



The
Westminster
School



Exams Policy 2015/2016

Safe Happy and Learning Together
*Building foundations and providing
opportunities to create confident,
aspirational and independent members of
our community.*

Approved by Governing Body on:

09/06/2016

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Head Teacher:

C Hill B.E.d..N.P.Q.H.

Lead Personnel:

B Taylor

Date of Review:

23/03/2016

Contents

- The Centre Exams Policy
- Qualifications
- Exam series and timetables
- Entries, entry details and late entries
- Exam fees
- Equality legislation
- Estimated grades
- Recognition of prior learning
- Managing invigilators
- Candidates
- Internal assessments and appeals
- Results
- Certificates
- Withdrawal flow chart

This policy is next due for review on 23 March 2017

Exams Policy

The purpose of this exams policy is to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates; and to ensure the operation of an efficient exams 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.

The exams policy will be reviewed every year.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the exams officer and Assistant Head Teacher. The policy will go under consultation with all staff before being approved by the Governing Body.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Exam Responsibilities

The Head of Centre (Head Teacher):

- Has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Will liaise with alternative providers when entering pupils i.e. colleges, IMPACT etc.
- Will support all staff involved in examinations to ensure clear systems are followed and adhered to.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice.
- Will share a malpractice policy with all staff.

The Exams Officer:

- Manages the administration of internal exams and external exams including controlled assessments / entry level testing.
- Advises the senior leadership team (SLT), subject leaders and teachers, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- Checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.

- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges in liaison with the finance department.
- Ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.
- Considers the needs of the pupils when organising examinations.

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- Accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Decisions on post-results procedures.
- Arranging appropriate moderation opportunities to ensure all the above are complete (internal and external).

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer.
- Raising any concerns over pupils who may struggle to sit formal examinations.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) / Assistant Head Teacher are responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- Process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- Work with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.
- Work with external agencies if appropriate.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- 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 ensuring their return to the exams office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by middle managers in liaison with the senior leadership team and Head Teacher.

The types of qualifications offered are:

- GCSE
- Entry Level
- BTEC Foundation Learning
- Functional Skills
- ASDAN Awards
- OCNWMR

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year can be found in the Centre's published prospectus and on the website www.thewestminsterschool.co.uk. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams officer must be informed by 1st October of that academic year.

Informing the exams officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Assistant Head Teacher 14-19 / Middle Manager.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by Middle Managers in consultation with the SLT.

Exam Series

Internal exams i.e. mock exams and assessments are scheduled in December and March of each academic year. External exams and assessments are scheduled in the summer term in line with dates set by the examination boards. Internal exams are held under external exam conditions. The Middle Managers decide which exam series are used in the centre. The centre does not offer some assessments on an on-demand basis.

Exam Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams at a specified date before each series begins. These exam timetables are shared with parents/carers.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The School does not accept entries from private candidates.

The centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations unless under exceptional circumstances. The final decision for this will come from the Head Teacher.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Middle Managers via email, briefing meetings, internal post/pigeon hole. They are also published on the school calendar. Middle Managers provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines. Once these entries have been decided, Middle Managers or SLT (where appropriate) must sign these off.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, from SLT.

GCSE re-sits/retakes are not allowed. Functional skills retakes are allowed. Re-sit decisions will be made by Middle Managers in consultation with SLT.

Exam Fees

Candidates 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.

The exams officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series through email.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre. Functional skills entry exam fees are paid by the centre. Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre. Any late entries must be approved by a member of SLT.

Fee reimbursements are not sought from candidates:

- if they fail to sit an exam;
- if they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Equality Legislation

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation. The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the SLT and exams officer.

Access Arrangements

As an SEN school, all pupils will have a statement and so will need access arrangements to complete exams/assessments. These will be organised by the exams officer and SENCo. Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement; and submitting the applications is the responsibility of exams officer. As an SEN school, most pupils will need a reader or scribe in the examinations. Therefore, seating plans and rooms will need to be chosen accordingly by the exams officer in liaison with the Assistant Head Teacher 14-19.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the exams officer and Team Leader for Learning Support.

