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The
Westgate School

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Examinations Policy

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1. EXAMINATIONS POLICY

The Governing Body is concerned to ensure that:

- the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.
- clear guidelines are published to all relevant parties so as to facilitate the efficient operation of the examination system.

To this end policy and procedures will be reviewed every three years or if regulations change, by the Head of Centre and Governors.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement the agreed policy & procedures.

The Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre.

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice, alongside the exams officer. Refer to the JCQ document - Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

Curriculum Leaders are responsible for:

- Advising on reviews of marking and appeals.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to curriculum leader/school/curriculum and SEN Department.

The Send Coordinator (SENDCo) is responsible for:

- 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 are responsible for:

- 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.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Checking all exam entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

The school's position on the conduct of examinations, entries, charging, access arrangements and appeals is made clear in the procedures attached. The range of examinations and qualifications offered will be continuously reviewed in the best interest of the student body.

2. Qualifications

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre.

The qualifications offered are GCE, GCSE, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals and WJEC Diplomas

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 the June of that year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the Curriculum Leaders.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Subject teachers.

3. Exam Series and Timetables

Exam Seasons

The main external exams and assessments are scheduled in January, May and June and November for any retakes.

Certain BTEC and other Vocational course examinations are conducted in exam conditions throughout each academic year.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Senior Leadership Team decides which exam series are used in the centre.

On-demand tests can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the EO and the SLT.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetable for External exams.

4. Entries, entry details and late entries

Entries, entry details and late entries

It is the responsibility of the relevant subject leader to ensure that the examinations officer is notified of all entries. Candidates will be entered for examination in all courses of study which they satisfactorily complete. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Head Teacher only.

Candidates or parents/carers must meet with the teacher concerned to discuss a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. Charges may be levied in some circumstances.

The centre will only accept entries from external candidates at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

The centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines will be circulated to Subject Leaders via Email and the school calendar by the Exams Officer.

Late entries are authorised by Curriculum Leaders.

GCSE retakes are allowed at the discretion of the subject leader.

5. Exam Fees

Exam Fees

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 deadlines stated by the awarding bodies. These deadlines will be published by the Exams Officer.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

A-Level entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

BTEC entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Other Vocational qualifications exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees received after the deadlines will be charged to the relevant Department.

Re-sit fees are paid by the Centre.

If parents/guardians demand that changes of tiers of entry are made after the final deadline published by the awarding bodies, then they will be charged accordingly. Amendments will not be made until payment has been made.

6. Disability Discrimination Act

Disability Discrimination Act

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006 and the Equality Act 2010.

The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

'A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The centre will meet the requirements of the DDA by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and SENDCo.

Access arrangements

The SENDCo 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 SENDCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENDCo.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENDCo.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENDCo.

All access arrangements will be completed and approved by the appropriate awarding bodies by December of the academic year.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENDCo.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENDCo.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

7. Managing Invigilators

Managing Invigilators

Support staff and External staff are used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer and Centre administration.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) 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.

8. Malpractice

The Senior Leadership Team and Exams Officer are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice. Final decisions on what action is to be taken will be agreed between the member of SLT in charge of exams and the Head Teacher, following this, the exams officer will report any incident to the exam board.

The misuse of generative AI in assessments also constitutes as malpractice. If the subject teacher suspects that a student has misused AI in their assessments, it is their responsibility to notify the Exams Officer and relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team to begin an investigation. Further details can be found in our NEA policy.

The centre will make students aware of how to use AI responsibly and refer to the JCQ document *AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications* for guidance.

9. Exam days

If the Exams Officer is absent on exam days, the PA to the Headteacher will take responsibility for the smooth running of the exams and ensuring that regulations are adhered to.

The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator on the day of the examinations.

Site Management are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms ensuring that examination regulations are adhered to.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand (but must not remain in the examination room) 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 published time of the exam.

Subject leaders may not enter an exam room except in the event of an emergency, whereby they will be escorted by a member of SLT.

