



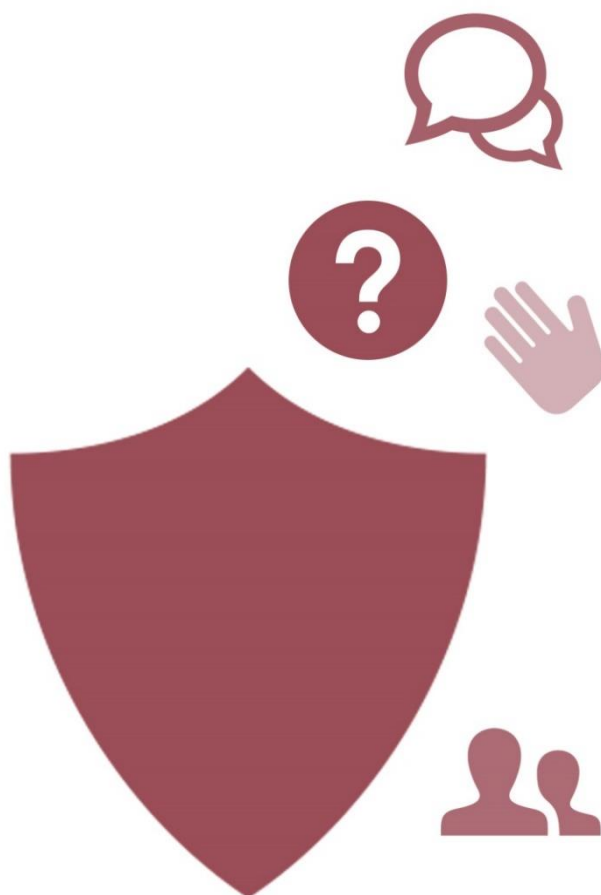
YSGOL GYMUNEDOL
CWMTAWE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

DATE OF POLICY: MARCH 2024

HEADTEACHER / HEAD OF CENTRE: Mr. C. L. Hitchings

EXAMINATIONS OFFICER: Mrs. C. Parkhouse



INTRODUCTION

The school examinations policy contains guidance on the operation of internal and external examinations held throughout the academic year.

We endeavour to keep parents, pupils and other stakeholders up-to-date with school information via our website at www.cwmtawe.org our school twitter account and through direct correspondence with pupils and parents. Further information on the policies and procedures of awarding bodies are available from the Joint Council for Qualifications www.jcq.org.uk.

The 'examinations centre', 'school' or 'centre' is Cwmtawe Community School. The 'Awarding Body' may be any one of the main UK awarding bodies for the qualifications offered by the school (i.e. WJEC, Edexcel, LiBF, NCFE, VCTC, City & Guilds). The 'subject leader' is the Head of Department. A candidate's representative may be a parent, carer or other appropriate adult authorised to act for the candidate.

PURPOSE

The examination system aims to:

- Provide pupils with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills at the highest level they are capable of.
- Allow pupils to gain appropriate and recognised qualifications for their chosen learning pathway.
- Provide accurate and timely examinations data to inform target setting.
- Ensure all pupils have equal access and opportunity.
- Prepare pupils well for external examinations so they understand expectations of behaviour and conduct.
- Assist staff in understanding their obligations and responsibilities with regard to the effective provision of examinations.
- Ensure all external examinations are undertaken in line with awarding body guidelines.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The examinations process requires complex and detailed organisation and involves a wide range of staff to ensure its efficient and effective operation.

