



25 October 2023

cymwysterau.cymruqualifications.wales

Dear Head of Centre

Overseeing the November 2023 GCSE exam series

There are four GCSEs being examined in November - English Language, Mathematics – Numeracy, Mathematics and Welsh Language. As previously, there are no restrictions on who can be entered for these exams. We will be publishing official statistics on November entries at the start of December. You will be able to find this information in the [publications area of our website](#). We will monitor how grade boundaries are set by WJEC for all exams within this series to ensure that the standards are appropriate and take account of [our policy decision about grading](#).

Exam security

Schools and colleges play a key role in maintaining the security of exam papers and it is important that your staff follow the rules set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) for the security of papers and conducting exams. This information is available on the [instructions for conducting examinations area](#) of the JCQ website. WJEC's website also has useful guidance on what to do if any security breach is suspected. WJEC has guidance on contingency planning providing information on [what to do if exams are disrupted in any way](#). We advise you to familiarise yourself with WJEC and JCQ's guidance and to ensure that contingency plans are up to date and fit for purpose.

Issuing of results for vocational qualifications

Ofqual has recently announced measures to ensure learners taking vocational qualifications get their results on time from 2024 onwards, following the approach taken this year. These measures will also be adopted by awarding bodies who offer vocational qualifications in Wales. [You can read more on our website](#).

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Applying to become a subject expert

Qualifications Wales is recruiting subject experts to work alongside our approvals team to help us approve the new Made-for-Wales qualifications. Across all six areas of learning and experience, we are looking for individuals with strong subject-specific experience and knowledge, a deep grasp of the Curriculum for Wales and a secure understanding of educational assessment.

We're hosting an [online webinar](#) this Thursday 26 October (16:00-16:45) to explain more about the roles and how to apply.

This is a great opportunity for centres to play an integral role in the roll-out of Made-for-Wales qualifications. Please note that teacher release fees are available to all centres who support the release of staff for in person, term time approval activity. So, please do share [the registration link](#) with your colleagues. Applications close on Friday 3 November.

Conference success

Our recent Exam Officer Conference brought together the exam officer community from across Wales and connected them with key stakeholders in the qualifications system. As well as information for exam officers, an important message from JCQ reminded delegates of the responsibilities specifically designated to Heads of Centre, including producing and updating policies in line with the [JCQ General Regulations](#).

The conference week was a great success, and I hope all exam officers were able to join sessions appropriate to them. All sessions were recorded and can be accessed on the [Wales Exam Officer Hub](#).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip Blaker'.

Philip Blaker

Chief Executive