

Warwickshire Adult and Community Learning Service

# CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK

2023/2024

This handbook is reviewed and updated annually

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| Date of next review  | October 2024 |

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## Introduction

The Warwickshire Adult and Community Learning Service is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the examination and assessment process in place in the centre and are made aware of the required JCQ/awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

## Purpose of this handbook

- To support/complement candidate briefings
- To inform candidates about malpractice in examinations/assessments
- To inform candidates about the use of their personal data and copyright
- To ensure candidates are provided with all relevant information about their exams and assessments in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To ensure copies of relevant JCQ information for candidates documents and exam room posters are provided in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To answer questions candidates may have etc.
- To inform candidates of any exams-related policies/procedures that they need to be made aware of

## Malpractice

Malpractice means any act or practice which is in breach of the Regulations. Any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice will be investigated and reported to the relevant awarding body.

Examples of malpractice

- Introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room
- Breaches of examination conditions
- Exchanging, obtaining, receiving, or passing on information which could be examination related (or the attempt to)
- Offences relating to the content of candidates' work
- Undermining the integrity of examinations/assessments

### Things not to do on social media:

- Buy/ask for/share exam content
- Pass on rumours of what's in exams
- Share your work
- Work with others so that your coursework is not your own independent work

and/or non-examination assessments and coursework, as example:

### Research and using references

Where computer-generated content has been used (such as an AI Chatbot), your reference must show the name of the AI bot used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>), 25/01/2024. You should retain a copy of the computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts, ideas or outputs and trying to pass them off as your own. It is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously.

A copy of the Malpractice Policy which can be found on the WCC ACL website

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates/3>

## Personal data

The awarding bodies collect information about exam candidates

To understand what information is collected and how it is used, you must read the JCQ Information for candidates which can be found on the ACL website

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates/2>

## Copyright

The copyright of any form of work created by a candidate that is submitted to an awarding body for assessment (referred to as Assessment Materials) belongs to the candidate

By submitting this work, a candidate is granting the awarding body a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use their assessment materials (referred to as Assessment Licence)

If a candidate wishes to terminate the awarding body's rights for anything other than assessing his/her work, the awarding body must be notified by the centre and it is at the discretion of the awarding body whether or not to terminate such rights

## Written timetabled exams

You will be sent an email with the date, time and venue of your timetabled exams. If you think that the information is incorrect please let your tutor or the Business Support team know immediately.

You will be sent a document outlining candidate instructions for taking exams. Information about the use of social media and exams can be found on this link

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates/3>

On entry to the exam room there will be displayed an unauthorised items poster which states that you cannot take into the exam mobile phones, smartwatches or MP3/4 Players. A copy of this poster can be found on the above website.

## Where you will take your exams

If you are taking a GCSE exam it will most likely take place at Pound Lane, Leamington Spa. Other exams such as Functional Skills, ESOL and EDSQ will be timetabled in venues around the county.

## What time your exams will start and finish

Your GCSE exams will start at 9.30 am. If you are taking other exams pay close attention to the email that you will be sent to ensure you arrive at the correct time. You must remain in the exam room until the exam has finished and all of the exam papers have been taken in and counted.

## Supervision during your exams

Exams are supervised by a team of invigilators. Invigilators must follow strict rules and regulations when conducting exams as directed by JCQ awarding bodies etc.

## Exam room conditions

You will be met at the door of the exam room and asked to provide your ID. You will then be invited into the exam room and to sit at the desk with your name on.

You will be under formal exam conditions from the moment you enter the exam room until you are given permission to leave by the invigilator

You must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times in the exam room

You must not communicate with or disturb other candidates

The following information will be displayed in the exam room - centre number, subject title, paper number; and the actual starting and finishing times, and date, of each exam

You will be requested to complete the front of your answer books (first name and surname that matches your entry information and candidate number).

Any relevant information relating to the completion of the front of their answer books (first name and surname that matches your entry information, candidate number etc) and that must only be done when in the invigilator instructs you to

You can only leave the examination room when the exam has finished and the answer books have been taken in and counted by the invigilator.

There are occasions when you may want to leave the exam room early, please refer to our Leaving Exams policy which can be on the following link

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates/3>

### **Where you will sit in the exam room**

Desks in the exam room are spaced out as a minimum of 1.25 m between candidates. You will be invited to sit at the desk that has your name on it. If you are unable to find your desk then please ask the invigilator for help.

### **How your identity is confirmed in the exam room**

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. However photographic proof of identity must be presented before you are allowed into the exam room.

Forms of photo ID accepted are:

- current valid Passport
- current valid National ID Card/residence permit or equivalent if it contains a photo
- current valid full photo card Driving Licence
- current valid Residence Permit (with photo) • current valid Biometric Residence Permit (with photo)
- current valid Application Registration Card or Standard Acknowledgement Letter
- Travel Document issued by the United Nations or Red Cross
- Valid Vignette attached to an Immigration Status Document or a GV3 document

In cases where it is impossible to identify candidates due to the wearing of religious clothing, such as a veil, you would be approached by a member of staff of the same gender and taken to a private room where you would be politely asked to remove your religious clothing for identification purposes. Once identification has been established the religious clothing should be replaced and you should proceed to the exam.

### **What equipment you need to bring to your exams**

In the examination room you must not have access to items other than those stated in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list or the specification for that subject. Your tutor will explain to you before the exam what items are you allowed to take in.

## Using calculators

A calculator is defined as an electronic device whose primary purpose is to carry out mathematical calculations.

The instructions on the question paper will say whether calculators are allowed or not. If the instructions do not include such a statement, calculators should be treated as standard equipment and may be used.

Where the use of a calculator is allowed, you will be responsible for making sure that your calculators meet the awarding bodies' regulations.