10. Candidates

Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other electronic devices always apply.

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 are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the exams officer or senior invigilator.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be always accompanied by a member of staff. Only **one** candidate at a time may be permitted to leave the exam room at any given time.

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.

Clash Candidates

The Exams Officer/Senior Invigilator will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts and identifying a secure room within the school.

If overnight supervision arrangements are required, these will be organised with parents, in line with JCQ regulations.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate that is fully prepared and has covered the whole course become affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control, at the time of an assessment or during, candidates will be eligible for special consideration. JCQ outlines such circumstances as:

- an accident/injury or temporary illness at the time of assessment
- suffer bereavement at the time of assessment
- encounter a serious disturbance during an examination
- involved in a domestic crisis at the time of an assessment
- an accidental event at the time of assessment such as being given the wrong paper
- participating in sporting events, training camps or other events at an international level at the time of assessment
- failure by the centre to implement approved access arrangements

It is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the Exams Officer, or the exam invigilator, if any of the criteria listed above apply to them.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example by providing 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 last exam in the series.

Should the candidate fail to provide appropriate evidence, the centre may charge the examination fees to the candidate's primary parent/carer.

11. Internal Assessments and Appeals

Internal Assessment

It is the responsibility of the Curriculum Leaders to ensure that the integrity of all internal assessments is maintained. This includes all practical assessments.

It is the duty of Curriculum Leaders to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

All internal assessments must be kept in a secure location throughout the examination period, they are not permitted to be removed from the exam centre and must not be shared with other candidates.

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

Appeals against internal assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in Appendix A.

12. Results

Results, Enquiries about Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Head of 6th Form.

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

Any confidential examination data prior to results day will only be accessed by key members of staff at the Head of Centre's discretion.

EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense.

When the centre does not support a candidate's request for 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.

Requests must be submitted before the deadline published by the awarding bodies.

ATS

After the release of results, candidates may request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results. There will be a charge which varies with each Exam Board per paper to be paid by the candidate. Scripts will not be ordered until payment has been received.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The consent of candidates must be obtained. All charges incurred will be paid for by the department.

Reviews of marking cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

Requests must be submitted before the deadline published by the awarding bodies.

13. Certificates

Certificates

Certificates will be available for collection during a specific period in the November/December after exams have taken place. If they are uncollected during this period, certificates will be posted home by recorded delivery.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so and provide a copy of the candidates Identification.

The centre retains certificates for one year, they are then destroyed as directed by the examination boards.

Candidates will need to contact the exam board if they have lost their certificates, and a transcript of results may be issued by the exam board.

14. Escalation Procedure Due to Absence

The member of SLT with oversight of examination administration who provides support and guidance to the exams officer:

James Ward, Assistant Headteacher – Data, Reporting and Examinations

If James Ward is absent, support and guidance will be provided by Jon Gargan – Headteacher.

Examination Appeals Policy – Appendix A

Introduction

This policy addresses the situation where students/or the centre on a student's behalf, may wish to appeal against a grade that has been received for a qualification whether it be an internal or external examination and the charges involved in such a situation.

Access

Students are made aware of the existence of this policy and have open access to it. All teachers are made aware of this policy and how to access it, in order that students can be fully supported during the appeals process.

This policy is reviewed annually and may be amended when regulations change with the awarding bodies.

Policy Statement for External Examinations

All students at The Westgate School have the right to make an appeal if they disagree about any of the marks received for the qualifications they are undertaking.

If any student wishes to appeal the outcome of a review, they should follow the following procedure:

- Speak to the member of staff responsible for teaching the qualification in the first instance about the reason they wish to appeal.
- The member of staff has a responsibility to explain to the student why he/she received the grade/mark in their opinion.
- If deemed appropriate by the member of staff/Head of Centre, a request will be made to the examining body concerned for a review of marking of the paper/coursework. The student should be made aware that there is a possibility that their mark may go down as a result of this review.
- The student will receive notification of the outcome by letter from the awarding body concerned.
- Should the result of this request not be satisfactory, and the student wishes to pursue this matter further, the Exams Officer will assist the student in following the correct procedures and will act on their behalf to the awarding body concerned.
- The Westgate School will support any student with the awarding bodies in the case of an appeal.
- All appeals are to be made within the published timescales determined by the awarding bodies.
- Any fees associated with an appeal are due from the student before any appeal can be made.

