

Ballyclare Secondary School



Candidate examination handbook

It is important that examination candidates read all the information in this booklet. These are JCQ regulations, for all students in the UK taking examinations.

Candidate examination handbook

Ballyclare Secondary School is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the exam and assessment process in place in the centre and are made aware of the required JCQ awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

This handbook is designed as a brief introduction to the procedures/arrangements for students taking external examinations in Years 11-14. Included in this guide are copies of several notices issued by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ is the single voice of the awarding bodies offering the majority of the UK's qualifications) which every student should read.

Coursework/controlled assessments/non-examination assessments

Controlled assessment and non-examined assessments have replaced coursework in GCSE. There are various levels of control and supervision in the setting, completion and marking of the work to ensure that all students nationally get an equal opportunity to demonstrate their own work. The supervision can vary from normal classroom working to more formal exam conditions supervised by invigilators. Subject teachers will make students aware of when and where their assessments will take place and what the conditions are – this might include banning access to email, the internet and mobile phones at times. In some situations, the scheduled assessment cannot be repeated as it may involve the whole group or may be difficult to rearrange without disrupting other subjects, therefore, please ensure that any absence from school during term time is avoided.

In some subjects, work is marked by the awarding body but usually it is marked and cross checked by teaching staff and then moderated by the awarding body.

Teachers give the work a raw mark and this is submitted to the awarding body. Teachers will let students know what this raw mark is and may give an opinion of what grade it is likely to be.

However, it is important to know that two things can happen to change the final grade:

- Samples of controlled assessments are moderated (checked) by an external examiner (moderator) from the awarding body, and they may decide to adjust the marks (for the whole cohort) up or down if they do not agree with the original marking.
- The raw grade boundaries also change at each session for example a mark of 37/50 may be an A one year and a B the next.

Written exams

These exams are set by awarding bodies (exam boards) such as CCEA, AQA, OCN, Edexcel/Pearson and WJEC. Candidates can only take them on the days/times that they are scheduled so that everyone in the country who is sitting a particular written examination does so at the same time. It is important that you do not make any arrangements to be absent from school during the examination periods.

As soon as all the exam entries have been made (February for summer exams), an individual timetable and statement of exam entries, listing all the exams you will be sitting during an examination period will be given to you. It will tell you which exam is on which day plus the

length of the exam and if it is in the afternoon or morning. Your personal details, including legal names and date of birth, are included on your exam timetable. These details will appear on your certificates. Please check them carefully and let the exam officer, Miss Trimble, know immediately of any errors. You must check your timetable carefully to ensure you have been entered for the right exams. Ask your subject teacher if you are not sure.

On-screen tests

Some tests or assessments may be completed on a computer. The same examination rules and regulations apply to these as written exams or assessment.

What to do if you identify you have two or more exam papers timetabled at the same time (an exam clash)

If you are scheduled to sit two or more papers and the total time is more than three hours, it may be necessary to conduct an examination in a later or earlier session within the same day. You will need to be supervised to ensure the security of the exams is upheld and maintained between the sessions. During the supervision (isolation) you **must not** be in possession of an electronic communication/storage device, have access to the internet, a mobile phone or a watch. If the total of the two exams is three hours or less, then the two exams will be taken back-to-back without any revision between. Either way, you should discuss the schedule of exams with Miss Trimble.

Where you will take your exams

On the day of your exam, check the exam board in the pupil entrance of the school. This will have on it the location of your examination. The majority of exams will take place in the Gym, however, on days with larger numbers, the Gym and Assembly Hall will also be in use.

Supervision during your exams

All external exams are supervised (invigilated) by people who are specially employed for this job and who are not teachers at the school. They are responsible for making sure the exam is run according to JCQ's rules and regulations; they have a key role in upholding the integrity of the external examination/assessment process. Listen carefully to their instructions and don't be afraid to ask if you are not sure about anything. The invigilators are there to ensure good behaviour from the candidates and to answer any queries you may have. If you need any additional materials during the exam raise your hand and an invigilator will come to assist you where possible. They are not allowed to help you with any part of the examination or tell you which questions to answer - they can only read out the instructions on the front of the question paper.

Exam conditions

The invigilators will tell you when you can enter the room and once you are in it you are under examination conditions and must obey the rules. You should then find your desk, which will have your candidate number on it. Only material listed on the question paper is permitted in the examination room. You may not have on or near you any other material. If you are found to have any material with you which is not allowed, even if you had no intention of referring to it, this will be reported to the examination board. The normal practice in such circumstances is to disqualify the candidate from the paper or the subject.

For examinations with permitted books, check that no notes or papers have accidentally been left inside any book which you are permitted to have in the examination room. You must write only in black ink or ball-point pen, except for drawings and rough notes. All rough work must be written in your answer book and neatly crossed through with a single line. Any mistakes should also be crossed through neatly with a single line. Correcting fluid or correcting pens must not be used. For computer marked multiple-choice papers rough work should be written on the question paper.

You may not communicate in any way with another candidate. You may not give assistance to any candidate or ask for assistance from another candidate. You should put up your hand if you need to attract the invigilators' attention.

What equipment you need to bring to your exams

You should bring with you the equipment you will need for that examination - such as pens, pencils, calculators etc. They should be placed in a clear bag. This is so the invigilator will be able to check that you have nothing else on your desk that could be used to help you. You must write in black ink, unless the instructions on the front of the question paper say otherwise. Gel pens should not be used in examinations.

