


# Examination policy 2025-26

	<b>Name of School</b>	<b>NEW WOODLANDS SCHOOL</b>
	<b>Policy review Date</b>	<b>Autumn 2025</b>
	<b>Date of next Review</b>	<b>Autumn 2026</b>
	<b>Who reviewed this policy?</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>

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# 1. Purpose of the policy

The aim 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.
- all exams and assessments are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions, thus always maintaining the integrity and security of the examination/assessment system
- exam candidates understand the process and what is expected of them

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

## 2. Responsibilities

### 2.1 Head Teacher

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
  - *A guide to the special consideration process (SC)*
  - *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA)*
  - *AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications*
  - *Guidance for centres on cyber security*
  - *Instructions for conducting coursework (ICC)*
  - *Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE)*
  - *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (GCE and GCSE specifications) (NEA)*
  - *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications) (NEA VTQs)*
  - *Notice to Centres – Informing candidates of their centre-assessed marks*
  - *Plagiarism in Assessments – Guidance for Teachers/Assessors*
  - *Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures (SMPP)*
- Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements for exams and assessments
- Takes responsibility for confirming, on an annual basis, that they are aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ's regulations by responding to the head of centre's declaration which is managed as part of the National Centre Number Register (NCNR) annual update
- Understands that this responsibility cannot be delegated to a member of the senior leadership team or the examinations officer, and acknowledges that failure to respond to the NCNR annual update, and/or the head of centre's declaration, will result in:
  - the centre status being suspended
  - the centre not being able to submit examination entries
  - the centre not receiving or being able to access question papers
- Retains a workforce of an appropriate size and competence, including sufficient managerial and other resource, to undertake the delivery of the qualification as required by an awarding body. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications
- Provides fully qualified teachers to mark non-examination assessments, and/or fully qualified assessors for the verification of centre-assessed components
- Enables the relevant senior leader(s), the examinations officer and the SENCo to receive appropriate training and support in order to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments within the centre, and ensure compliance with the published JCQ regulations

- Appoints a SLT responsible, who will determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Has in place a written escalation process should the head of centre, or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination administration, be absent- see Escalation policy
- Has in place a member of the senior leadership team who will provide support and guidance to the examinations officer and ensure that the integrity an
- Ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO
- Makes sure that a teacher, a tutor or a senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined, is not an invigilator during an examination
- Complies with local health and safety rules which are in place and that the centre is adequately covered for public liability claims
- Takes all reasonable steps to maintain the integrity of the examinations/assessments, including the security of all assessment materials, by ensuring:
  - the location of the centre's secure storage facility in a secure room solely assigned to examinations for the purpose of administering secure examination materials
  - appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that confidential materials are only handed over to authorised members of centre staff
  - access to the secure room and secure storage facility is restricted to the authorised two to six keyholders (ensuring only persons authorised by the head of centre and the exams officer are allowed access to the centre's secure storage facility as one of the two to six key holders)
  - the relevant awarding body is immediately informed if the security of question papers or confidential supporting instructions is put at risk
  - that arrangements are in place to check that the correct question paper packets are opened by authorised members of centre staff
- Makes arrangements to receive, check and store question papers and examination material safely and securely at all times and for as long as required in accordance with the current JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- Makes arrangements to receive and issue material received from the awarding bodies to staff and candidates, and notify them of any advice and instructions relevant to the examinations and assessments
- Allows candidates access to relevant pre-release materials on, or as soon as possible after, the date specified by the awarding bodies
- Obtains written approval from the relevant awarding body before permitting a third party to deliver any part of a qualification including assessments
- Through taking an ethical approach and working proactively to avoid malpractice among students and staff takes all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice/maladministration before, during the course of and after examinations have taken place
- Ensures irregularities are investigated and informs the awarding bodies of any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, are reported to the awarding body immediately
- Ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place (that allow the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence)
- Ensures required internal appeals procedures are in place and drawn to the attention of candidates and (where relevant) their parents/carers

- Ensures the centre's equalities policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place and details the processes followed in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements
- Ensures a complaints and appeals procedure covering general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification is in place and drawn to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers
- Ensures the centre has a child protection/safeguarding policy in place, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance, which satisfies current legislative requirements
- Ensures the centre has a data protection policy in place that complies with General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 regulations
- Ensures the centre has documented processes in place relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- Ensures the relevant awarding bodies are informed of any **Conflict of Interest** where
  - a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at the centre which includes internally assessed components/units (taking at the centre as a last resort where unable to find an alternative centre)
  - a candidate is being taught and prepared for a qualification which includes internally assessed components/units by a member of centre staff with a personal connection to the candidate
- Maintains records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected by the above, and where:
  - a member of exams office staff has a personal connection to a candidate being entered for exams and assessments at the centre or at another centre
  - a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at the centre which does not include internally assessed components/units (taking at the centre as a last resort where unable to find an alternative centre)
  - a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at another centre
- Ensures other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials are briefed on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials
- Ensures members of centre staff do **not** forward e-mails and letters from awarding body or JCQ personnel without prior consent to third parties or upload such correspondence onto social media sites and applications
- Ensures members of centre staff do **not** advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly nor provide them with addresses/email addresses of awarding body examining/assessment or JCQ personnel
- Ensures the centre has a secure storage facility in a room solely assigned to examinations
- Question papers and pre-release materials issued by the awarding bodies must always be stored at the centre's registered address in a secure room with a secure storage facility, e.g. safe or security cabinet. Access to the secure room **must** be restricted to between two and six key holders, one of whom **must** be the exams officer. The two to six key holders **must** be permanent members of staff or members of staff who have a formal contract of employment and are subject to standard HR policies and procedures. The secure room **must** be accessible throughout an examination series for the storage of question papers and be available for inspection.
- Ensures that, wherever possible the following individuals are not assigned as invigilators during an examination: a teacher, teaching assistant, tutor or senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined or a learning support assistant who has supported one or more candidates

