility for giving the Exams Officer the appropriate notice period for scheduling of internal exams which contribute to summative assessment.

External exams are scheduled throughout the academic year. Heads of Faculty must liaise with Subject Tutors /Exams Officer to oversee and plan the scheduling of exams for their area. This includes decisions on early entry.

All Year 11 mock exams are held under external exam conditions.

### **3.2 Timetables**

The Exams Officer will display timetables of all external exams on the exams notice board as well as on the exams pages of the school website. Allocation of Invigilators will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

## **4. Entries, entry details, late entries and re-sits**

### **4.1 Entries**

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of Faculty and Subject Teacher. However, should a candidate request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal there would be an expectation that this would be following a discussion with their Subject Teacher. The School reserves the right to make the final decision on exam entries. External candidates would be considered on a case by case basis.

### **4.2 Entry details**

All individual candidate statements of entry will be given to the candidates via their Form Tutors.

The Exams Officer will accept withdrawals, amendments and changes of tier up to the deadline date set by the Exams Officer. These must be via email/and or memo in order that the circumstances of amendment can be filed accordingly.

### **4.3 Late entries**

Under extreme circumstances very late entries may be considered but these will be subject to a fee levied by the Awarding Organisation.

### **4.4 Re-sits**

Re-sit decisions are made in consultation with the Subject Teacher, Exams Officer and the candidate.

## **5. Exam fees**

Normal registration and exam fees for the first sitting are paid by the school for fully funded candidates with an active enrolment.

Reimbursement of fees will be sought from candidates who do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or proof of other mitigating circumstances. The Exams Officer will charge the Examination Board entry fee for any timetabled exam or assessment missed without supporting evidence.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by whoever is responsible for the need to make the change.

External candidates will be responsible for paying their own exam fees and the school reserves the right to charge an additional administrative fee.

All external examination fees will be paid for from the Exams budget. This will also include preparing the resources and the printing cost of the Year 11 mock exam papers.

All internal tests held within the classroom environment will be paid for from department budgets.

## **6. The Disability and Equality Act, special needs and access arrangements**

### **6.1 Disability and Equality Act**

The Disability and Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA to general qualifications. All school staff must ensure that access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

### **6.2 Special needs**

The SEN department will inform Heads of Faculties of candidates with special educational needs. The Head of Faculty can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam. All students with concessions will be supported by an LSA/TA in External exams and Year 11 mocks, but will have an external invigilator present to run the exam. For internal assessment this will be supported by a LSA/TA in the classroom but no external invigilator will be present

### **6.3 Access arrangements**

Candidates who may require access arrangements are identified during the admissions process or enrolment.

Subject Teachers/Form Tutors identifying candidates who may require access arrangements after the start of the course should contact the SEN Co coordinator at the earliest opportunity. It is the Subject Teachers responsibility to ensure arrangements are made as soon as possible after the start of the course.

Applying for access arrangements via the JCQ AAO tool is currently the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

## **7. Estimated grades**

Estimated grade forms are to be completed and returned via the Heads of Faculty to the Exams Officer in order to meet the Awarding Organisations' published deadlines.

## **8. Managing Invigilators and exam days**

### 8.1 Managing Invigilators

External Invigilators will be used for all external exams and some internally assessed components, controlled assessments and mock exams.

The recruitment of Invigilators is co-ordinated by the Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new Invigilators is the responsibility of the Business Manager.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the School.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the School.

### 8.2 Exam days

The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users.

The Premises team are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

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

Subject staff may be present prior to the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted and must leave the venue before the examination begins.

In practical exams Subject Teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by teaching staff or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Faculty the following day.

## **9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration**

### 9.1 Candidates

JCQ rules on candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

Normal school rules on dress and behaviour apply.

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

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until the published finishing time.

Students are personally responsible for providing their own equipment for their exams.

### 9.2 Clash candidates

The supervision of candidates between exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer. In cases of overnight supervision candidates need to complete the appropriate documentation in accordance with JCQ regulations.

### 9.3 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 School, Exams Officer or the Exam Invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within seven days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

If the School supports the application the Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant Awarding Organisation within the JCQ's recommended deadlines.

## 10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

### 10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the required date.

The Heads of Faculty will ensure all coursework is marked/internally verified in line with Awarding Organisation requirements. Heads of Faculty have the responsibility to ensure that appropriate quality assurance procedures are followed to include internal verification of assessed work. Subject Teachers will ensure that all internal verification is completed by School internal deadlines. The Exams Officer will ensure that the work is despatched at the correct time and that a record of what has been sent, when and to whom, is maintained.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Exams Officer by the Heads of Faculty. These should be received by the Exams Officer in order to meet the internal Exams Office Deadline.

### 10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The school is obliged to publish a separate policy on this subject, which is available from the Exams Officer, and on the School website.

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

### 11.1 Results

Results day information will be published to candidates and on the School website. The results are available for collection in person. If a candidate is unable to collect in person they can, via prior discussion with the Exams Officer, arrange for someone to collect them on their behalf. A letter of authorisation is required and the appointed person must bring in proof of identity. Failure to do so will result in the School being unable to release them. Results can be posted home but only by prior arrangement with the exams officer.