Policy Statement for Internal Examinations

Any student at The Westgate School has the right to challenge the grading of internal examinations/coursework. If a student wishes to appeal a decision with the grading before the mark is submitted to the awarding body, they should follow the following procedure:

- Speak to the member of staff responsible for teaching the qualification in the first instance about the reason they wish to appeal.
- The member of staff has a responsibility to explain to the candidate why he/she received the grade/mark.
- The member of staff must inform the candidate that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.
- The centre will ensure that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review.
- The student will be informed of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking in writing.
- Should the outcome of this appeal be unsatisfactory, the student has no further right of appeal.

Charges for Examination Appeals

Internal Examinations/Controlled Assessment

- No charges will be levied for appeals against internal assessments unless an external assessor is used. If this happens then the candidate will be advised of the charge at the time of making a request.

External Examinations

- If the centre requests a review of marking of an external examination, no charges will be made to the primary parent/carer of the student concerned.
 - A Curriculum Leader may submit a review of marking of a student's external examination for reasons such as being less than 5 marks away from the next grade up. It is the responsibility of the Curriculum Leader to obtain permission from the student. The student must be made aware that a review of marking may lead to a result changing grade up, down, or not at all. The Exams Officer will notify the student of any changes to the overall grade.
- If the centre is asked to submit an appeal after the review of marking, the student concerned and the centre support this request, no charges will be levied.
- If the centre is requested to submit a review of marking by the student concerned and the centre does not support this request, charges will be invoiced to the person of parental consent. If payment is not received within the timescale deemed by the centre and the awarding body concerned, the centre withholds the right not to submit the appeal.
- If a Curriculum Leader wishes to submit a review of marking of student's external examinations for reasons such as being less than 5 marks away from the next grade up, they must obtain permission from the student. The student must be made aware that a

review of marking may lead to a result changing grade up, down, or not at all. The Exams officer will notify the student of any changes to the overall grade.

**In any circumstance, all reviews of marking must be made within the strict timescales determined by the Awarding Bodies concerned.
Details can be found in the Candidate Handbook.**

Appendix B

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN IN CASE OF FIRE OR EMERGENCY DURING A PUBLIC EXAMINATION

Public examinations will take place in a designated area

This policy does not refer to evacuation during an internal examination, where regular evacuation procedures will be instigated

Upon discovering a fire in an area where a public examination is taking place, the invigilator or member of staff in charge will:-

1. Shout a warning of 'FIRE' and operate the nearest fire alarm call point. Inform reception or nearest member of staff **GIVING PRECISE DETAILS AND LOCATION OF THE FIRE**. Mobile phones are allowed to be used in this instance.
2. If you are unable to make contact with reception, contact the Fire Brigade directly by dialling **999**. Remember to give the full address and nature of the emergency.

The Westgate School

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3. It is important that you do not put yourself at risk. Fire extinguishers are positioned in nominated areas. Details of the various types and correct operation are printed on the body of the extinguishers. It is Fire Safety Policy that unless you are competent in their use **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO FIGHT A FIRE**. In the interest of your safety and those who may have to rescue you, leave the building immediately by the safest route and meet at the nominated fire assembly point where a roll call will be taken.
4. Candidates will then be evacuated as per the guidelines below.