## Centre inspections

- Co-operates with the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, an awarding body or a regulatory authority when subject to an inspection, an investigation or an unannounced visit, and takes all reasonable steps to comply with all requests for information or documentation made by an awarding body or regulatory authority as soon as is practical
- Allows all venues used for examinations and assessments, paperwork and secure storage facilities to be open to inspection
- Understands the JCQ Centre Inspector will identify him/herself with a photo ID card and must be accompanied throughout his/her tour of the premises, including inspection of the centre's secure storage facility

## 2.2 Exams officer

The exams officer will manage the administration of public and internal exams:

- Advise 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 awarding bodies.
- Oversee 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.
- Undertakes an annual information gathering exercise in preparation for each new academic year to ensure data about all qualifications being delivered is up to date and correct
- Collates all information gathered into one central point of reference
- Research awarding body guidance to identify administrative processes, key tasks, key dates and deadlines for all relevant qualifications
- Produces an annual exams plan of key tasks and key dates to ensure all external deadlines can be effectively met; informs key centre staff of internal deadlines
- Ensure that candidates and their parents 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 confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Administer access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- Identify and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Submit candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Ensures question papers are always be kept in their sealed packets until the second pair of eyes check and log have been completed
- Ensures the second pair of eyes check takes place immediately before each question paper packet is opened in the designated examination room
- If the question paper packet needs to be split for different rooms on one or more sites or for an access arrangement, ensures the check takes place in the secure room
- Ensure the procedure is followed to verify candidate identity, where:
  - School staff will identify each candidate during initial registration of examination.
  - Exams officer will take registration at start of each examination with invigilators to ensure invigilators are aware of identity and access arrangements of each candidate.
  - Where it is impossible to identify a candidate due to the wearing of religious clothing, such as a veil, the candidate will be approached by a member of staff of the same gender and taken to a private room where they should be politely asked to remove the religious clothing for identification purposes. Candidates will be aware in advance of this procedure and well before their first examination.

## **2.3 Teachers**

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 leads and Examination Officer.

## **2.4 Inclusion lead**

The Inclusion lead 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, in accordance with the access arrangements policy.

## **2.5 Invigilators**

Invigilators are responsible for:

- Attend/undertake training (on the current regulations), update, briefing and review sessions as required
- Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate
- Sign a confidentiality and security agreement and confirm whether they have any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions applied to them.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the main office to be secured in the safe.

## **2.6 Reception Staff**

Reception staff are responsible for:

- Supporting the EO in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials and in following the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials.
- Ensuring Log of secure receipt and dispatch.

## **2.7 Candidates**

Candidates are responsible for:

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

# **3. Qualifications**

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the senior leadership team.

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

# **4. Exam series and Timetable**

## **4.1 Exams**

Internal exams and assessments will follow guidelines from the appropriate exam board for the individual qualification and in line with non-examination assessment policy.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June.

Internal exams held under external exam conditions.

## **4.2 Timetables**

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

## **5. Entries**

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Curriculum Lead/Subject Teachers.

Entry deadlines are circulated to curriculum leads via email

Late entries will need to be authorised by Exam Officer and Head teacher.

Re-sit decisions will be made on an individual candidate basis.

## **6. Exam fees**

Exam fees are paid by the Centre for qualifications offered by New Woodlands School.

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

Late entry, amendment or re-sit fees are paid by the Centre if the decision is made by SLT.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who decide to not attend the exam or not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

## **7. Disability Discrimination Act**

### **7.1 Equalities Act**

All exam centre staff must ensure they are familiar with and meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 as set out in New Woodlands SEND policy.

### **7.2 Access arrangements**

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the Educational psychologist/Specialist teacher.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Exams officer. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams officer. The Exams officer 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 Exams officer will inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

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

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

## **8. Examinations**

### **8.1 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.

A member of SLT will be available to verify the identity of all candidates at the time of the examination or assessment.

The Examinations Officer will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff must not be present at the start of the exam and must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted.

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

Papers will be distributed to curriculum leads / subject teachers 24 hours after the end of the exam session.

## **8.2 Managing Invigilators**

Support staff are used to invigilate all examinations, as they know the pupils best and can reduce anxiety, these staff have not supported one or more candidates in the subject being examined.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams officer, through online and in person training.

## **8.3 Malpractice**

The Exams officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice

# **9. Candidates**

## **9.1 Candidates**

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

Candidates' personal belongings are handed in at the start of every examination.

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.

Note: candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

The Exams officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

## **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, to that effect.

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 exam.

# **10. Results**

## **10.1 Results day**

The centre will be open on results day from 10am for collection of results by candidates. Any results not collected will be sent by post to their home addresses.

## **10.2 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 candidates' 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 re-mark at the centre's expense.

When the centre does not support a candidate's or parent'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.

### **10.3 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.

## **11. Certificates**

Candidates are given the opportunity to pick up certificates available on results day.

On results day candidate information/ address is obtained to ensure correct details before dispatch. After results day certificates are posted (recorded delivery), securing permission of receipt once all have been received from examination boards (normally no later than November).