



West Exe School

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EXAMINATIONS

AT WEST EXE SCHOOL

A PARENT AND STUDENT GUIDE



CONTENTS

This booklet sets out information for students and their parents in Years 10 & 11 at West Exe School. Keep it at home so you can refer to it during the year.

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6 - 10	Student Information	Detailed information on exam board rules and how the examinations will be run at West Exe School. This will be explained to students in school.

Please visit the 'Key Information/Examinations Information' link on the West Exe School website to access 'Exam Board Guidance' with information and warnings about examinations and controlled assessment from the Joint Council for Qualifications – please be sure to read them!

Current information, including examination timetables, can also be found on the West Exe School website.

If you have any questions about any of the information in this booklet do not hesitate to contact your child's tutor at West Exe School on 660100.

PARENT INFORMATION

In many ways Years 10 & 11 are the most important years of a student's education. This booklet outlines why and suggests ways you can support your child at this important time.

Year 11 must continue in education or apprenticeship, and results gained in this year will help frame the rest of each student's life. Students have already begun their Level 2 courses (GCSEs and Technical awards in most subjects) and you will be aware from this of the demands of KS4. Year 10 will have given students a clear idea of what it is like to follow an individual curriculum and students should by now realise it is vital that they are able to organise themselves, their time and their work, to meet deadlines and work to the very best of their ability.

Why is Year 11 so important?

Year 11 has always been a very important time for students; in the past most subjects finished with examinations in June making revision vital for success. On-going assessment throughout and Technical portfolios now mean hard work is vital through Year 10 and Year 11 to avoid major disappointment.

What exactly does that mean?

Your child will be studying Key Stage 4 (Level 2) courses. These will be either GCSE or Technical qualifications, which allow students to study at the next level or to take up higher level apprenticeships in the future.

Technical courses are mainly 'coursework' based with an additional external assessment element that may be in the form of a written paper, set task or on-line test. The 'coursework' assessment is through teacher-set assignments throughout the course so every task completed is a vital part of the final assessment. For some subjects, assessment units are submitted in Year 10 and count toward the final grade.

GCSEs are now linear meaning that all units have to be taken at the end of the course in Year 11.

For both types of qualification, the deadlines are set by the exam board not the school so missing a final deadline will mean sacrificing all the marks for a section of the course.

Why does it matter?

Achieving Level 2 qualifications allows students to choose from a far wider range of post 16 courses, apprenticeships etc. Employers see this as being the level students need to reach to be considered literate and numerate in the workforce.

In order to give each student the best possible chance of succeeding in life and fulfilling their potential we are committed to helping as many as possible to reach this level but it is only possible if students take their education seriously from the beginning of Year 11. Your help as parents in this can be invaluable. For details see the following sections.

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD ACHIEVE THEIR BEST THIS YEAR?

Parents often ask how they can best help their child. The ideas below give some specific advice – the most important thing, however, is often simply to be aware of the issues & concerns your child may have by talking to them about school, emphasising the importance of doing their best and offering challenge and support as they are needed.

Examination Dates/Controlled Assessment Deadlines – Students will be given details of exam entries via their subject teacher and the issue of individual exam timetables when entered for any examinations. Controlled Assessment tasks set during Years 10 & 11 and the deadline for each one will be notified by individual subject teachers. A *Warning to Candidates* notice available on the West Exe School website also advises about what you can and cannot do when sitting examinations and completing controlled assessments. Some people find it helpful to write these dates onto a calendar at home to help identify pressure points and help avoid leaving too many pieces of work to be completed at the same time and to ensure that all deadlines are met.

Punctuality to Examinations – The published starting time for all morning examinations is 9am and 1.30pm for all afternoon examinations. It is vital that students arrive on time. As parents it can be really helpful if you ensure your child is up in plenty of time and that they are well rested, fed and hydrated during the exam period. To support punctuality and allow time for briefing we ask students to arrive at school at 8.30am for morning exams.

Examination Preparation – Everyone learns differently but students often find preparing for examinations hard. Let your child explore different ways of learning but be supportive of their efforts, ensure they are realistic about putting in enough work for each exam without becoming stressed or anxious and talk to them about what works for them after each exam to help them improve their preparation for the next one.

Time Management – a list of exam dates will be posted on the West Exe School website and students need to manage their time sensibly. This is something many students find very difficult; often leaving coursework until the last moment and not following advice given in school about breaking tasks down and spreading them over the whole time allowed. Talking to students about tasks set and starting work on them immediately may help avoid panic and underachievement later.

Resources – Students will need to be fully equipped for lessons with writing equipment etc as well as specialist equipment in some areas. They will often need to carry coursework to and from school and so should come equipped with a bag large enough to carry an A4 folder every day.