Upon hearing the fire alarm or other emergency during a public examination the invigilators should follow these guidelines:-

1. If the alarm sounds during the exam, the senior invigilator should instruct the candidates to put down their pens/pencils, close their booklets and sit in silence. A note of the time will be made and any time will be added to the end of the exam.
2. Candidates are to remain in the examination room until the Exams Officer or a member of SLT advises as to whether evacuation should take place.
3. If evacuation is not taking place, the examination will re-start with additional time added. The examination board will be informed of the disruption to the examination.
4. If evacuation is to take place, candidates will leave the examination room in silence by the nearest fire exit, leaving all personal possessions behind. Exam students are to stand away from the general population.
5. Examination papers and scripts are to be left in the exam room. The door should be locked after evacuation to ensure the security of the examination papers.
6. The invigilator or member of SLT will take the attendance register with them.
7. Candidates will be escorted to a designated area away from the main school as follows:

Examination Room

Sports Hall/TTC/Dance Studio
 Technology Block/ICT area/F31
 S Rooms
 G32/G33
 Multipurpose Hall (including 6th Form area)

Assembly Point

Rear car park
 Main car park at front of school
 Rear car park
 Main car park at front of school
 Field – away from building

8. The invigilator or member of SLT will take the attendance register to ensure no persons are missing.
9. Candidates are prohibited from talking/discussing the examination with their peers during the evacuation. If anyone is suspected of doing so, they will be reported to the examination board for suspected malpractice, which may result in disqualification from the exam.
10. Once permission has been granted to re-enter the examination room, students must do so in an orderly fashion and in silence. Permission will be granted to re-start the examination and additional time will be added.
11. The exams officer will apply for Special Consideration to the examination board who will then take the incident into account when marking the papers.

Appendix C

EXAM PAPERS & IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS

All material relating to exams is signed in at reception, using the log book and immediately handed to the Exams Officer.

The Exams Officer immediately takes the delivery to the secure room to check dates, syllabus number, paper number, timings and number of papers received, before locking away in the secure cabinet.

One set of keys is held by the Exams Officer and a second set is kept in a locked key cabinet in the Facilities Manager's office, in case of emergency.

Exam papers and attendance registers, along with any accompanying stationary is handed to the invigilator in charge of the exam prior to the start.

For large exams (more than 20 candidates) exams papers are placed on the exam desks no earlier than 30 minutes prior to the start of the exam. The papers are not to be left unattended. If there are fewer than 20 candidates, papers are not opened and distributed until all candidates are seated in their allocated seats in the exam room.

Identification of Students

Candidates are seated in the exam room in alphabetical order by tier of entry. Places are identified via the distribution of a seating plan displayed in the meeting area. Each exam desk is identified by a card showing the candidates name and number and photo.

Before the start of the exam, candidates are asked to double check that they have the correct paper and place card.

It is the responsibility of SLT to ensure registers of students are taken by the exams officer and/or invigilators to update attendance on SIMS. Once the exam has started, registers must be handed to the Exams Officer as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of the Senior Invigilator to take a register at the start of the exam to be kept in the exam room for the duration of the exam and to be used in the event of an evacuation.

The Exams Officer is responsible for any queries in regards to tiers of entry.

Appendix D

ACCESS ARRANGEMENT PROCEDURES

All students that have access arrangements will report to the SEN team, outside of the canteen 15 minutes prior to the start of an examination. They are then responsible for maintaining the security of the papers until they are distributed to the LSA's supervising examinations.

All examination papers together with any cover sheets are delivered back to the Exams Office as soon as the exams are completed.

The lead LSA will check and collect exam papers from the secure room before the exam, with the Exams Officer.

The Exams Officer will advise the Lead LSA of any erratum notices.

APPENDIX E

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

The school has a lockdown procedure in place in the case that there is an unexpected event which causes significant disruption to our school.

The alarm for a lockdown procedure will ring intermittently for 30 seconds as opposed to the fire alarm which rings consistently.

In the event of a lockdown, invigilators must ask all students to put down pens and pencils, close their exam papers and move to an area in the room away from doors and windows in silence. A note must be made of the time.

All doors must be locked, all lights must be switched off and windows and blinds must be closed. If doors cannot be locked, they must be barricaded.

Students and invigilators/staff must remain silent until advised that it is safe.

More information can be found in the Lockdown Policy.