

Hawarden High School  
Ysgol Uwchradd Penarlâg



# School Exam Policy 2023-24

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## **The purpose 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.

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

The Headteacher has responsibility for the school as a centre and is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice.

This exam policy will be reviewed annually.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the head of centre and the exams officer.

## **1. Exam responsibilities**

### **Head of Centre / Headteacher**

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre;

- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- Holds the responsibility for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document '*Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*'
- Ensures knowledge of JCQ General Regulations document is current
- Ensures and Exam Officer is appointed (Head of Centre **MAY NOT** appoint themselves as an Exam Officer)

### **Exam Officer**

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class teachers 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/controlled assessments / non-exam assessments are 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
- assists the ALNCO in administering access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration 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 and organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- tracks dispatch of coursework / controlled assessments / non-exam assessments and stores returned work and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Updates and maintains the exam entries / exam day contingency plan annually in case of emergency

### **Deputy / Assistant Head**

- Curriculum planning, pupil assessment and data management
- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

### **Heads of department**

- 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.
- Ensuring coursework / controlled assessments / non-exam assessments and declaration sheets are available for moderation
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

### **Head of careers**

- Guidance and careers information.

### **Teachers**

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to heads of department / faculty.
- Submission of coursework / controlled assessments / non-exam assessment marks to HoD / AB secure website by the deadline

## **ALNCO**

- Administration of access arrangements, including making applications alongside the exam officer and preparing / storing evidence for inspection purposes
- 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.

## **Invigilators**

- Keep up to date with knowledge of JCQ ICE rules and regulations
- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exam 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 exam office.
- Ensuring all secure documents are returned to the exam office after the exam

## **Candidates**

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework / controlled assessments / non-exam assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Understanding the exam regulations

## **Administrative staff**

- Posting of exam papers.

## **2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered**

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE and A levels, Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification and Vocational Qualifications.

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 July each year.

### **At key stage 3**

All candidates will take English, mathematics and science and ICT (from 2008). 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.

### **At post-16**

It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12.

## **3. Exam seasons and timetables**

### **3.1 Exam seasons**

Internal exams are scheduled in December, March/April and July.

External exams are scheduled in November, January, March and May/June.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the head of centre.

### **3.2 Timetables**

The exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

## **4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes**

### **4.1 Entries**

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of department and the subject teachers.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal on consultation with the subject teacher.

The centre only accepts external entries from candidates who have recently left the centre.

## **4.2 Late entries**

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email, SIMS messaging, briefing and weekly newsletter.

Late entries are authorised by heads of department.

## **4.3 Retakes**

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers, heads of department and the heads of faculty.

Candidates are allowed to retake GCSE / AS / A2 Subjects and units within the exam board guidelines.

*(see also section 5: Exam Fees)*

## **5. Exam fees**

GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

AS initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Welsh Baccalaureate entries are paid by the centre

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the candidates or the centre.

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.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements.

This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates.  
(See also section 4.3: Retakes)

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry. Candidates will be reimbursed in line with the exam board post results charging policy as appropriate.

(See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

## 6. The Equality Act, special needs and access arrangements

### 6.1 The Equality Act (EA)

The Equality Act 2010 extends the application 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 ALNCO.

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

### 6.3 Access arrangements

It is the responsibility of the ALNCO to;

- Make specific arrangements for candidates to take the exams
- Make applications alongside the exam officer to awarding bodies to allow candidates Access Arrangements in exams
- Have on file the approval confirmation, relevant evidence and signed data protection notice for each application for inspection purposes

***It may be a requirement for exam staff to help administer this to ensure a thorough understanding of candidates needs in exams. This should be agreed between exam staff and ALNCO.***

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exam officer with the ALNCO

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the ALNCO and exam officer.

## 7. Managing invigilators and exam days

### 7.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for all exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams officer. Training of the invigilators is undertaken by the Exams Officer.



Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Head of Centre.

## **7.2 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.

The caretakers are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Assistant Head will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not communicate with the students, and will not have access to any examination materials or papers.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand 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. All papers / secure documents must be returned to the exam office. Papers will be distributed to heads of department/faculty at the end of the exam session by the exam officer only.

## **8. Exam Contingency**

The priority when implementing contingencies will be to maintain three principles:

- Delivering assessments to published timetables
- Delivering results to published timetables
- Complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards

The national examination timetable applies to GCSEs, AS levels and A levels.

**a. Disruption of teaching time – centre is closed for an extended period**

Where there is a disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, the centre will ensure learners are prepared, as usual, for examinations.

