



WOODLANDS
SCHOOL

ASPIRATION, RESILIENCE, OPPORTUNITY, EXCELLENCE

Data Protection Policy (Exams)

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Woodlands School is part of The Compass Education Trust Ltd, a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales Company number 07666213.
Registered Office: The Billericay School, School Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LH

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	David Wright
Exams Officer & Data Manager	Honor Roth
Senior Leader(s)	Seddeer Amran, Emma Jordan, Nicola White, Dominic Riste, Katie Heseltine, Katie Lee Sang, Dean O'Connor
IT Manager	Matthew Connelly
Facilities Manager	Paul Roth
Trust Network Manager	Adam Knott

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Purpose of the Policy

This policy details how Woodlands School, in relation to exams management and administration, ensures compliance with the regulations as set out by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The delivery of examinations and assessments involve centres and awarding bodies processing a significant amount of personal data (i.e. information from which a living individual might be identified). It is important that both centres and awarding bodies comply with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 or law relating to personal data in any jurisdiction in which the awarding body or centre are operating.

In JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 6) reference is made to 'data protection legislation'. This is intended to refer to UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and any statutory codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner in relation to such legislation.

It is the responsibility of the centre to inform candidates of the processing that the centre undertakes. For example, that the centre will provide relevant personal data, including name, date of birth and gender to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications.

All exams office staff responsible for collecting and sharing candidates' data are required to follow strict rules called 'data protection principles' ensuring the information is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure

To ensure that the centre meets the requirements of the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR, all candidates' exam information – even that which is not classified as personal or sensitive – is covered under this policy.

Section 1 – Exams-related information

There is a requirement for the exams office(r) to hold exams-related information on candidates taking external examinations. For further details on the type of information held please refer to Section 5 below.

Candidates' exams-related data may be shared with the following organisations:

- Awarding bodies
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)
- The Compass Education Trust
- PAM Progress Teaching
- Essex County Council
- School Governors
- SMID
- Department of Education
- Arbor

This data may be shared via one or more of the following methods:

- hard copy
- email
- Arbor

- Secure Microsoft Forms
- Imports directly onto organisations website
- Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Files via A2C (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/about-a2c>)
- Secure extranet site –
 - City & Guilds Walled Gardens
 - AQA Centre Services
 - Pearson Portal
 - OCR Interchange (Cambridge Assessment)
 - WJEC Portal
 - NCFE Portal
 - Trinity College Portal

This data may relate to exam entries, access arrangements, the conduct of exams and non-examination assessments including controlled assessments and coursework, special consideration requests and exam results/post-results/certificate information.

Section 2 – Informing Candidates of the Information Held

Woodlands School ensures that candidates are fully aware of the information and data held.

All candidates are:

- informed via the candidate handbook
- Provided with a data sharing agreement to sign at the beginning of the year which outlines how information is shared
- given access to this policy via the Woodlands School website.

Candidates are made aware of the above before the registrations/entries are submitted to awarding bodies for processing.

Materials which are submitted by candidates for assessment may include any form of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programs and data (“Student Materials”). Candidates will be directed to the relevant awarding body’s privacy notice if they require further information about how their Student Materials may be used by the awarding body.

Candidates eligible for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments which require awarding body approval will be informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using *Access arrangements online*, complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Candidates involved in suspected or alleged malpractice will be informed that their personal data will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved, and that personal data about them may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies, in accordance with the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures*.

Candidates will be informed:

- that awarding bodies may be required to provide a candidate’s personal data to educational agencies, such as DfE, Welsh Government, Department of Education (Northern Ireland), ESFA, regulators, HESA, UCAS, Local Authorities and the Learning Records Service (LRS)
- that their personal data may be provided to a central record of qualifications approved by the awarding bodies for statistical and policy development purposes
- of the processing that the centre undertakes, for example, that the centre will provide relevant personal data, including name, date of birth and gender, to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications

Candidates may obtain access to their personal data, such as examination results by applying to the appropriate awarding body’s data protection officer.

Candidates are also referred to the centre’s privacy notice which explains:

- why Woodlands School needs to collect personal data
- what it plans to do with it
- how long it will keep it

whether it will be sharing it with any other organisation

Section 3 – Hardware and Software

The table below confirms how IT hardware, software and access to online systems is protected in line with DPA & GDPR requirements.