- **Governing Body / Chair of Governors** - approval of the policy.
- **Headteacher / Head of Centre** – overall responsibility for the centre and must be familiar with the contents of JCQ’s annually updated publications, in particular: JCQ General Regulations, JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations and JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments.
- **Examinations Officer** – responsible for organising and overseeing the examinations process, providing a clear centre policy, setting up venues, organising training for staff, liaising with external agencies (e.g. JCQ inspectors, awarding body staff) and communicating information to internal staff.
- **Admin Officer i/c examinations** – responsible for entries/amendments and all examinations administration.
- **ALNCo/SEN Support** – responsible for identifying and communicating requirements for access arrangements and completion of relevant awarding body documentation to facilitate the application of Access Arrangements. Also responsible for organising the provision detailed in the support plan through the effective deployment of Learning Support staff and communicating any potential issues to the Examination Officer.
- **Subject Leaders** – responsible for identification of appropriate programmes of study, accuracy of entries and amendments and general subject-based administration.
- **Head of Year** – responsible for the dissemination of examinations related communication to pupils and parents, addressing pupil conduct for both external and internal examinations.
- **Senior Leadership** – responsible for ensuring appropriate pupil conduct at the beginning of each examination. Accurate identification of learners in attendance at each venue and informing reception staff of pupils’ absence.
- **EWO/Family Engagement Officer/ Reception staff** – responsible for instigating a ‘fast response’ to any unexplained absences. This would include a phone call home from reception and if necessary home visits by the EWO with the aim of ensuring pupils commence the examination within 1 hour of the official start time.
- **Teaching Staff** – communication of candidates requiring access arrangements to ALNCo, accuracy of entries and amendments and general subject-based administration.
- **Invigilators** – attendance of training, responsible for the effective operation of the examination session in line with JCQ guidance, ensuring appropriate pupil conduct and behaviour and communicating any issues which arise to the Examinations Officer.
- **Parent/Carer** – responsible for advising the school of any changes to circumstances or inability to attend examinations.

EXAM SEASONS

The school enters candidates for examinations during all examination seasons (i.e. November, January and June). However, not all subject awards are available in all seasons. Individual subject leaders are responsible for advising the Examinations Officer as to which examination seasons they wish to enter candidates for well in advance of the awarding body entry deadlines, which are published on their respective websites.

Internal exams are scheduled at various times throughout the year and are calendared accordingly. All Key Stage 4 internal exams are held under external exam conditions. The Examinations Officer and Heads of Year will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

ENTRY POLICIES

Candidates may be entered for awards with any of the main examination awarding bodies. The awards include GCSE qualifications as well as vocational options such as the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge and NCFE Equality and Diversity qualifications. Details on individual subject choices are available within the relevant options booklet. It is the responsibility of subject leaders to advise the Examinations Officer of the correct specification code and candidate details for entry. Changes to awarding body or specification must be discussed with the Headteacher before subject leaders commence a programme of study with pupils.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department via communication in Heads of Department meetings and email. Pupils are entered for the qualification by the subject teacher in conjunction with the Head of Department, providing they have met the minimum requirements with regards to attendance, coursework, orals and practical work. The cost of initial entry is met by the school. Candidates will be entered for the examination unless the subject teacher feels that they would achieve their best grade at another entry point. If an early entry is considered, the subject teacher will discuss this with parents/carers. The school will not enter pupils early at the request of parents/carers if it is felt that the candidate will not achieve their best grade at that entry point.

If a pupil misses an external examination without the school's authorisation, then the school reserves the right to charge the candidate's parent/carer the cost of entry and subsequent withdrawal. Non-payment may result in the invoice being passed to the Local Authority's Finance and Legal department.

AMENDMENTS

Subject leaders are responsible for informing the Examinations Officer of any amendments to entries. It is essential this is done prior to the awarding body deadline for amendments to avoid additional fees. Amendments will only be permitted after the amendment deadline in extreme cases. If candidates wish to amend/withdraw their entry after the amendment deadline, they should discuss the issue with the subject leader. In these circumstances, the school reserves the right to charge the candidate's parent/carer the cost of the amendment.

