



Exam Handbook 2024-25

Information for Students & Parents

Introduction

Exams can be a stressful time for both students and parents and it is important that all those involved are as well informed and prepared as possible. Rules and regulations for exams are designed to ensure fairness and minimise disturbance and it is in the interest of all that the exams run smoothly.

The school will make every effort to ensure that candidates receive the best possible preparation for their examinations, the administrative arrangements run smoothly and the exams are conducted in a way that will cause as little stress as possible and help students to achieve the best results they can.

Any mock exams run by the school will follow the same rules and regulations as external exams to enable students to get used to the process before their main exams.

This handbook is designed to give both the students and parents all the information they need about exam procedures, to answer some of the most frequently asked questions and help guide and support all those involved through the exam process.

Along with this handbook students will also be provided with the formal notices that are provided by the Joint Council of Qualifications.

If you have any questions/problems regarding any exam, please feel free to contact the Exams Office.

General Questions About Exams

Who is responsible for the running of exams?

Our Exams Officer is responsible for administering all external examinations arrangements and for the oversight of students during exams.

Heads of Department are responsible for informing the exams office who they wish to enter and for what.

There is a team of invigilators who will be present during the exams at all times to supervise the students and be on hand if any problems should arise.

The Awarding Bodies/Exam Boards set the dates and times of all external exams. They provide strict criteria on how the exam should be run, which the school is required to follow precisely.

What is an external exam?

An external exam is an exam set by the Exam Board that goes towards the student's final grade for that qualification. The Exam Board will set the date and time of the exam and the school has to sit the exam at that time and no other. All exam papers are sent to the Exam Board for marking and then results are sent to the school, who will then pass these onto the students.

What is a Candidate number?

Each student will have their own individual 4-digit number whilst in the school that they need to use for every exam that they take. This number helps further identify them along with their name.

When do the exams take place?

November exams are **re-sits only** and will take place between 4th November and 13th November 2024.

January exams will take place in January 2025.

Summer exam will take place between 1st May and 25th June 2025.

Contingency Day 2025

There are two 'Contingency Days' for all exam boards in the UK, one afternoon session and a whole day. Wednesday 11th is the afternoon sessions, Wednesday 25th June is the whole day.

In line with Ofqual's exam system contingency plan, this is an additional day at the end of the exam period. It will only be used in the event of major local or national disruption to summer 2025 exams, in which case it is possible that timetable dates could be affected up to and including the contingency day.

Students will need to make sure that they are available for exams until the 'Contingency Day'. If the contingency plan needs to be used, you will be notified.

No appointments or holidays should be booked during school hours during the exam period.

Exam Entry

When the entries for exams have been made, students will receive a 'Statement of Entry', detailing the subjects and tiers for which they have been entered. The Statement of Entry will be given to the student in form time when they will be asked to check their details carefully.

This statement is evidence that an entry has been made. It is for the student to check this statement very carefully and if they believe there is a mistake, they must see their subject teacher straight away to discuss it. All entries are given to the exams office by the Head of Department and it is their decision who they enter and for what. Students should also check the spelling of their name (which should be their legal name) and their date of birth as this will appear on their certificate.

If any errors are highlighted after certificates have been received into centre the candidate will be responsible for any associated costs relating to its update.

Exam Timetables

Nearer the time of the exams, students will be issued with their Exam Timetable. This will list all the exams the student is entered for, and will also show the date and time of each exam. It is important that students again, check this very carefully and if they believe there is a mistake they must see their subject teacher or the Exams Officer urgently.

Students must keep this exam timetable safe and make sure they know exactly when their exams are.

It is the student's responsibility to know when their exams are and to be on time.

Lateness

Students should aim to arrive at least 30 minutes before their exam start time. If a student is going to be late for any reason, they should ring the school as soon as possible to let them know.

Depending on how late the student is, and the length of the exam, it may be possible for them to be admitted. We will always try to let a student who is late sit their exam and have the full time allocated to them. However, any student who is later than one hour for their exam will be reported to the examining board and it will be their decision whether they accept the paper or not. If a student arrives after the exam has finished they will not be allowed to sit the exam.

Students and parents are advised to make sure they leave in plenty of time and make suitable arrangements to get to their exam on time. Exams will begin on time and we cannot wait for students to arrive.

Absence

External examinations dates and times are set by the Exam Boards and the centre is not allowed to move these dates for any reason, except for a clash.

Students and Parents are reminded that holidays or appointments should not be booked during the exam period.

If a student is feeling unwell on the day of the exam we would always advise they try, where possible, to come in and sit their exam. We will not be allowed to let the student sit the exam at another time. If the student feels they cannot come to school, they should call on the absence line as normal as soon as possible. When calling in, please let the school know that the student has an exam. If a medical certificate is supplied to the Exams Office, it may be possible to apply for Special Consideration from the Exam Board for the missed exam. Likewise, if a student feels they are disadvantaged in some way whilst they are taking their exams (due to illness, injury, bereavement, etc.), as long as medical evidence in the form of a medical certificate or letter from the doctor is supplied to the Exams Office, it may be possible to apply for special consideration, depending on the circumstances. Once applied for, the individual exam board will decide whether special consideration will be applied.