Holidays During Term Time - Please do not make any plans for family holidays or any other known absence from school, including dental or medical appointments. We do not yet have the dates for the practical sessions, as these are dependent on visiting examiner who will only advise of the exact dates closer to their visiting time – students will be informed.

Examinations will continue until the end of June so you should not make any plans for holidays before this date. Since Years 10 & 11 are such a critical years for all students, and full attendance is vital for exam success, we would not normally expect students and families to plan any term-time holidays during this year.

A full list of exam dates for the year will be available on the school website.

Communication – If you have any concerns about your child's progress please do not hesitate to contact the school (01392 660100). You may wish to discuss general issues with their tutor or specific subject matters with individual teachers. An early call will often avoid major problems.

STUDENT INFORMATION

EXAMINATIONS – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Exam times are very important times in your life at West Exe School. The examinations that you will be taking will influence what you do in the future, so it is very important that they run as smoothly as possible. There are a number of rules and regulations for examinations that you must be aware of (most of these rules are set by the exam boards, not by school!).

IF YOU DO NOT FOLLOW THESE RULES THEN IT IS POSSIBLE THAT YOU COULD BE DISQUALIFIED FROM YOUR EXAMINATIONS, SO PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

UNIFORM

Full school uniform MUST be worn, including black shoes.

ABSENCE FROM EXAMINATIONS

You must attend all the examinations on your individual candidate timetable. Misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation for absence. You may receive a bill if you do not attend an examination that has been paid for by the school.

If you miss an examination through illness or are unwell during the examination, make sure you see a doctor the same day to get a medical note and pass this to Student Services to give to the Exams Officer within three days. It may be possible to apply, under certain circumstances, to the exam board for Special Consideration. If you do miss an exam, it is important to contact Student Reception who can tell the Exams Officer the same day to let them know why you are not present.

BAGS, BOOKS, NOTES AND VALUABLES

You are not allowed to keep any bags, books or notes with you in the examination room and these will be left in the dance studio or suitable lockable room for the duration of your exam.
Please do not bring valuables with you when you come into school for an examination.

MOBILE PHONES, SMARTWATCHES, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION OR STORAGE DEVICES

Mobile phones, electronic communication or storage devices such as iPods, MP3/4 players, reading pens, Smartwatches, wrist watches and glasses/smart glasses which have a data storage device and any other products with text or digital facilities are not permitted – **DO NOT** bring any of these in on examination days. Any candidate taking a 'phone to a desk will be reported to the exam board, even if it is turned off. The exam boards are very strict on 'phones, as they can be used as communication devices and may allow cheating, and will disqualify any candidate with a 'phone on his/her person (unless permitted with prior arrangement due to medical purposes).

IF A MOBILE PHONE, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION OR STORAGE DEVICE IS FOUND IN YOUR POSSESSION DURING AN EXAM, EVEN IF IT IS TURNED OFF, THE DEVICE WILL BE TAKEN FROM YOU AND A REPORT MADE TO THE APPROPRIATE EXAM BOARD. DISQUALIFICATION OF THIS EXAM AND OTHERS COULD WELL APPLY.

NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.

CHEATING

If you are caught cheating in any way in an examination, you **WILL** be reported to the exam board. 'Cheating' means doing anything that is against the rules and this includes:

- ☹ Being in possession of a mobile phone/smartwatch/storage device
- ☹ Using unauthorised aids
- ☹ Communicating with other candidates (by talking or otherwise)
- ☹ Copying from other candidates

IF CANDIDATES ARE CAUGHT CHEATING, THE EXAM BOARD MAY DECIDE TO PENALISE OR DISQUALIFY YOU.

EQUIPMENT

You must provide all your own equipment. Borrowing from other candidates is NOT allowed under any circumstances. You should bring your equipment in a clear plastic bag or transparent pencil case. Pencil cases with all the equipment you may need can be purchased from the Library.

The following equipment should be brought to EVERY exam:

- ☺ 2 pens – **BLACK ONLY**
- ☺ 2 HB pencils
- ☺ Ruler (marked with millimetres)
- ☺ Pencil sharpener (preferably one which catches the shavings!)
- ☺ Eraser
- ☺ Compass
- ☺ Protractor
- ☺ Calculator
- ☺ Coloured pencil crayons
- ☺ Highlighter (for English exams)

YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO USE CORRECTING FLUID (TIPPEX ETC) IN EXAMINATIONS.