### 11.2 Enquiries about Results

EARs for General Qualifications may be requested by school staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The Awarding Organisation's fee is payable by either the candidate or the curriculum area depending on who has requested the EAR. The school will always seek the candidate's permission prior to using this service. **Please note that a remark can result in the grade being lowered as well as raised.**

### 11.3 Access to Scripts (applicable to General Qualifications only)

After the release of results of General Qualifications, candidates may request the return of papers within the Awarding Organisations' stated deadlines.

The school will make the final decision on whether to apply for a review of marking

If a result is queried, the Exams Officer in conjunction with teaching staff or Head Teacher will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the curriculum areas' expense. Otherwise the candidate will pay for the review of marking themselves. If there is a change in unit grade the candidate will receive a refund from the Exams Office. **Please note that a review can result in the grade being lowered as well as raised.**

Heads of Faculty and Subject Teachers may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

### 12. Certificates

Students will be provided with a hard backed envelope, which they are asked to stamp and self-address in the spring term, and return to the exams office. The certificates will then be posted out when they are received by the centre in December each year.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised in writing to do so, and provide their own identification.

The school retains certificates for one academic year.

### **13. Examination Contingency Plan**

#### **Purpose of the plan**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Woodbrook Vale School. By outlining actions/procedures to be followed in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by information contained in the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* where it is stated that “Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.”

## Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

### 1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

- *Planning*
  - annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
  - annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
  - sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained
- *Entries*
  - awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
  - candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
  - awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred
- *Pre-exams*
  - exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
  - candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
  - exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions
  - internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators
- *Exam time*
  - exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
  - required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
  - candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies
- *Results and post-results*
  - access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
  - the facilitation of the post-results services

#### Centre actions:

- The assessment officer and SLT link responsible for exams to cover essential tasks, if possible in liaison with the exams officer. Also a possibility of increasing capacity by temporarily employing senior invigilators to carry out delegated administration.

## 2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

- *Planning*
  - candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
  - evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated
- *Pre-exams*
  - approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
  - modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
  - staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained
- *Exam time*
  - access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

### Centre actions:

- Concessions testing is already sub contracted out. The SEN Assistant would continue to coordinate this.
- The exams officer will ensure that the pre-exam and exam time tasks are carried out.

## 3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks not undertaken including:

- *Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received*
- *Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in:*
  - *candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late*
  - *late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies*
- *Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines*

### Centre actions:

- The exams officer will liaise with the SLT exams link and use the MIS system to ensure that students are entered for the right specifications.

#### **4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence**

##### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams*
- *Invigilator shortage on peak exam days*
- *Invigilator absence on the day of an exam*

##### Centre actions:

- The exams officer ensures all support staff are invigilator trained and each year produces a 'staff guide to invigilation'
- In the event of a shortage of invigilators, the exams officer would ring other exams centres to see if they can arrange for one of their external invigilators to be provided.

#### **5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**

##### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning*
- *Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days*
- *Main exam venues unavailable due to an expected incident at exam time*

##### Centre actions:

- On peak exam days Year 11 are on study leave, thus freeing up classrooms to be used as exam rooms.
- The exams officer will liaise with other local exam centres, to see if they have any available exam rooms.

#### **6. Failure of IT systems**

##### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *MIS system failure at final entry deadline*
- *MIS system failure during exams preparation*
- *MIS system failure at results release time*

##### Centre actions:

- Ensure that Network Services are aware of the key dates, so they can schedule their maintenance work accordingly.
- The exams officer to ensure that entries are sent in a timely fashion.
- If necessary, the exam officer can download results from awarding body secure sites.

## 7. \*Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

### \*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning.

### Centre actions:

- Relocate within the site where possible
- Close the site for up to 2 days (term time)
- Look to relocate (short term) small critical groups to other sites such as Rainbows other schools and colleges in Loughborough.
- Suspend non critical staff groups for up to 2 days
- Provide temporary accommodation and equipment on site (Porta cabins on field)
- Use home working where possible

## 8. \*Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

### \*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

*\*In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.*

### Centre actions:

- If possible to open for exams and exam candidates only.
- The exams officer will liaise with other local exam centres, to see if they have any available exam rooms.
- Offer candidates the opportunity to sit any exams missed at the next available series.
- Exams officer to apply for special consideration for candidates who have met the minimum requirement

## 9. \*Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

### \*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

### Centre actions:

- The exams officer will liaise with other local exam centres, to see if they have any available exam rooms.
- Centre to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.
- Exams officer to apply to awarding bodies for special consideration for candidates who have met the minimum requirements.

## 10. \*Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

### \*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

### Centre actions:

- Exams officer or school receptionist to take the exam scripts to the local post office.
- Exams officer to ensure secure storage of completed exams papers until collection.

## 11. \*Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

### \*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

### Centre actions:

- Exams officer to inform awarding bodies and take advice.

## 12. \*Centre unable to distribute results as normal

### \*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

### Centre actions:

- Exams officer to make arrangements to access results and co-ordinate post results services from an alternative site.

\*information taken from the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

## **Further Guidance to Inform and Implement Contingency Planning**

### **Ofqual**

*Joint Contingency Plan in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/16235/1/2012-12-11-joint-contingency-plan-november-2012.pdf>

### **GOV.UK**

*Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings*  
<https://www.gov.uk/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

*Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions>

*Dispatch of exam scripts guide - Contingency planning*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>

### **JCQ**

Guidance on *alternative site arrangements* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms>

*Instructions for conducting examinations* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

Guidance on *access arrangements and special consideration* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>