

## Testwood School

### Exams Policy

Key Responsibility	RM
Last Review:	February 2026
Next Review:	February 2027

#### Revision History

Version	Date	Amendments	Initials
V1.1	26/03/2018	Policy Reviewed and dates updated	AS
V.2.0	15.05.19	Review dates changed. MS will need to be replaced as will no longer be responsible for this from Sept '19	JBa
V3.0	02.10.19	Under section 8 (third paragraph); the following sentence has been added: <i>Candidates are prohibited from bringing a wrist watch into the examination and would be required to leave their watches outside of the examination room.</i> Under section 6, under Contingency Planning – The responsibility has changed from Assistant Head to Headteacher Under section 11 – Certificates – the centre retains certificates for 7 years (this has changed from 10 years)	JBa
V4.0	03/03/2020	Throughout exams policy SENCo replaced with SENDCo Exams officer –correction to lettering c-g Under Contingency Planning - noticeboard in the examinations office replaced with held in the examinations folder in the examinations office Under Results – text added: Results are embargoed for release to candidates until 8am Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> August 2021. candidates signature required <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates to provide written authority and a prepaid self-addressed envelope. The Centre is not liable or responsible for examination results lost in transit.</li> <li>Third party to bring photographic identification when collecting results</li> </ol> Under Certificates – text added: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates to provide photographic identification on collection of certificates.</li> <li>Written authority and a prepaid self-</li> </ol>	JG

		addressed envelope to be supplied by the candidate. The Centre is not liable or responsible for examination certificates lost in transit. Additional text added – Head of Centre, Exams officer and SIMS Manager can confirm that Testwood School are JCQ compliant.	
V5.0	10/10/22	Head of Centre Declaration for 2022/2023 completed	JBa
V6.0	18/05/21	Revised dates and Point 13 added regarding results for Summer 2021. Appendices added as follows: Appendix 1 Centre Policy for summer 2021 Appendix 2 Head of Department Checklist Appendix 3 Assessment Record	JBa
V7.0	21/09/21	Removal of attachments regarding Tags for Summer 2021 Head of Centre Declaration for 2021/2022 requested and return submitted September 2021 in accordance with JCQ guidelines	JBa
V7.1	04/02/22	3 new paragraphs added under Malpractice	JBa
V8.0	10/05/23	New paragraph under Malpractice Revised review dates	JBa
V9.0	13/05/2024	Updated change in responsibility and dates of exam series. Added information on AI and cyber security in line with JCQ guidance.	RM
V10.0	05/02/25	SENDCo changed to SENCo throughout policy. Pg 7 Cambridge International exam changed to Cambridge Nationals. Pg 11 Invigilator training updated Pg 15 SIMS Mgr changed to Arbor Mgr	RM
V11.0	28/01/26	Added information on AI and cyber security in line with JCQ guidance.	

\*Appendices follow on from policy

## 1. Principles

To ensure that JCQ requirements on the Conduct of Exams are adhered to.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of the exams policy is:

- a) To ensure the planning and management of examinations is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates
- b) To ensure the operation of an efficient examinations system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff

### **3. Outcomes**

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

The full examination policy is shown on the next page.

## Testwood School Exams Policy

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### **1. The purpose of this exams policy is:**

- a) To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates;
- b) 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 annually.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher accountable for school examinations in consultation with the school examinations officer.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

## **Exam responsibilities**

### **The Head of Centre:**

- a) Has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams Centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- b) Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments. (NB: The Exams Officer will do the administration of these areas, with the knowledge of the Head of Centre).

### **Exams officer<sup>1</sup>:**

- a) Manages the administration of external and internal examinations.
- b) Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- c) Oversees the production and distribution, to all Centre staff and candidates, of information concerning all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- d) Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.

- e) Checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- f) Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- g) Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.

This is the individual to whom the Head of Centre has delegated responsibility for the administration of exams in their Centre.

h) Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process, in liaison with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo)

i) Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.

j) Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.

k) Line manages and organises the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.

l) Ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule, by liaising with teaching staff

m) Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.

**Subject Leaders are responsible for:**

- a) Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- b) Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- c) Accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- d) Decisions on post-results procedures.

**Teachers are responsible for:**

- a) Supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Subject Leader and/or exams officer.

**The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:**

- a) Identification and referral for testing to the Exams Access Assessor of candidates requiring possible access arrangements and
- b) Notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- c) Process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- d) Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

**Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:**

- a) Assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- b) Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- c) 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.

