

5 May 2022

Dear parents and carers,

GCSE Public Examinations Update – Summer 2022

We are writing to inform you of the latest information regarding examination Covid mitigations and the action to take if your child is unwell during the examination period.

What happens if my child is unable to attend an examination?

If candidates are ill on the day of the examination, it is important the Exams Office is contacted as soon as possible on 01732 373500. As is normal in a standard examination series, candidates are expected to complete examinations to receive a grade. A qualification award will not be made if none of the examinations/assessments within a specification have been completed.

Special consideration can be applied for when a candidate is absent for an acceptable reason. There will be a need to provide evidence of the reason, such as a doctor's note unless it is as a result of Covid, on which there is further advice below. Candidates must be reminded that the awarding of a grade through the special consideration process can only be made where they are absent from an examination or non-examination assessment component for an acceptable reason. It cannot be a self-declaration. For the June 2022 examination series, owing to the exceptional circumstances, the awarding bodies will award a grade where eligible candidates have completed the assessment(s) for at least one whole component within the specification. Do note that a candidate cannot receive a grade for GCSE English Language by only completing the Spoken Language Endorsement.

What about if my child has the Covid virus?

If candidates are ill with Covid, we strongly recommend they contact the Exams Office immediately and follow the advice of the UK Health Security Agency's Guidance for people with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19, or a positive test result for COVID-19. The current recommendations are as below:

For children and young people 18 and under:

- “Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their education setting.”
- “Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare, and resume normal activities when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to attend.”
- “It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed to by a health professional.”

- “If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test, if they can.”
- “Children and young people who usually go to school, college or childcare and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal.”

We strongly advise that candidates adhere to the UKHSA guidance as it applies on the day of their examination(s). The information from UKHSA may be updated at any time, so candidates must adhere to the current recommendations.

A candidate who is staying at home and avoiding contact with others, in line with UKHSA guidance, at the time of the examination, is considered to be absent from the examination for an acceptable reason. This includes candidates who are displaying the symptoms described in the UKHSA guidance as advising them to stay at home (e.g. a high temperature for those aged 18 and under) as well as those with a positive COVID-19 test result.

Where a candidate still wishes to attend an examination, despite having symptoms (e.g. a high temperature) or a positive COVID-19 test we strongly advise the candidate to follow the UKHSA’s guidance. There is no requirement for a candidate to complete a COVID-19 test to provide evidence of their absence from an examination, but there will be a self-assessment form to complete which will be found under the notifications tab on Edulink. There is a minimum of ten days between the first and last examination in each GCSE subject. This will reduce the chance of a candidate missing all examinations in a subject because of illness.

Communication of GCSE results

Our key aim is to ensure that the GCSE results are communicated quickly and effectively, and that our usual support mechanisms are in place to assist our candidates with their next steps.

For all candidates, results will be issued via the candidates’ Edulink at 8.00am on the morning of 25 August and will be found under the examination results tab. The school will not be open for candidates to collect their results in person, but we are available on the phone to provide support and guidance.

Actions following results collection

Once your child has viewed their results, they will need to indicate, via Edulink using the form, if they intend to return to Weald of Kent Grammar School to study for their A levels in Year 12 or not.

The Senior Leadership Team as well as the Pastoral Team and our counsellors will be available to provide support and advice over the phone. If required, please phone the school on 01732 373500 where our receptionists will take your name, phone number and reasons for wanting to talk to us. We will ring you back as soon as possible but please note that the phone calls deemed most urgent will be dealt with first.

Candidates who intend to return for the sixth form will be automatically enrolled, into their A-level option choices providing they have met the subject specific entry criteria.

What to do if my child is unhappy with their examination grade?

All candidates have the opportunity to appeal their grades directly with the examinations board via the post-results service. **It is important to note that an appeal may result in a grade being lowered, staying the same, or going up.** Therefore, if a candidate puts in an appeal and their grade is lowered, they will receive the lower mark.

Examination boards offer a range of post-results services:

- A clerical recheck which checks the examiner has marked all the pages, counted all the marks and that the result matches the marks on the paper. A copy of the re-checked script can also be requested.
- A review of marking which includes a clerical re-check and candidates will receive a copy of the reviewed script as part of this service. A second examiner will review the paper/recording again to identify genuine marking errors or unreasonable marking and check that all marks are counted.
- A priority copy of marked paper (access to scripts). This is a copy of the marked exam paper that you can use to decide whether to request a review of marking or a clerical re-check.
- Original marked paper (access to scripts). The Access to Scripts Original is specifically for teaching and learning purposes, so candidates should not request this service if they want to request a review or priority review of marking, a clerical re-check or an appeal. If an Access to Scripts Original request is made, candidates cannot then submit a request for a Review of Marking.

If candidates are unhappy with the outcomes of these post results services, then they can appeal against the examination board's decision. Please contact us to discuss this option further at the time.

Candidates must fill in the appeals form which will be found on the Edulink Noticeboard tab, and email it back to exams@wealdgs.org. Deadline dates and payment for the services will be detailed on the form and must be paid for via Parent Pay. Candidates, parents and carers cannot send appeals directly to the exam board themselves – it must come from us. The outcome of the awarding organisation appeal will be communicated to candidates directly via email. If the appeal is upheld and the overall subject grade changes, then any monies paid will be refunded via Parent Pay.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding and if you have any questions, do please contact us on exams@wealdgs.org.

Yours sincerely,



Mr K Fidock
Assistant Headteacher