CALCULATORS

Calculators may be used in most examinations: your subject teachers will tell you if they are not allowed for a particular paper. **YOU MUST BRING YOUR OWN CALCULATOR IF YOU NEED ONE. YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO USE A MOBILE PHONE AS A CALCULATOR.** The exam boards do not make any allowances for calculator failure or operational mistakes – YOU are responsible for making sure your calculator works properly. If you are going to buy a new calculator please check with your Maths teacher to see what they recommend. Calculators can be purchased from the Library...

Calculators must not:

- ⊗ Be dependent on mains supply (i.e. needs a plug!)
- ⊗ Have alphabetic keys
- ⊗ Be programmable
- ⊗ Have noisy keys which would disturb others
- ⊗ Use magnetic card input
- ⊗ Have a permanent memory

BEHAVIOUR IN THE EXAM ROOM

Firstly, make sure you have visited the toilet before lining up for your exams as students are only allowed to leave the exam hall in exceptional circumstances.

You must be silent at all times when you are in the exam room. This includes when you enter and leave. If you need assistance, put your hand up clearly and wait for an invigilator to attend to you. Once you have entered the exam room, you have to be escorted at all times if you need to leave. Please do not write on exam desks. It is regarded as vandalism, and you will have to pay for any damage. You will not be allowed to leave an examination early if you have finished your work as this disturbs other candidates in the room.

DICTIONARIES

Dictionaries may not be used in examinations unless they are specifically permitted by the subject specification (your teacher will tell you if they are allowed). **ELECTRONIC TRANSLATORS ARE NEVER ALLOWED.** If English is not your first language, then you may be allowed to use a bilingual translation dictionary in certain examinations. However, this **MUST** be arranged before the examinations begin.

If you think you will be eligible to use a bilingual dictionary please see your tutor / subject teacher or the learning support team.

EXAM/CANDIDATE NUMBER

You will be given a 4-digit reference number that refers only to you.

You need to remember this number

as you will write it on all your examination papers. If you wish, you may write your exam/candidate number in permanent pen onto the outside of your transparent pencil case. You are not allowed to write it on your hand, or have it written on a piece of paper on your desk.

TIMETABLES

Please check your individual candidate timetable carefully. If there are **ANY** mistakes (e.g. name, date of birth, exam entry etc.) you **MUST** tell your subject teacher immediately. Mistakes that are not spotted at this stage could mean that your certificate is incorrectly printed later.

Check each examination date carefully and check to see if the examination is in the morning or the afternoon.

If there is an examination on the timetable that you were not expecting to take (e.g. if you know you have already dropped or been withdrawn from a subject) you **MUST** tell the subject teacher immediately. Make sure you know which **room** and **seat** you need to go to for each examination (your room and seat number will stay the same for most exams) the lists will be on the English workroom windows ahead of the exam series.

Extra time will not be permitted if you have simply misread your timetable. Take special note of any re-arrangements due to a timetable clash.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHECKING YOUR EXAMINATION TIMETABLE.

IF YOU LOSE YOUR TIMETABLE, ASK YOUR TUTOR OR THE EXAMS OFFICER FOR A NEW ONE.

DRINKS AND FOOD

You are allowed to take into the examination room a **drink of water in a clear plastic bottle**. Chewing gum and any other food or drink is not allowed. You will not be able to leave the examination room to refill a bottle of water, an invigilator can do this for you if you ask.

END OF THE EXAM

The invigilators will collect your examination papers before you leave the examination room. **Silence MUST be maintained during this time.** Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper must NOT be taken from the examination room. You will be dismissed from the examination row by row and may be told which door to use, you must walk down the aisle of the row you sit in and then leave at the front of the room – do not walk through rows of desks and chairs as it causes disruption and moves furniture. **You must remain silent until you are outside the building.**

RESULTS/CERTIFICATES

GCSE results are published in August – You will be notified of the date by school and you can come into school on the day to collect – keep an eye on emails (student and parents!) social media and the website for information.

You will need to sign for your results. If you want someone else to collect your results that person will need signed permission from you to collect your results, this permission can be emailed ahead of time or bought in on the day, but you must inform the exam officer of any such arrangements 1 week ahead of results day.

Any results not collected in the timeframe given will be posted to your home address. **If you change address after leaving school in June, please inform us of your new address.** Later in the day your results will be emailed to your individual West Exe email account.

Careers staff and teaching staff will be present on the day if you need advice after receiving your results.

Exam certificates arrive in school about three months after you have received your results and will be available at a Graduation Ceremony. We will write to you shortly beforehand to invite

you and your parents to the evening.

YOU MUST KEEP YOUR EXAMINATION CERTIFICATES IN A SAFE PLACE – A CHARGE OF £50 IS MADE PER EXAM BOARD TO ISSUE A CERTIFIED STATEMENT OF RESULTS SHOULD YOU LOSE YOUR ORIGINAL CERTIFICATES.
ORIGINAL CERTIFICATES ARE REQUIRED WHEN APPLYING FOR UNIVERSITY.

EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to read and understand the exam boards' *Warning to Candidates poster* available on the West Exe School website. A larger copy of this notice will be displayed outside every exam room.

IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, ASK YOUR TUTOR, OR A TEACHER FOR HELP.

LOCATION OF EXAMINATIONS

Most examinations will take place in the Sports Hall, Gym, and Devon rooms. Your individual timetable will state where your examinations will take place. For most exams you will sit in the same seat and venue. Please arrive at school **AT LEAST 15 minutes before the start time shown on your timetable** so that you are not in a rush before your exam.

The lining up area will be the same as for assemblies near the Basketball court. Please line up in your rows so we can admit you quickly to the Assembly Hall for an exam briefing. Have coats off, pencil cases out ready so you can be admitted quickly. MOBILES MUST BE TURNED OFF. If your exam is in another examination room, please line up outside of the room following the exam briefing.

You will be told when you are allowed to enter the examination room and you **MUST** sit at the desk that has been allocated to you and indicated on your timetable, unless the invigilator instructs otherwise. **IF YOU DO NOT SIT IN THE CORRECT SEAT THE INVIGILATORS COULD MARK YOU AS ABSENT.** You are NOT allowed to enter the examination room before the exam time.

BANNED ITEMS

The following items **MUST NOT** be brought into any examination room:

- ⊗ Mobile phones, smartwatches, glasses, smart glasses, pagers, organisers, any type of electronic communication or storage device
- ⊗ Calculator cases and instruction books
- ⊗ Headphones, personal stereos, MP3 players, iPods, or any other kind of music storage/playing device
- ⊗ Wrist watches which have a data storage device
- ⊗ Books (except for authorised texts), notes, letters, diaries or other printed material

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Special consideration can only be applied for if something has seriously affected your performance on the day of an examination. Examples of acceptable reasons for applications are bereavement (if a close relative or friend has passed away close to the exam), injury or illness. If after an exam you think you have a good reason for applying for Special Consideration you need to speak to Miss Henderson – Exam Officer or Miss Jacobs in person or by telephone on 01392 660100 Ex 176 as soon as possible and, if necessary, see your doctor the same day. Any medical evidence must be given to school reception immediately and no later than 3 days following the exam to be considered supporting evidence for special consideration.

NO LATE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED BY THE EXAM BOARDS.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Access arrangements are agreed and processed at the start of the course. Access arrangements put in place **must** reflect the support given to a candidate in School and has to be their '**normal way of working**'. A history of support and provision has to be evidenced by the School.

The arrangement is not able to be granted to the candidate at the time of their examinations. A doctor's note produced at the time of the examinations, for whatever reason, IS NOT sufficient evidence to warrant the implementation of an access arrangement.

Access arrangements have to be applied and processed inline and approved, and the evidence of need **must** be made available for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service who conduct unannounced inspections of centres. Inspectors will expect to see appropriate documentation to substantiate the use of an access arrangement and will take decisive action if the inspection reveals lack of sufficient evidence. If you require any support with this please contact the exam officer or learning support team.

TIMES

Unless otherwise stated on your timetable, for example in the case of a clash, all examinations at West Exe School start promptly at **9:00am** for morning papers and **1:30pm** for afternoon papers. You should aim to be at school **no later than 30 minutes** before the start of an examination. Students will have pre-exam briefings prior to all exams in the Assembly Hall and need to arrive at school by 8.30am.

APPEALS PPROCEDURE/ENQUIRES ABOUT RESULTS

Please refer to the West Exe School Examination Policy on the School Website for full details on the Appeals Procedure and Review of Marking.

WARNING

All the exam boards have very strict rules and regulations. They make it clear that:

- Their official exam sessions must be run under strictly fair conditions, with no form of deception. This rule severely excludes any form of communication between candidates during an exam, as well as any other practice that could conceivably be seen as an attempt to deceive and could be deemed as Malpractice.
- Anyone attempting unfair practices can expect cancellation of exam entries and the charges that this will incur, as well as possible exclusion from examinations for a period of up to 5 years.
- Invigilators HAVE to stick to the rules; they HAVE to report to the Exams Officer ANYTHING that they feel could be suspicious.
- The School is inspected by the exam boards to make sure that we carry out the exams in the correct way.

**DON'T LET IT HAPPEN TO YOU. STICK TO ALL THE RULES. DON'T
RISK YOUR FUTURE.**

☺ **GOOD LUCK IN YOUR EXAMINATIONS!** ☺