Please note, it is the school's policy to seek reimbursement for the entry fee paid should any student miss an exam without good reason.

Clashes In Your Timetable

As there are a number of different Exam Boards and many different subjects being taught, a clash may occur in a student's timetable where two or more exams are timetabled for the same date and time.

If the clash is for the same subject, i.e. French reading and French listening, these exams will run one after the other, and will be shown as such on your timetable.

Should the two exams be less than three hours in total, they will also run back to back with a short break of no more than 20 minutes. The break will be taken in the exam room and under exam conditions.

If not, then one or more of the exams may be moved to a different time and if absolutely necessary, the next day. Students will be informed when they receive their exam timetable of the new time and date of the exam being moved. The student will have to remain under supervision between the original time of their exam and the new time. Generally, most clashes are resolved by moving one of the exams to either the morning or afternoon. Students will then be under supervision over lunch and must follow the supervision rules below. On rare occasions, an exam may have to be moved to the following day. If this is the case, the student's parent/carer will need to supervise the student overnight. A form and letter will be sent home to the student and parent which needs to be read fully and signed to agree to the overnight supervision.

Supervision Rules

If a student has a clash in their timetable and has one of their exams moved to a different time, they will have to be in a period of isolation and supervision. This is essential to avoid compromising the integrity of the exam.

If a student is being supervised over lunch, they should bring some revision or reading material, their lunch and a drink. They will not be allowed to use their mobile phone, a computer or communicate with any other student who has already sat the exam.

If a student is being supervised overnight they must be collected from the school reception by their parent/carer after their previous exam has ended. Overnight they must not be allowed to use their mobile phone, the computer or any other means of using the internet. They must not go out or communicate with any other student. The next day, they must be delivered to the school reception by their parent/carer and handed over to the Exams Officer in person.

What Is Allowed In The Exam Room?

- Students are allowed to take a drink in with them but **only** water in a clear bottle with the label removed. The bottle must not have a logo. Chilly bottles, sports bottles, fizzy drinks or cans are not allowed in the exam room
- A Black ball point pen and spares (*blue ink is not allowed*)
- Pencils/rubber/sharpener
- Calculator/ruler (*for Maths & Science exams*)
- All materials must be taken into the exam room in a CLEAR pencil case

The following are NOT allowed into the exam room

- Mobile Phones, even if turned off
- iPods/MP3/4 players and headphones/AirPods
- Watches and jewellery
- Potential technological/web enabled sources of information, Smart Watches, Fitbits, etc.
- Use of Tippex or coloured gel pens is not permitted
- Notes, papers, textbooks, log books
- Food or chewing gum
- Mascots

Uniform

Full school uniform must be worn to each and every exam. All students know the rules regarding school uniform and it is their responsibility to ensure they continue to observe them during exam time.

Students not dressed appropriately or modestly will not be permitted to sit the exam.

During the Exam

The school regards breaches of exam regulations very seriously. Students should remember the importance of good behaviour in an exam as any activity that disturbs or upsets other students will not be tolerated and will be regarded as malpractice. If a student is being disruptive to other candidates the Exams Officer along with a senior member of staff, has the authority to remove that student from the exam room.

The following rules must be followed:

- Students are asked to enter and leave the exam room in silence, as they are under exam regulations as soon as they enter the exam room and until they leave the room
- Students must never leave the exam room without prior permission from the invigilator and at the end of the exam, must wait quietly to be dismissed
- Students must not try to communicate with any other student in any way, either verbally or non-verbally, e.g. talking, whispering, passing notes, eye contact, smiling or gesturing whilst in the exam room – this includes after the exam has finished as students are exiting the room
- If a student requires assistance at any time, including if they feel unwell, they must raise their hand and wait for the invigilator to come to them
- Students need to face forward in their seats at all times
- Invigilators are there to supervise and ensure exams run as smoothly as possible. Any verbal abuse towards them will not be tolerated
- Students are not permitted to leave the exam room for any reason for the first hour or the last half hour of the exam including use of the toilet. Students should go to the toilet before the exam begins
- Any student who leaves the exam room, for instance if feeling unwell, will be supervised at all times by an invigilator and must not try to communicate with any other student
- Watches of any description are to be handed in or left in their bag
- Mobile phones **must be switched off** and are to be handed in before the exam starts or left in a bag
- No bracelets are to be worn in the exam room

Students are not permitted to leave the exam room early, even if they feel they have finished the exam, and must stay for the entire length of time allocated. If a student feels they have finished, they should use the time to check their work and must sit quietly until the end of the exam.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Should there be a need to evacuate the exam room; students will need to follow the advice of the invigilators.