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

## **2. Qualifications offered**

The qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Head of Centre. The types of qualifications offered are GCSE's, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals and other independently run qualifications.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year.

If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Subject Leader.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Subject Leader in consultation with the Head of Centre.

### **3. Exam series**

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled at appropriate times for all year groups, in consultation with the Subject Leaders and the Head of Centre.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May/June for GCSE's.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Centre offers some assessments on an on-demand basis (BTEC). On demand assessments can be scheduled only at times agreed between SLT, the Exams Officer and the relevant teaching staff.

### **4. Exam timetables**

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams before each series begins.

### **5. Entries, entry details and late entries**

Candidates or parents/carers can, after discussion with Subject Leaders and Head of Centre, request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The Centre does not accept entries from private candidates.

The Centre does not act as an exams Centre for other organisations (except in exceptional circumstances).

Entry deadlines are circulated to Subject Leaders via email, briefing meetings, and internal post/pigeon hole.

Subject Leaders will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

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

GCSE re-sits are allowed under appropriate circumstances (as long as the candidate is still attending the school and the JCQ rules are adhered to).

Re-sit decisions will be made by Subject Leaders in consultation with the Head of Centre.

## **6. 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 the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

The exams officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series. GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Centre, but are taken from departmental budgets, if it is deemed to have been an error within the department.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates if they fail to sit an examination and cannot provide proper supporting evidence as to why they were absent (e.g. medical note) or if they are removed by parents/carers from roll after entries are made.

Re-sit fees are usually paid by the Centre, but in certain circumstances, the parents/carers of a candidate may be asked to pay for a re-sit entry.

## **7. 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 Head of Centre.

### **Access arrangements**

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo and the Exam Access Accessor.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement 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 Exams Officer and the Learning Support staff.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Officer and the SENCo.

### **Contingency planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Contingency plans are available via email, in the examinations folder held in the examinations office, internal post/pigeon hole and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

### **8. Managing invigilators**

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams. Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer and the Director of Finance.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Finance Director.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the Centre. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Finance Director and agreed with the Pay Policy. Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Invigilators will receive Safeguarding training, Prevent training and Health and Safety training.

Non-teaching staff may be used as invigilators, scribes and readers to meet the Access arrangements and requirements of JCQ when sufficient external staff are not available.

## **Malpractice**

The Head of Centre in consultation with the Exams Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Introduction of electronic wandling of students on arrival at exam venues. Communication to parents and carers.

Purpose: To identify possible cases of malpractice where students still have mobile phones and other electronic devices on their person in direct contravention of JCQ regulations.

In order not to delay arrival and start times of examinations and to act as a visual deterrent thus avoiding non-compliance of the rules, the wandling will be used at the Head of Centre's discretion.

Suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice must be fully investigated, whether it be centre staff or candidate. This can involve unauthorised materials, paperwork, guidance, inappropriate support and can involve numerous incidences. The Head of Centre must notify the appropriate awarding body immediately of all alleged incidents. The only exception to this is candidate malpractice discovered in coursework or non-examination assessments before authentication forms have been signed by the candidate. All teaching staff involved in the delivery of NEA subjects must be conversant and familiar with these rules reporting suspected breaches in a timely fashion. See appendix B for further details.

## **Exam days**

The exams officer and SENCo will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilators.

Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements in advance by the Exams Officer

The Exams Officer / Lead Invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may not be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff who are present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In non-exam assessment exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers, invigilators or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Subject Leaders in accordance with JCQ's requirements, 24 hours after candidates have completed them. (Amended, JCQ Requirements 2025/26).

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with Front Office Staff and Parcel Force.

## **9. 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.

Candidate's 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, watches and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room. Candidates are prohibited from bringing a wrist watch into the examination and would be required to leave their watches outside of the examination room.

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 / Lead Invigilator.

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. Water bottles may be taken into exam rooms (including IT4 and The Hub so long as bottles are left on the floor)

### **Clash candidates**

The Exams Officer, Senior Leadership team and subject staff 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 to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence to be provided before the last day of the scheduled exam season.

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body at any time before the last day of the scheduled exam season.

### **10. Internal assessment**

It is the duty of Subject Leaders to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will advise Subject Leaders of the relevant deadlines.