WITHDRAWALS

Candidates may only be withdrawn from external examinations after following a programme of study with the agreement of the Headteacher. If a candidate has not satisfied the minimum requirements for the award (e.g. attendance issues, coursework, orals or practical work) the Headteacher may decide to withdraw the candidate. In these circumstances, the school will make every effort to contact the candidate and/or their representatives to discuss the withdrawal. Candidates and/or their representatives may also request withdrawal by writing to the Headteacher. The school reserves the right to charge candidate's parents/carers the cost of initial entry and subsequent withdrawal.

EXAMINATION PROCEDURES – EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

The daily organisation of external examinations is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer. The start time for all external examinations is 9.00am for morning sessions and 1.00pm for afternoon sessions. Pupils are required to arrive 15 minutes before the start time. The provision of appropriate equipment is the responsibility of the pupil. Subject staff are not permitted inside the examination rooms.

EXAMINATION PROCEDURES – INTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

Internal exams for KS3 and KS4 are scheduled at various times throughout the year and are calendared accordingly. The Examinations Officer, is responsible for gathering appropriate information from subject leaders, formulating the examination timetable, allocating venues and providing timely information to the Head of Year. The Head of Year will then communicate appropriate information to pupils. The Head of Year will assist in ensuring appropriate pupil conduct within the examination venues in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team. The Examinations Officer will liaise with the ALNCo to organise suitable provision for any Access Arrangements necessary.

NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENTS (NEA)

Candidates are required to complete Non-Examination Assessments (NEA) in several subjects. Individual deadlines are advised to parents during the Year 10 and Year 11 Parents' Evening and also to candidates by subject staff. Following the deadline, NEA tasks are assessed by

subject teachers and the subject leader will initiate a moderation and standardisation exercise. This will ensure all work has been assessed fairly, in line with the awarding body's specification.

Once complete, it is the subject leader's responsibility to follow the guidelines provided by the awarding body on presentation, sample selection, accurate completion of candidate declaration forms and assessment sheets and appropriate packaging of work. This information is available from awarding body websites or from the subject officer. Heads of Department will ensure all coursework / non-exam assessments are ready for despatch / ready for upload and at the correct time.

Following assessment, subject teachers and subject leaders must make raw marks available to candidates, so they may exercise their right to appeal if they so wish. Under no circumstances should staff attempt to convert a raw mark into an indicative grade.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS – GENERAL NOTES

The school regularly assesses pupils to ascertain if they need additional arrangements to access the school curriculum and their examinations. This is a continual process throughout key stage 3 and key stage 4 and forms the basis of the provision of support. It should be noted that the criteria used for the award of an access arrangement for an internal examination differs from that used for an external examination. Therefore, a pupil may be awarded access arrangements for internal examinations, external examinations or both depending on their individual circumstances. The ALNCo is responsible for communication of Access Arrangements requirements to all teaching staff.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS – INTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

The ALNCo is responsible for the identification and provision of support for pupils during internal examinations and the appropriate organisation of these pupils within examination venues. The school library is utilised as a venue for pupils that require readers, writers, laptop etc. Candidates that qualify for 'extra time only' may be accommodated within the main examination venues, if necessary.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS – EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

As they approach their external examinations, the ALNCo is responsible for identifying individual pupils that qualify for an access arrangement and the effective completion of Awarding Body application forms. The centre will then apply to the Awarding Body for access arrangements to ensure those candidates identified are not disadvantaged in their examinations. It is the responsibility of the candidate (or their representative) to inform the school of any factor unknown to the centre which may place them at a disadvantage in examinations and we will take all reasonable steps to reduce or alleviate the disadvantage.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Occasionally, there may be instances where candidates may be disadvantaged immediately prior to or during an examination. This could be due to illness, bereavement or other relevant reasons. In these circumstances, the Examinations Officer will assess whether it is appropriate to apply for special consideration for the candidate. However, candidates and/or their representatives are advised to contact the school for advice immediately in these circumstances. It is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, of mitigating circumstances.

CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION

The school will endeavour to keep the candidate informed at all times. Prior to each examination session, candidates will be addressed in assembly and receive a guidance letter informing them of examination procedure, examination dates/times and the appropriate notices and warnings issues by JCQ. Relevant documents are also published on our website at www.cwmtawe.org.

STORAGE OF CONFIDENTIAL MATERIALS

The school office will inform the Examinations Officer immediately when confidential materials arrive from the awarding bodies. If the Examination Officer is unavailable, the office staff will check boxes against the delivery note and store the sealed boxes in the secure storage facility until the Examinations Officer becomes available for checking. All confidential materials must be securely stored at all times and the delivery log must be completed. Subject leaders must check the relevant specification requirements for the secure storage of NEA materials and ensure that they are able to comply. If there are any issues, they should discuss their concerns with the Examinations Officer.

INVIGILATION & SUPERVISION

The recruitment of invigilators and securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Business Manager. All invigilators will be required to complete a declaration, indicating whether they have invigilated previously and whether they have been involved in any maladministration / malpractice. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examination Administrator.

Candidates are supervised in examination venues by a team of invigilators. In each venue, a 'lead' invigilator will ensure that JCQ guidelines are followed and candidates conduct themselves appropriately. Invigilators are fully trained to JCQ requirements and are expected to be familiar with the JCQ Instructions on Conducting Examinations. A senior member of school staff will visit each venue at the start of examinations to ensure compliance and on an ad-hoc basis throughout the examination. External invigilators must be fully trained and

comply with the relevant JCQ ICE (Instructions for Conducting Examinations) booklet. In particular, they must:

- Update the seating plan if necessary and ensure they have an accurate record of candidate attendance.
- Refrain from taking any work into examination venues – they must pay full attention to the conduct of the examination in session.
- Refrain from talking or disrupting candidates in any way.
- Ensure subject staff do not enter the examination rooms.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The results of external examinations are issued to school following the examination and the school will advise pupils of their results in due course. During the June series of examinations, results are published during the school holidays. In light of this, the school will open from 8.30am to 12.00pm on the published results day for candidates to collect their results. The publication dates for results are available from awarding body websites. Unfortunately, results can only be collected by the candidate. Where candidates are unable to collect their results, candidates may request to receive their results via their Hwb email account. However, candidates must email the school in advance to request this provision.

RE-TAKES

Candidates may decide to re-take individual examinations to gain enhanced grades. In the first instance, they should discuss their intention with the subject leader. In some cases, candidates (or their representatives) will be required to cover the cost of re-takes, which must be settled in full with the school office prior to entry.

EQUALITY ACT 2010

The school will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that candidates with disabilities covered under the Equality Act are not disadvantaged in any examination, or during the course of their studies.

PRIVATE CANDIDATES

The centre will consider applications from private candidates to take examinations at the same time as internal candidates. However, the school reserves the right to reject applications from private candidates if acceptance is likely to incur additional costs for the centre or it is likely to affect the service offered to internal candidates. Private candidates will be charged the full awarding body cost of the examination and an administration fee which must be settled in full prior to entry.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – COURSEWORK/ORALS/PRACTICAL WORK

The school is committed to ensuring all internal assessment is carried out fairly, consistently and to a high standard in line with the specification for the subject award. All internal assessments are authenticated, moderated and standardised internally prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body. The awarding body then undertake external moderation to ensure assessment is consistent between examination centres. However, if a candidate feels that they have been unfairly treated with regard to any internal assessment, the following procedure should be initiated.

- If a candidate feels that coursework or another internally assessed unit of work has been unfairly assessed, they should raise the issue with the subject leader.
- If the subject leader and candidate fail to reach agreement, then candidates may appeal using the procedure documented below.
- The appeal can only be made against the assessment process and not the mark awarded.