You will be told these regulations beforehand

During an examination a calculator must not be able to offer any of these facilities:

- a) language translators;
- b) symbolic algebra manipulation;
- c) symbolic differentiation or integration;
- d) communication with other machines or the internet;

During an examination a calculator must not give access to pre-stored information. This includes:

- a) databanks;
- b) dictionaries;
- c) mathematical formulae;
- d) text.

A calculator must not be borrowed from another candidate during an examination.

Some calculators have an 'exam mode'. This is acceptable in examinations where the exam mode is activated and the exam mode results in the calculator becoming compliant with the above requirements.

An invigilator may give a candidate a replacement calculator.

Where access is permitted to a calculator for part of an examination, it is acceptable for candidates to place their calculators on the floor under their desks in sight of the invigilator(s) for the non-calculator portion of the examination.

## What you should not bring into the exam room

You must not be in possession of the following items:

- iPods;
- mobile phones;
- MP3/4 players or similar devices;
- watches.

This means that:

- ideally, all unauthorised items are left outside of the examination room;
- any pencil cases taken into the examination room must be see-through;
- any unauthorised items that have been taken into the examination room must be placed out of your reach (and not under your desk) before the examination starts. This will normally be at the

front of the examination room or a similar arrangement that enables the invigilator to control access to the items.

Following the invigilator's announcement any mobile phones or other unauthorised items in your possession must be handed to the invigilator prior to the examination starting. This also includes watches.

If you have access to unauthorised items in the examination room this may be considered as malpractice

### **Food and drink in exam rooms**

Bottles of water can be taken into the exam room, but must have the labels removed. Cups or glasses of water are not allowed, nor is any food.

### **Where your personal belongings will be stored during your exam**

Personal belongings such as coats and bags must be stored in an area at the back of the exam room where a poster indicates this is where personal belongs should be stored. Mobile phones, watches, ipods and MP3/4 players should be handed into the invigilator. They will be stored in a bag and you will be given a number to match the bag your items are in so you can claim your belongings back at the end of the exam.

### **What to do if you arrive late for your exam**

If you arrive late for your GCSE exam you will be allowed in, but a report will go to the Awarding Organisation explaining that you were late.

ESOL learners are not allowed to enter late into a Trinity exam under any circumstances, and learners will not be allowed into Function Skills exams once the exam has started.

Please see a copy of the Candidate Late Arrival Policy which can be found by following this link:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates>

### **What to do if you are unwell on the day of your exam**

If you are unwell and unable to attend a GCSE exam, are unwell but manage to attend the exam, or feel unwell during the exam it may be possible to apply for a special consideration. The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 2 days of the exam. The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding organisation within 7 days of the exam.

For other exams where there are several series a year it should be possible to book you into the next exam date.

### **What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from your exam**

Based upon the circumstances for the absence, and subject to the required conditions being met, an application for special consideration may be made to the relevant awarding organisation. Candidates will be re-charged any relevant entry fees for unauthorised absence from examinations

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates/3>

### **What happens in the event of an emergency in the exam room**

In an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert, the invigilator will take the following action:

- stop the candidates from writing;

- collect the attendance register (in order to ensure all candidates are present) and evacuate the examination room
- advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room. You will be advised to close your answer booklet;
- ensure the candidates leave the room in silence;
- ensure candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that there is no discussion about the examination;
- make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted;
- allow the candidates the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes;
- if there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination;
- make a full report of the incident and of the action taken and send to the relevant awarding organisation

### **Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments**

A request for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be declared when you first attend the course. However you can discuss this prior entry to the course and a discussion will be held with your tutor regarding appropriate arrangements. This may involve a formal assessment being carried out, or you providing evidence to your tutor that you require such assistance.

### **Results**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre for their GCSEs from 9 am. If a candidate is not able to collect a result in person they can authorise another person to collect the results, but must complete an authorisation form.

For other exams they will be contacted with their results by their tutor.

### **Post-results services**

If you are not happy with your result you can apply for a Review of the Results, a Review of Marking, you can appeal, or you can request access to your scripts. Requests for post-results services must be made through the Centre.

The Centre's Access to Scripts, Review of Results and Appeals procedures can be found be following this link

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates/3>

Please contact the Exams Officer after your exams for details of these procedure

### **Certificates**

In many cases certificates are handed out to learners via the tutor. If this is not possible copies of certificates are scanned and saved before being posted out to candidates. The address of the candidate will be checked before it is sent out.

Certificates that we are unable to post out will be kept for 3 years. If not claimed they will be destroyed.

### **Internal appeals procedure**

The Service aims to ensure that all assessment decisions are valid, fair and consistent. However there may be occasions when a learner wishes to appeal against a decision that has been made.



A written statement of appeal must be received by the Examinations Officer or the Team Lead, Quality and Curriculum within 10 working days of the original decision for internally marked assessments or within the awarding organisation's deadline for externally marked examinations.

An appeal may be made on the following grounds:

- Dissatisfaction with the outcome of an assessment and/or the final grade
- Procedural irregularity. Review and feedback procedures were not followed. Access to assessment has hindered the learner's ability to complete the qualification at an acceptable pace
- Administrative irregularity. Incorrect advice being given by a member of the course team that affects the assessment.
- Resource irregularity. Where resources or facilities at the assessment site have hindered the learner's achievement.
- Evidence of:
  - o Unfair treatment by a member of the Course Team
  - o Discrimination by a member of the Course Team because of the learner's race, gender or religion
  - o Lack of recognition of the learner's special assessment requirements

These are the only grounds for appeal. For information on the procedures you will find a copy of the Internal Appeals procedure by following this link

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates/3>

### **Complaints policy**

Information on the Service's concerns, complaints and appeals procedure can be found by following this link

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5/adult-community-learning-term-dates/2>