Hardware	Date of purchase and protection measures	Warranty expiry
Network - Desktop computer	Purchase Date: 21/07/2025 Antivirus scan (daily, automatic) Antivirus updated (multiple times daily, automatic) Software restriction policies (instant, automatic).	20/07/2030
Network – Laptop	Purchase date: 12/06/2025 Antivirus scan (daily, automatic) Antivirus updated (multiple times daily, automatic) Software restriction policies (instant, automatic).	11/06/2028
Software/online system	Protection measure(s)	
Network: Server Operating System – Windows 2016 Standard	Servers are kept in a secure location restricted to specific staff. Logins for the servers are protected by passwords.	
MIS Arbor	Access level determined by permission level (as set by the Head). Usernames are protected by passwords.	
A2C	Unique keycodes given by exam board to secure login Loaded onto Exam Officers PC which is protected by personal username and password	
Awarding body extranets: Pearson AQA OCR	Exam officer managers account permissions for the school Unique usernames and personal passwords	

NCFE WJEC NCFE Portal Trinity College LiNX VTCT City and Guilds	
Online Analysis tools – PAM & SMID	Systems are set for an embargo day as per MIS Personal accounts set up with secure username and password
PiXL	Username and Password Managed by SLT

Section 4 – Dealing with Data Breaches

Although data is handled in line with DPA/GDPR regulations, a data breach may occur for any of the following reasons:

- loss or theft of data or equipment on which data is stored
- inappropriate access controls allowing unauthorised use
- equipment failure
- human error
- unforeseen circumstances such as a fire or flood
- hacking attack
- ‘blagging’ offences where information is obtained by deceiving the organisation who holds it
- cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections

If a data protection breach is identified, the following steps will be taken:

1. Containment and Recovery

Adam Knott and Matthew Connelly will lead on investigating the breach.

It will be established:

- who needs to be made aware of the breach and inform them of what they are expected to do to assist in the containment exercise. This may include isolating or closing a compromised section of the network, finding a lost piece of equipment and/or changing the access codes
- whether there is anything that can be done to recover any losses and limit the damage the breach can cause. As well as the physical recovery of equipment, this could involve the use of back-up hardware to restore lost or damaged data or ensuring that staff recognise when someone tries to use stolen data to access accounts
- which authorities, if relevant, need to be informed

2. Assessment of Ongoing Risk

The following points will be considered in assessing the ongoing risk of the data breach:

- what type of data is involved?
- how sensitive is it?
- if data has been lost or stolen, are there any protections in place such as encryption?
- what has happened to the data? If data has been stolen, it could be used for purposes which are harmful to the individuals to whom the data relates; if it has been damaged, this poses a different type and level of risk

- regardless of what has happened to the data, what could the data tell a third party about the individual?
- how many individuals' personal data are affected by the breach?
- who are the individuals whose data has been breached?
- what harm can come to those individuals?
- are there wider consequences to consider such as a loss of public confidence in an important service we provide?

3. Notification of Breach

Notification will take place to enable individuals who may have been affected to take steps to protect themselves or to allow the appropriate regulatory bodies to perform their functions, provide advice and deal with complaints.

4. Evaluation and Response

Once a data breach has been resolved, a full investigation of the incident will take place. This will include:

- reviewing what data is held and where and how it is stored
- identifying where risks and weak points in security measures lie (for example, use of portable storage devices or access to public networks)
- reviewing methods of data sharing and transmission
- increasing staff awareness of data security and filling gaps through training or tailored advice
- reviewing contingency plans

Section 5 – Candidate Information, Audit and Protection Measures

For the purposes of this policy, all candidates' exam-related information – even that not considered personal or sensitive under the DPA/GDPR – will be handled in line with DPA/GDPR guidelines.

An information audit is conducted yearly during the autumn term.

The table below details the type of candidate exams-related information held, and how it is managed, stored and protected

Protection measures may include:

- password protected area on the centre's intranet
- secure drive accessible only to selected staff
- information held in secure area
- updates undertaken every day –
Antivirus (updated every 4 hours, scanned daily)
Windows updates (as provided by Microsoft)

Section 6 – Data Retention Periods

Details of retention periods, the actions taken at the end of the retention period and method of disposal are contained in the centre's Exams Archiving Policy which is available/accessible on the Woodlands School website.

Section 7 – Access to Information

(With reference to ICO information <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/schools/exam-results/>)

The UK GDPR gives individuals the right to see information held about them. This means individuals can request information about them and their exam performance, including:

- their mark

- comments written by the examiner
- minutes of any examination appeals panels

This does not however give individuals the right to copies of their answers to exam questions.

