Exams: Complaints and Appeals Policy

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Woodland Rise School

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Proprietary Body Signed off

ZL & JH

Purpose of the procedure
This procedure confirms Woodland Rise School's compliance with the General Regulations for Approved Centre that the centre will draw to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers the written complaints and appeals procedure which will cover general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:
- Fair Assessment Policy
- Learner Identification Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Exams and Invigilation Policy
- Internal Quality Assurance Policy

Grounds for complaint
A candidate (or his/her/parent/carer) may make a complaint on the grounds below (this is not an exhaustive list):

Teaching and learning
- Quality of teaching and learning, for example:
  - Teacher lacking knowledge of new specification/incorrect core content studied/taught
  - Core content not adequately covered
  - Inadequate feedback for a candidate following assessment(s)
  - Non-subject specialist teacher without adequate training/subject matter expertise utilised on a long-term basis
- Pre-release/advance material/set task issued by the awarding body not provided on time to an exam candidate
- The taking of an assessment which contributes to the final achievement of a qualification not conducted according to the awarding body instructions
- The assessment of internally assessed work which contributes to the achievement of a qualification, not undertaken according to the requirements of the awarding body (complainant should refer to the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- Centre fails to adhere to its' internal appeals procedure
- Candidate not informed of his/her centre assessed marks prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body
- Candidate not informed of his/her centre assessed marks in sufficient time to request/appeal a review of marking prior to marks being submitted to the Awarding Body
- Candidate not given sufficient time to review materials to decide whether to request a review of centre assessed marks.

Access arrangements
- Candidate not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor
- Candidate not involved in decisions made regarding his/her access arrangements
- Candidate did not consent to personal data being shared electronically (by the non-acquisition of a signed data protection notice/candidate data personal consent form)
- Candidate not informed/adequately informed of the arrangements in place and the subjects or components of subjects where the arrangements would not apply
- Exam information not appropriately adapted for a disabled candidate to access it
- Adapted equipment put in place failed during exam/assessment
- Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment
- Appropriate arrangements not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment because of a temporary injury or impairment

Entries

- Failure to clearly explain to candidate (or parent/carer) a decision of early entry for a qualification
- Candidate not entered/entered late (incurring a late entry fee) for a required exam/assessment
- Candidate entered for the wrong exam/assessment
- Candidate entered for the wrong tier of entry.

Conducting examinations

- Failure to adequately brief candidate on exam timetable/exam regulations prior to exam/assessment taking place
- Room in which exam held did not provide candidate with appropriate conditions for taking the exam
- Inadequate invigilation in exam room
- Failure to conduct exam according to the regulations
- Online system failed during (on-screen) exam/assessment
- Disruption during exam/assessment
- Alleged, suspected or actual malpractice incident not investigated/reported
- Eligible application for special consideration for a candidate not submitted/not submitted to timescale
- Failure to inform/update candidate on the outcome of a special consideration application

Results and post-results

- Before exams, candidate not made aware of the arrangements for post-results services and the accessibility of senior members of centre staff after the publication of results
- Candidate not having access to a member of senior staff after the publication of results to discuss/make decision on the submission of a review/enquiry
- Candidate request for return of work after moderation and work not available/disposed of earlier than allowed in the regulations
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a result (complainant to refer via exams officer to awarding body post-results services)
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a centre decision not to support a clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal (complainant to refer via the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- Centre applied for the wrong post-results service/for the wrong script for a candidate
- Centre missed awarding body deadline to apply for a post-results service
- Centre applied for a post-results service for candidate without gaining required candidate consent/permission

Complaints and Appeals Procedure:
If a candidate (or his/her parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification he/she is following, Woodland Rise School encourages him/her to try to resolve this informally in the first instance. A concern or complaint should be made in person, by telephone or in writing to the Head of Centre.
If a complaint fails to be resolved informally, the candidate (or his/her parent/carer) is then at liberty to make a formal complaint.

How to make a formal complaint:

- A formal complaint should be submitted in writing by completing a complaints and appeals form
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 working days

How a formal complaint is investigated:

- The Head of Centre will further investigate or appoint a member of the senior leadership team (who is not involved in the grounds for complaint and has no personal interest in the outcome) to investigate the complaint and report on the findings
- The findings and a conclusion will be provided to the complainant within 3 working weeks'.
- The school will maintain a confidential record of all complaints, investigations, appeals and outcomes in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Appeals:

Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted.

- Any appeal must be submitted in writing by again completing a complaints and appeals form
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 working days
- The appeal will be referred to the Heads of Centre (Head of centre) for consideration
- The Heads of Centre (Head of centre) will normally provide a written outcome within 15 working days of receiving the appeal. Where additional time is required, the appellant will be informed of the reason for the delay and provided with a revised timescale.

Where a complainant remains dissatisfied following completion of the school's internal complaints and appeals procedure, and where appropriate, they may refer the matter to the relevant awarding organisation in accordance with its published procedures.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Heads of Centre and Internal Quality Assurer, or sooner if awarding organisation requirements, legislation or school procedures change. The date of the next review is August 2027.