APPEALS POLICY (INTERNAL ASSESSMENT)

- The school will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.
- The school will inform candidates that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.
- The school will, having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate. This will either be the originals viewed under supervised conditions or copies.
- Candidates have five working days, to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision on whether to request a review of the centre's marking.
- Candidates (or their representative) should outline their concern in writing to the Examinations Officer, stating the details of the complaint and reason for appeal.
- The written appeal should reach the Examinations Officer a minimum of ten working days prior to the deadline of submission of marks.
- The school will ensure that the review of marking is conducted by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate for the component in question and has no personal interest in the outcome of the review.
- The reviewer will ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
- The reviewer will inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.

- The outcome of the review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the review of the centre's marking bring any irregularity in procedures to light, the awarding body will be informed immediately.

The moderation process carried out by the awarding bodies may result in a mark change, either upwards or downwards, even after an internal review. The internal review process is in place to ensure consistency of marking within the centre, whereas moderation by the awarding body ensures that the centre marking is in line with national standards. The mark submitted to the awarding body is subject to change and should therefore be considered provisional.

INTERNAL APPEALS PANEL

- The Internal Appeals Manager is the Examinations Officer.
- The Internal Appeals Panel comprises of the Headteacher, Examinations Officer and a School Governor.

APPEALS POLICY (EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT) – ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS (EARS)

- Enquiries About Results Services (EARS) concern externally assessed awards and have to be made by the centre to the awarding body.
- The school will consider instigating an EAR if the subject leader considers that a candidate should, under normal circumstances, have achieved a higher outcome.
- The school will seek written consent from candidates before instigating an individual enquiry. Candidates should recognise that marks could be increased or decreased as a result of an EAR.
- Candidates and/or their representatives may request an EAR before the specified deadline which is communicated on the day of results. The school will review the EAR request with the subject leader and advise candidates and/or their representatives whether the EAR is likely to be successful.
- If the candidate and/or their representative wish to proceed with the EAR, the full cost including administration costs will have to be met in advance by the candidate. The EAR cannot be processed until payment is made in full to the school office.
- Candidates should be made aware that the EAR deadline occurs within a very short timeframe after the publication of results. EAR consent forms received after the deadline cannot be processed and the payment will be returned.
- The decision of the awarding body will be accepted by the school and candidates and/or their representatives will be advised on further courses of action should they remain unhappy with the outcome.

ACCESS TO SCRIPTS (ATS)

- After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within two weeks of the publication of results.
- If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. If a candidate requires an ATS they must complete the relevant paperwork to allow the exams officer to make the necessary application. The consent of candidates must be obtained.

CONTINGENCY PLAN

In the event of absence of the Examinations Officer, the Assistant Headteacher (KS4 Co-ordinator) will take responsibility for examinations. This will alleviate any disruption to pupils and the smooth operation of examination procedure.

In the event of any major disruption to the examination system in Wales the contingency plan will be adopted to ensure a consistent and effective response. Examples of disruptions could include severe weather, widespread illness, travel disruption or system failures. The school will seek advice from the awarding body as appropriate. Our priority will be to do all we can to allow the examinations to continue and mitigate any potential disadvantage to candidates. The Examinations Officer, in conjunction with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, will assess the impact of any disruption and seek redress, if appropriate, for pupils through the Special Consideration process.

DATA PROTECTION & GDPR

All candidates should be aware that the school is required to share personal pupil data with the awarding bodies to process examination entries and for the general administration of examinations. Access to this information is strictly controlled but may be shared with other education partners where appropriate (e.g. Local Authorities and Welsh Government). This is exercised under Article 6 of GDPR. The school and/or awarding bodies do not share data with organisations involved in direct marketing or similar activities. The school's privacy statements are available from the school website.

Cwmtawe Community School is registered with the Information Commissioner for the purposes stated above, as are the main awarding bodies. More information may be found on their website www.ico.org.uk. Candidates have a range of rights including the right of access to the data held at school level and at individual awarding bodies. However, the school and/or awarding body reserve the right to charge an administration fee for providing details following a request from a candidate.