Requesting Exam Information

Requests for exam information can be made to Mrs Jordan and Mrs Roth in writing. If collecting from the school, ID may be required, and confirmation of personal details will be asked to confirm personal identity, this may include date of birth and address at the time of study.

The GDPR does not specify an age when a child can request their exam results or request that they aren't published. When a child makes a request, those responsible for responding should take into account whether:

- the child wants their parent (or someone with parental responsibility for them) to be involved; and
- the child properly understands what is involved.

The ability of young people to understand and exercise their rights is likely to develop or become more sophisticated as they get older. As a general guide, a child of 12 or older is expected to be mature enough to understand the request they are making. A child may, of course, be mature enough at an earlier age or may lack sufficient maturity until a later age, and so requests should be considered on a case by case basis.

A decision will be made by Paul Roth and David Wright as to whether the pupil is mature enough to understand the request they are making, with requests considered on a case by case basis.

Responding to requests

If a request is made for exam information before exam results have been published, a request will be responded to:

- within five months of the date of the request, or
- within 40 days from when the results are published (whichever is earlier).

If a request is made once exam results have been published, the individual will receive a response within one month of their request.

Third Party Access

Permission should be obtained before requesting personal information on another individual from a third-party organisation.

Candidates' personal data will not be shared with a third party unless a request is accompanied with permission from the candidate and appropriate evidence (where relevant), to verify the ID of both parties, provided or the establishment requests the information in the form of a CTF file via school2school for post 16 education

In the case of looked-after children or those in care, agreements may already be in place for information to be shared with the relevant authorities (for example, the Local Authority). The centre's Data Protection Officer will confirm the status of these agreements and approve/reject any requests.

Sharing Information with Parents

The centre will take into account any other legislation and guidance regarding sharing information with parents (including non-resident parents and a local authority (the 'corporate parent'), as example guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) regarding parental responsibility and school reports on pupil performance:

- Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility
www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-

[responsibility/understanding-and-dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility](#)
(Updated 24 August 2023 to include guidance on the role of the 'corporate parent', releasing GCSE results to a parent and notifying separated parents about a child moving school)

- School reports on pupil performance

www.gov.uk/guidance/school-reports-on-pupil-performance-guide-for-headteachers

Publishing Exam Results

When considering publishing exam results, Woodlands School will make reference to the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office) <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/schools/exam-results/>
Can schools give my exam results to the media for publication?

Section 8 – Table Recording Candidate Exams-Related Information Held

For details of how to request access to information held, refer to section 7 of this policy (**Access to information**)

For further details of how long information is held, refer to section 6 of this policy (**Data retention periods**)

Information type	Information description (where required)	What personal/sensitive data is/may be contained in the information	Where information is stored	How information is protected	Retention period
Access arrangements information		Candidate name Candidate DOB Gender Diagnostic testing outcome(s) Specialist report(s) (may also include candidate address) Evidence of normal way of working	Access Arrangements Online MIS Lockable metal filing cabinet	MFA; Secure user name and password [insert] In secure office (SENCo)	25 Years
Alternative site arrangements		Candidate name Candidate number	Lockable metal filing cabinet	Folder is kept in a lockable filing cabinet	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals
Attendance registers copies		Candidate name Candidate number	Folders	Folder is kept in lockable filing cabinet	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals
Candidates' scripts		Candidate name Candidate number	Unless permissible to use in the classroom, scripts will be kept electronically in a designated folder	Folder will be password protected in exams officer work area only	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals

Information type	Information description (where required)	What personal/sensitive data is/may be contained in the information	Where information is stored	How information is protected	Retention period
Candidates' work		Candidate name Candidate number	Return to subject teachers after the publication of results for teachers to keep in a lockable metal filing cabinet	Exam store room from exams end until publication day. When with subject teachers, in a lockable filing cabinet	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals
Centre consortium arrangements for centre assessed work					
Certificates		Candidate name Candidate signature on collection log	Lockable filing cabinet	In secure area solely assigned to exams	Minimum of 12 months
Certificate destruction information		Candidate name	In a folder stored in a lockable filing cabinet	Keeping the filing cabinet locked at all times	5 years from date of issue
Certificate issue information		Candidate name Candidate signature	Lockable filing cabinet	Keeping filing cabinet locked at all times	5 years from date of issue
Conflicts of interest records		Staff name Staff signature Candidate name	Lockable filing cabinet	Keeping filing cabinet locked at all times	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals

Information type	Information description (where required)	What personal/sensitive data is/may be contained in the information	Where information is stored	How information is protected	Retention period
Entry information		Candidate name Candidate number Candidate DOB Candidate UCI/ULN	In a folder stored in a lockable filing cabinet Electronic excel file	Keeping the filing cabinet locked at all times Password protect the file	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals
Exam room incident logs		Candidate name Candidate number Invigilator name Invigilator signature	In a folder Electronic scanned copy to send to examining bodies	In lockable filing cabinet On the exam officers secure work area, password protected	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeal
Invigilator and facilitator training records		Staff names Staff signature	In a folder (confirmation of attendance)	In a lockable filing cabinet	Assessment records along with appraisals are kept for 5 years
Overnight supervision information		Candidate name Candidate's supervisor signature Head of centre signature	In a folder Electronic scanned copy to examining body	In a lockable filing cabinet Password protected in the exam officers secure work area	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals
Post-results services: confirmation of candidate consent information		Candidate name Candidate signature	Signed document in a folder	Kept in a lockable filing cabinet	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeal

Information type	Information description (where required)	What personal/sensitive data is/may be contained in the information	Where information is stored	How information is protected	Retention period
Post-results services: requests/outcome information		Candidate name Candidate signature	Outcomes are updated on a tracking sheet Outcomes are sent to pupils by post	Password protected in exam officers secure work area	To be retained until after the deadline for EARs or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
Post-results services: scripts provided by ATS service		Candidate name Candidate number	Files downloaded electronically from exams board	Saved electronically in the exam officers secure work area and password protected	Until the end of the ATS service
Post-results services: tracking logs		Candidate name Candidate number			To be retained until after the deadline for EARs or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquire has been completed, whichever is later
Private candidate information		Candidate name Candidate DOB Candidate email address	On a document in a folder	Folder kept in a lockable filing cabinet	To be retained until after the deadline for EARs or until any appeal,

Information type	Information description (where required)	What personal/sensitive data is/may be contained in the information	Where information is stored	How information is protected	Retention period
		Candidate address Candidate UCI and/or ULN Candidate telephone number Candidate signature			malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
Resilience arrangements: Evidence of candidate performance		Candidate name Candidate number Candidate signature	Electronically – PPE papers scanned in	Password access and stored in a shared space with the Exams Officer and SLT member with responsibility of exams	To be retained until after the deadline for EARs or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
Resolving timetable clashes information		Candidate name Candidate number	File created electronically	Saved in the exam officers secure work area, password protected	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals
Results information		Candidate name Candidate demographics (LAC/SEN etc) Candidate UCI/UPN/ULN	Electronic Excel/Word/PDF/PowerPoint files	Saved to secure exam officers work area, password protected Send via encrypted email to senior staff Senior staff save to own secure work	Records for current year plus previous 6 years to be retained as a minimum

Information type	Information description (where required)	What personal/sensitive data is/may be contained in the information	Where information is stored	How information is protected	Retention period
				area, password protected	
Seating plans		Candidate name Candidate access arrangements Invigilator signatures	Paper records, kept in a folder	Kept in a lockable cabinet	To be retained until after the deadline for EARs or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
Special consideration information		Candidate name Candidate sensitive information (case dependent) such as medical NHS number, scanned copy of medical letters which could include DOB, address, crime reference etc	Information is stored electronically – scanned PDF files	Files are saved in the exam officers work area, password protected	After post result services for that season or alternatively after any appeals.
Suspected malpractice reports/outcomes		Candidate name Staff name Staff signature	In a folder	In a lockable filing cabinet	After post results services for that season or alternatively after any appeals
Transferred candidate arrangements	Transferred candidate arrangements	Candidate name Candidate number Host centre HOC/EO signatures Entering centre HOC/EO signatures	Electronically online via JCQ secure portal	JCQ send it encrypted to exam boards	To be retained until the transfer arrangements are confirmed by the awarding body

Information type	Information description (where required)	What personal/sensitive data is/may be contained in the information	Where information is stored	How information is protected	Retention period
Very late arrival reports/outcomes		Candidate name Candidate number Staff signature	Electronically online via JCQ secure portal	JCQ send it encrypted to exam boards	After post result services for that season or alternatively any appeals



Signed: _____
Head Teacher

Dated: 8th December 2025



Signed: _____
Vice Chair of Governors

Dated: 8th December 2025