- In the case of modular courses, centre may advise learners to sit examinations in the next available series
- Centre will have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning

**b. Learners unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open**

- In the event of learners being unable to attend the centre to take examinations as normal, the centre will liaise with learners to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding body. JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website
- centre will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- centre will apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates **where they have met the minimum requirements.** JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website

**c. Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period**

If the centre is unable to open as normal for examinations, they will inform each awarding body with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible. As part of the general planning for emergencies, the centre will cover the impact on examinations. The head of centre will decide whether it is safe for the centre to open. The head of centre will take advice, or follow instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open.

- Centre will open for examinations and examination candidates only if possible
- Centres will use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other centres or use other public buildings if possible)
- Centres will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- Centres will apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements

**d. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

- If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts the centre will seek advice from awarding organisations.
- Centre will ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection

**e. Centre unable to distribute results as normal**

If the centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services, the centre will contact awarding organisations about alternative options i.e.:

- Centre will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site
- Centre will make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- Centre will share facilities with other centres if possible

**f. Exam officer absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle**

In the event of the exam officer being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, in order to minimise risk to examination and avoid any adverse impact on students, centre will

- Refer to the Exam Entries / Exam Day Contingency Plan (as maintained by the exam officer)
- Consult with awarding bodies when necessary

**g. Cyber attack**

Where it is identified that a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations the exam officer will work with IT and make contact with the relevant awarding body to seek further guidance. Senior leaders will monitor the situation and take any action required as directed by the awarding bodies.

## **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 exam staff must accompany them.

The exams officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

### **9.2 Clash candidates**

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

### **9.3 Special consideration**

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

It may be relevant for a special consideration claim to be supported by appropriate evidence, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor. All claims will be made electronically (where possible – paper-based otherwise) by the exam office within five days of the exam.

## **10. Coursework/ Controlled Assessments / Non-Exam Assessments and appeals against internal assessments**

### **10.1 Coursework / Controlled Assessments Non-Exam Assessments**

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Heads of department will ensure all coursework / controlled assessments / non-exam assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time and the exam officer will keep a record of what has been sent and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are to be inputted on the relevant awarding bodies secure websites by subject teachers and kept by the Heads of Department. Where electronic input of marks is not available then teachers should ensure relevant documents are delivered to the exam office for return to moderator in a timely fashion.

### **10.2 Appeals against internal assessments**

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exam office and must be available for inspection purposes.

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 work has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- appeals should be made in writing by 30 June 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 exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

## **11. Security of materials**

Exam officer alongside the head of centre will take all reasonable steps to maintain the integrity of the examinations and assessments, including the security of all assessment materials by ensuring

- the location of the centre's secure storage facility follows JCQ guidelines
- appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that confidential examination materials are only handed over to authorised members of centre staff
- appropriate arrangements are in place for handling secure electronic materials to ensure electronic question papers are only handled by members of staff authorised to do so by the head of centre
- Other members of staff may assist with printing and collation provided they are under supervision
- Email accounts for secure material access will belong to authorised named individuals
- Files will only be accessed by the named individual and will not be forwarded or shared.
- Access to secure materials will be audited regularly and will be reviewed by the head of centre ahead of each examination series
- The integrity and security of electronic question papers will be maintained during downloading, printing and collating. Files will only be accessed within a secure environment and then be deleted immediately.
- Once printed question papers will be sealed and held in secure storage.
- Any deviations from these instructions or concerns of potential breaches will be reported to the awarding bodies immediately.

## **12. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)**

### **12.1 Results**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre and electronically via the School MIS system.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the head of centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the head of centre.

The centre aggregates at the end of year 12 for AS grades and at the end of year 13 for A2 grades.

## 12.2 EARs (Enquiries about Results)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

When the centre does not uphold 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.

(See section 5: Exam fees)

If a candidate requires an EAR they must complete the relevant paperwork to allow the exam officer to make the necessary application.

## 12.3 ATS (Access to Scripts)

After the release of results, candidates may request the return of photocopied scripts within the exam board timeframes for scrutiny of the results before deciding to proceed with and EARs

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.

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

GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

## 13. Certificates

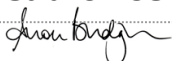
Certificates are not posted and need to be collected in person and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates may not be withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates under secure conditions for a minimum of 12 months from the date of issue.

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**Head of centre**



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**Exams officer**

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5<sup>th</sup> September 2023

This policy is due for review in September 2024