

Westfield Academy - Exam Procedure 2022/2023

Contents

1. Exam responsibilities
2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered
3. Exam seasons and timetables
4. Entries, entry details and late entries
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

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of the 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 head of centre, senior leadership team and the exams officer.

For the 2022/2023 exam series please be advised that the school will still be following all procedures and adapting as necessary to be in line with the current government guidance, both for the local area and guidance for schools, on the covid-19 pandemic. In particular this will be relevant for any January & February exams this year.

1. Exam Responsibilities

1.1 Head of centre

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and remarks
- 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*.

1.2 Exams manager/exams office manager

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 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
- 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
- Liaises with SENCO to ensure access arrangements and applications for special consideration are made 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
- Line manages the senior exam invigilators in organising recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Prepares and presents reports to the senior leadership team showing results achieved as requested by the vice principal
- Submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and distributes returned coursework to heads of departments correctly and on schedule
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the senior leadership team, any appeal/re-mark request
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams

1.3 Vice Principal

- Organisation of teaching and learning
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4

1.4 Heads of department/school/curriculum

- 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
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams manager

1.5 Head of careers

- Guidance and careers information

1.6 Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Submission of candidates' names to heads of department/school/curriculum

1.7 SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements
- 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

1.8 Lead invigilator(s)

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- Adherence to the JCQ instructions for conducting examinations at all times
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office

1.9 Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own

2. Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the heads of department and the senior leadership team. The statutory qualifications offered are; GCSE, BTEC and V-certs.

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 at the start of the academic year.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENCO, subject teachers, heads of subject, vice principal and principal.

At key stage 3

All candidates will take English, Mathematics, Science and ICT. The school will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.

At key stage 4

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

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in November/December & January/February (year 11) and May (year 10).

External exams are scheduled in November, December, January, February, March, May and June

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions wherever possible and appropriate.

N.B year 7 cognitive abilities tests (CATS) are scheduled in September each year.

3.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams.

4. Entries, entry details and late entries

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of department and the subject teachers. Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or tier or withdrawal. However, the final decision on this rests with the Head teacher (Head of centre).

The centre does not usually accept entries from external candidates (private entries).

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email and post

Late entries are authorised by the heads of department

5. Exam fees

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates. However, if a candidate fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fees can be recovered from the candidate's parent/guardian. Should a candidate miss an examination due to illness the exams officer must be presented with a valid doctor's certificate within 48 hours of the timetabled exam start time.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by departments.

Candidates will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes **provided that** these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

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 SENCO.

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 arrangements that individual candidates can 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. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO with the exams officer.

6.4 The Equality Act 2010

All invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and trained in disability issues by the exams officer. All invigilators are made aware of the policies and procedures relating to emergency evacuation and medication, especially where they relate to candidates with a disability.

The exams officer will ensure that the conditions and layout of the examination room are both appropriate, comfortable and accessible for those who have a disability.

Also see the schools' full Equality and Diversity Policy.

7. Estimated grades

The heads of department will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer. Submitting estimated grades is not common practice but depends on the specification and awarding body of a subject.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing Invigilators

External invigilators will be used for most internal exams and all external exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office. Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Head teacher's PA. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office, normally by a senior invigilator. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

8.2 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 lead Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with the 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. Once candidates enter an exam location they are under exam conditions, staff are only allowed access to the room at the exam managers discretion. Subject staff are not permitted to look through, remove or copy an exam paper from a live exam session. Subject staff are to only contact the exams manager regarding copies of live material after the completion of an exam, the exams manager is the only member of staff who will participate in these discussions and if appropriate provide the material in accordance to the JCQ ICE booklet.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties. For GCSE Music the music teacher will be present during the exam to ensure that the technology is working correctly and that the speakers playing the exam material are of good quality ensuring that all elements of a piece can be heard by the student. The Music teacher will not communicate with any candidate during the exam both verbally and non verbally; they are simply there to ensure the smooth running of the paper and would never be left in the exam room unattended by an external invigilator or the exams manager.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the completed exam papers have been collected by courier. Papers will be distributed to heads of department at a time convenient to the exams manager and the head of department. A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject specific instructions if required.

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

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

The centre is not responsible for candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all.

9.2 Clash candidates

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

9.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the exams officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor; however normally this would be required to be presented on the same day as the missed exam.

The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam, normally completed on the same day however once evidence has been received.

10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the end of the course. Heads of department will ensure all coursework is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and by whom.

Marks for internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by the heads of department.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

A separate, full procedure on this subject is available from the exams office.

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 31 May 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 exam officer and recorded for awarding body inspection

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

11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre. Arrangements for the school to be open on results day are made by the business manager. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the exams officer and business manager.

11.2 EARs

Enquiries about results (EARs) may be requested by the centre:

- When a change in grades awarded would affect key school measures; likely to apply to core subjects only.
- For other subjects where there is evidence that a significant percentage of the cohort has been disadvantaged by unfair application of the assessment criteria.

Any other remarks/appeals would be at the expense of the candidate and their parents who should contact the exams officer in the first instance. If successful this fee is refunded by the exam board.

11.3 ATS

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

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

GCSE remarks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

(see also section 5: Exam fees)

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person or collected at a later stage and signed for upon receipt.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so. The school requires a written statement of consent from the candidate stating the named party who is authorised to collect certificates on their behalf.

Replacement certificates are only issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred. In accordance with JCQ and the agreed standard procedure with the awarding bodies (published for April 2007 onwards), the centre will retain certificates for a minimum of one year after which time the centre is authorised to securely destroy unclaimed certificates. In an attempt to help students, Westfield Academy will retain unclaimed certificates for a minimum of five years from the award date after which time certificates will be securely destroyed.

.....
Simon Dallimore
Head of Centre

.....
Abbie Taylor
Exams Manager

.....
Date

.....
Date

This policy is next due for review on **01/09/2023**