Estimated Grades

Head of departments are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning is

'method of assessment that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding the skills they already possess and so do not need to develop through a course of learning'

At The Westminster School we recognise the importance of the assessors understanding of the capabilities of our students. We are a relatively small school at it is highly likely that our staff will have a good understanding of the students capabilities, even if they are about to embark on a completely new course. Through the induction phase of courses staff know well in advance which students have selected their courses. From this they are encouraged to raise any concerns about the capabilities of a student on a particular course. This is then discussed with either a TLR or senior management if appropriate. The needs of the student are considered and support is identified. The student will then start the course and there will be a four week period where suitability is again considered. Only in exceptional circumstances will a student not be considered for a course, for example health and safety grounds.

It is very likely that teachers will teach students in their previous key stage therefore teachers and assessors are encouraged to share exit routes and courses that are appropriate for them further up the school.

Staff are encouraged to instigate early verification for a student they have concerns about once they have started the course. This may include moderation within a department or reassurance from a line manager or a member of the senior leadership team.

Managing Invigilators

External staff will not be used to invigilate examinations. Internal staff will invigilate all exams, and also work a reader and scribes for candidates. As the centre uses internal staff, DBS clearance is not an issue.

Malpractice

The head of centre in consultation with exams officer, SLT are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice. Please refer to the Malpractice Policy.

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 staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements at least 3 weeks in advance via email.

The main invigilator/SLT will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff are not to be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do. All invigilators must sign in and out during the exam process. In practical exams and controlled assessments, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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 heads of department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 3 hours after candidates have completed them. After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies.

Candidates

The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times, in line with school policy. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities.

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 SLT. Strategies identified in behaviour support plans may be appropriate to support candidates leading up to an exam.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times. The exams officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day. This is dealt in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Clash Candidates

The team leader for learning support will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's exams officer. The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 3 days of the exam. The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 2 days of the exam.

Internal Assessment

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

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Middle Managers. The exams officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

The centre follows the JCQ guidelines in regards to controlled assessments. It is the responsibility of the centre to keep live controlled assessments and candidates' work secure at all times. The Middle Managers/subject leaders will ensure that work is kept confidential whilst it is in their possession.

All internal entry level tests must be calendared and a timetable to be submitted to the exams officer and SLT (Assistant Head Teacher 14-19). These papers must be signed out (with the exams officer) on collection and signed in on completion. This must be completed on the same day of the test. (see appendix for Copy of template).

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days, posted (first class). Candidates will also have an opportunity to attend the centre on allocated days set nationally. Results will be downloaded from A2C and sent out the following day. Candidates will only receive their results.

Candidates may be able to collect their results on the designated day if organised beforehand with the exams officer and Assistant Head Teacher. The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Assistant Head Teacher 14-19 / Head Teacher.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates. The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre. All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by SLT. If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the centre will respond by following the process in the appeals policy. All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the exams officer, following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 4 weeks of the receipt of results. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned. Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of exams officer.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates at Presentation Evening in November of the same year. If candidate has finished school, certificates will be posted to them (recorded delivery). Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are. The centre retains certificates for 3 years. A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

Withdrawal Process

If The Westminster School want to withdraw a learner from a qualification, or withdraw the qualification altogether, we will do so giving 3 months' notice to the exam board. The following process will be followed:

Communication by teacher
about withdrawal of
qualification/learner to
Assistant Head Teacher



Communication with the Head
of Centre about withdrawal



Exams Officer told to
withdraw candidates /
qualifications



Exams Officer to inform Exam
Board of withdrawal, giving 3
months' notice



Teacher to inform students of
withdrawal



Exams Officer to update
examination board

Appendix A

	General roles	Access arrangements / special consideration roles	Invigilator / invigilation / malpractice roles
Possible role options for inclusion in policy (select as many as required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of centre • Deputy head • Middle Managers • Senior leadership team • Exams officer • SENCO • Subject teachers • Governors • Candidate • Parent/carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENCo • Doctor • Pastoral teacher • Educational psychologist • Specialist teacher • Exams officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exams officer • Support staff • Senior leaders • Agency employees • Head of centre • Invigilator • SIPs (CIT)

Appendix B

The Westminster School
Internal Formal Assessment

Examples of Internal Assessment include Entry Level Topic tests, Controlled Assessments and Functional Skills tests.

Subject	
Exam Series	

Course/Test Type and Description of test (i.e. unit)	Date of Test and number of tests required	Test Signed out (Assessor)	Test Signed Out (Exams Officer)	Test Signed in (Assessor)	Test Signed in (Exams officer)