Candidates will:

- Be advised to stop writing and close their question/answer booklets
- Evacuate the exam room in seating plan order in silence
- Follow the lead invigilator to the tennis court away from the main Academy muster point
- Line up in seating plan order
- Remain silent; students are under exam conditions at all times

Candidates will not:

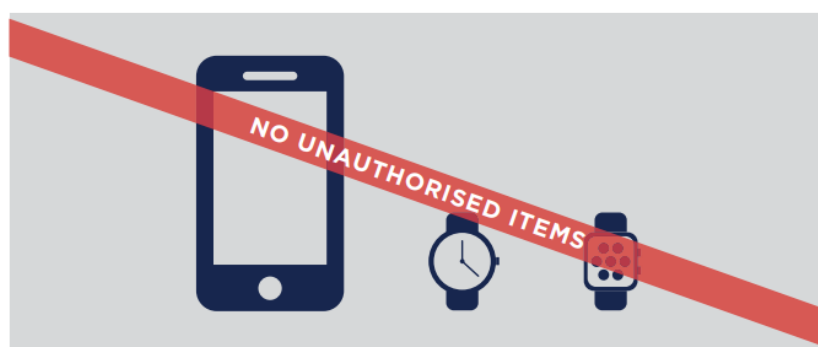
- Communicate with any other student at any time, regardless of the nature of the communication
- Join the main Academy muster point
- Collect personal items before leaving the exam room

The Exams Officer will make a full report to the awarding body advising them of the incident.

Malpractice

Malpractice is the term the exam boards use for any irregularity or breach of regulations. The Exams Officer is required to report all infringements to the appropriate awarding body, who will then decide on what action to take based on the nature of the infringement.

The Exam Boards take the integrity of the exams very seriously and it is important that all students follow the Exams Officer and the Invigilators' instructions carefully. Malpractice can include, but not limited to, being found in possession of a mobile phone, causing a disturbance in the exam room and cheating of any nature. Penalties given by the Exam Board are based on a number of things and can result in: **a warning, loss of marks or disqualification from that exam, that subject or sometimes, all exams taken with that Exam Board.**



The possession and use of any technological/web enabled sources of information in the exam room is strictly prohibited

Any student found to have a mobile phone in the exam room will be reported to the Exam Board for malpractice, even if it is switched off.

Students should not bring their mobile phone into the exam rooms – they need to either leave them in their bag or handed to the invigilator before the start of the exam. **They must be switched off.** All bags are put to the side of the exam room. The school accepts no responsibility for students' mobiles and would advise they do not bring them into school. There are also notices inside and outside of each exam room reminding students that mobiles and potential technological/web enabled sources of information, Smart Watches, Fitbits, etc. are not allowed and invigilators will give final warning to hand them over before the exam begins.

If a student realises they not handed them in, they should raise their hand immediately to attract the invigilators attention who will remove the unauthorised item/s for the duration of the exam.

Results Day

All results should be collected by the student themselves or they can give written permission to a family member or friend to collect their results on their behalf. This written permission must be brought along on the day by the person collecting the results along with an approved form of identification. Without it, results will not be handed over. We cannot send results via email or let you know them over the telephone.

Due to GDPR, results will not be sent home by post.

Summer 2025 results dates

The venue and times will be confirmed with students and parents via the website and MyEd once the exams have finished.

A Levels and Level 3 qualifications – Thursday, 14th August 2025

GCSEs and Level 2 qualifications – Thursday, 21st August 2025

Post Results

If you are not happy with your results or if the result obtained is substantially different from what was anticipated, you will need to discuss this with your subject teacher to see if there are any options that may be available to you. Sometimes the Head of Department may decide it is in your best interest to apply for a review of marking, for instance, if you are a couple of marks away from achieving a grade 5, in which case a consent form will be given to you to sign. Please note that a review of marking may end up with your **result staying the same, going up or even going down a grade**. The deadlines for post results services are very tight and if a consent form is sent to you, please return it to the school promptly.

Certificates

When certificates are ready to be collected, notification will be posted on the website and social media.

If students are unable to collect their certificates in person from the school they can give written permission to a family member or friend to collect their on their behalf. This written permission must be brought to the school by the person collecting with a form of approved photograph identification, e.g. passport or driving licence. Without it, certificates will not be released. Please make an appointment to collect certificates. This will ensure the Exams Officer is available.

Certificates will not be sent by post.

Certificates will not be held by the centre for longer than 2 years. If they are still uncollected after this time they will be confidentially destroyed. They can only be replaced by direct application to the Exam Board by the student and will require proof of identity and a fee per qualification. Please see individual Exam Board websites for further information.

Exam Boards

Please find below information regarding the Exam Boards we currently use. There is plenty of information on their websites, including how to gain copies of your lost certificates.

OCR

www.ocr.org.uk

Edexcel

www.edexcel.com

WJEC/EDUQAS

www.wjec.co.uk

AQA

www.aqa.org.uk

Key points to remember...

Times and dates of exams cannot be changed so do not book any appointments or holidays during the exam period.

Check your timetable carefully and make sure you are entered for the correct subjects and tiers, and nothing is missing.

Do not be late! Leave plenty of time to get to school to ensure you do not miss your exam.

If you are absent from an exam without a just reason you will be charged for the entry fee that the school paid to enter you for that exam.

Arrive for your exam in full and correct school uniform.

Do not take your mobile into the exam rooms – leave it in your bag or hand it in to the invigilator.

Do not cause a disturbance in the exams.

You must stay for the full length of the exam.