Marks for all internally assessed work are the responsibility of the Subject Leaders. 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.

### **11. AI Use in Assessments**

Staff and students are aware of the importance of submitting their own independent work for assessment and for identifying potential malpractice. Students who misuse AI such that the work they submit for assessment is not their own will have committed malpractice, in accordance with JCQ regulations, and may attract severe sanctions; Students and centre staff are aware of the risks of using AI and are clear on what constitutes malpractice. Staff who undertake NEAs have been fully briefed on JCQ guidelines and have been given a copy of the current advice. To be read in conjunction with newly adopted school wide AI policy which has been presented to Trustees.

### **12. Results**

Results day to be confirmed once the date has been published.

Candidates will receive individual results notifications on results days:

- a) In person at the Centre – candidates signature required
- b) By post to their home address – candidates to provide written authority and a prepaid self-addressed envelope. The Centre is not liable or responsible for examination results lost in transit.

- c) Collected and signed for a third party, with the written permission of the candidate.  
Third party to bring photographic identification when collecting results.

The results slip will generally be in the form of a Centre produced document.

Arrangements for the Centre to be open on results days are made by the Exams Officer.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

### **Enquiries about Results (EAR)**

EARs may be requested by Centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a review of marking 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, if agreed by the Head of Centre

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by teaching staff in consultation with the Head of Centre

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may still apply through the Centre, but at the cost of the candidate rather than the Centre.

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 the prescribed JCQ deadline timescale.

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

(NOTE: An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.)

The cost of ATS will be paid by the Centre (or candidate if they have requested the paper returned for their own records)

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

### **13. Certificates**

Candidates will receive their certificates:

- In person at the Centre. Candidates to provide photographic identification on collection of certificates.
- Posted – written authority and a prepaid self-addressed envelope to be supplied by the candidate. The Centre is not liable or responsible for examination certificates lost in transit.

Certificates can also 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 7 years.

If a candidate loses or damages their certificates, a new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results can be obtained directly from the Exam Boards by the candidates. There is a cost involved in this, which is set by the Exam Boards. The Centre cannot request replacement certificates of behalf of a candidate.

Head of Centre, Exams Officer and Arbor Manager can confirm that Testwood School is JCQ compliant for 2025/26.

### **14. Cyber Security**

Testwood School is committed to maintaining the highest standards of cyber security to safeguard sensitive information, including personal student data, and to protect the integrity of secure assessments. Testwood staff have a critical role to play in maintaining and improving cyber security. In today's digital landscape, it is crucial that centres adhere to industry best practices to mitigate the risk of cyber threats.

Testwood manages cyber security in the following ways:

- a) Using strong unique passwords
- b) Keeping all account details secret
- c) Enable additional security settings wherever possible
- d) Updating any passwords that may have been exposed
- e) Setting up secure account recovery options
- f) Review and manage connected applications
- g) Staying alert for all types of social engineering/phishing attempts
- h) Monitor accounts and review account access regularly
- i) Testing awareness - undertaken school wide during Autumn term 2025.
- j) In accordance with new JCQ requirements 2025/26, a new school wide Cyber Security Policy has been written and this is to be presented to trustees shortly for adoption. As part of the new 2025/26 regulations, the Exams Officer is required to

undertake annual Cyber Security training and accreditation. Cyber Policy and Certificate of accreditation to be presented to the visiting JCQ Inspector during their compliance visit.

## **15. Complaints**

This procedure confirms Testwood School's compliance with JCQ's general regulations for approved centres that we will draw to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers. Their written complaints and appeals procedure which will cover general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification.

A candidate may make a complaint on the grounds of Teaching and Learning/Access arrangements/Entries/Conducting examinations/Results and post results, although this is not an exhaustive list

If a candidate has a general concern or complaint about the Centre's delivery or administration of a qualification, he/she is following they should put their concerns in writing as soon as possible.

## **16. Whistleblowing**

Any member of staff concerned about the integrity of any aspect of the public exams process should raise these concerns with the relevant authority in the exam board/JCQ/regulator.

Concerns about the conduct of exams within school should be raised with the Head of Centre and the Exams Officer. If a concern relates to the Head of Centre, then the Chair of Trustees should be contacted. Concerns should be addressed in a reasonable and timely fashion; if they are not, the concern should be escalated in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing policy.

*This policy has been checked and is believed to be consistent with the stated vision and values of Testwood School.*