What you should not bring into the exam room:

Mobile phones or any other device capable of storing information or connecting to the web which could potentially be used in an exam, should never be taken into exam rooms. We recommend they are left at home or can be left into the school office. You will be able to collect any items after the exam. Mobile phones in the exam hall are regarded as an attempt to cheat and candidates will always be penalised if they are reported to have one of these items on their person, even if it is switched off. The minimum penalty is to get zero marks for the exam. No watches of any kind are allowed in the exam hall. This is a new rule from 2021. From 2023, no earphones or ear pods are allowed to be in your pocket during exams.

Food and drink in exam rooms

You should not bring food into the exam room, but you may bring a clear plastic bottle of water with no labels.

What you should wear for your exams

As all examinations are taken during school time, you must wear your school uniform. You can be refused entry to the examination room if you are wearing your own clothes. Remember that school uniform does not include facial piercings or coloured nail polish.

What to do if you are unwell on the day of an exam

It is vital that you telephone the school as soon as you think you may be too ill to sit an exam. Additionally, if there are other reasons why you are unable to come in for an exam you must inform the school office as soon as possible. You will be advised as to what you need to do depending upon the circumstances. You may need to get a letter from your doctor to confirm that you were too ill to attend, particularly if the exam you will miss is the final opportunity to sit it. Even if you are able to sit an exam but feel disadvantaged due to illness, or other circumstances on the day of the exam please let the exam officer, Miss Trimble, or your Head of Year know as we may be able to apply for special consideration or make some special arrangements for you.



AQA	City & Guilds	CCEA	OCR	Pearson	WJEC
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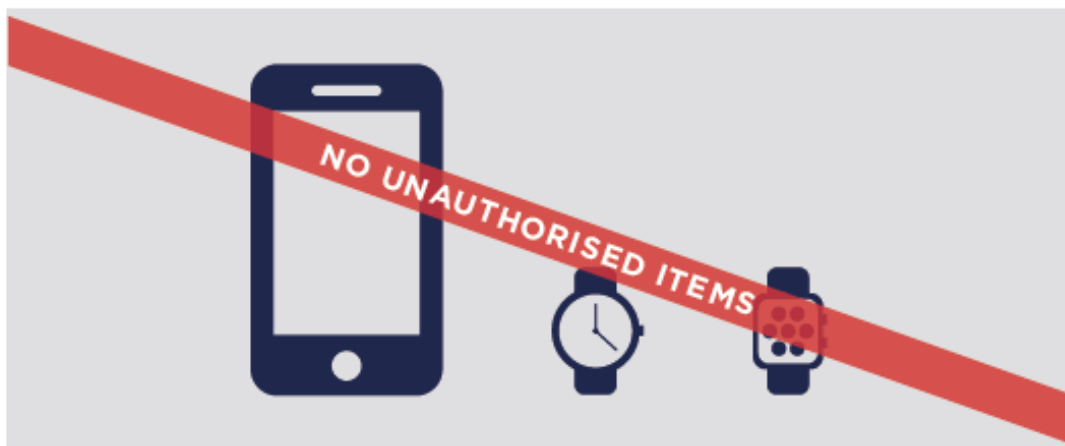
Warning to Candidates

1. You **must** be on time for all your examinations.
2. **Possession of a mobile phone** or other unauthorised material **is not allowed** even if you do not intend to use it. You will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification from the exam/qualification.
3. You **must not** talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once you have entered the examination room.
4. You **must** follow the instructions of the invigilator.
5. You **must not** sit an examination in the name of another candidate.
6. You **must not** become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice in any part of the examination.
7. If you are confused about anything, only speak to an invigilator.

The *Warning to Candidates* must be displayed in a prominent place outside each examination room. This may be a hard copy A3 paper version or an image of the poster projected onto a wall or screen for all candidates to see.

NO MOBILE PHONES NO WATCHES

NO POTENTIAL TECHNOLOGICAL/WEB
ENABLED SOURCES OF INFORMATION



Possession of unauthorised items, such as a mobile phone
or any watch, is a serious offence and could result in

DISQUALIFICATION

from your examination and your overall qualification.

This poster must be displayed in a prominent place outside each examination room.

Information for candidates Using social media and examinations/assessments



While we like to share our experiences online, when it comes to exams, we have to be careful.

- Sharing ideas online can be helpful when you're studying or revising
- However, sharing certain information (see information on the right) can break the rules and could affect your results
- If you're not sure what you can and can't discuss online, check with your teacher
- If you receive exam content on social media, you must tell your teacher
- Don't be caught out by scammers selling fake exam papers



Things to do on social media:

- Have fun
- Be responsible
- Report any exam content you see to your teacher

Things not to do on social media:

- Buy/ask for/share exam content
- Pass on rumours of what's in exams
- Share your work
- Work with others so that your coursework is not your own independent work

If you do any of the above activities, you may:

- ❗ Receive a written warning
- ❗ Lose marks
- ❗ Be disqualified from a part or all of your qualifications
- ❗ Be banned from taking assessments for a number of years

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the JCQ rules:
jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents


On your exam day

This checklist will help you to be as prepared as possible for your exams, so that on the day itself you can focus on doing your best.

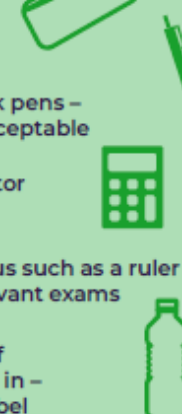
Before sitting your exams, ensure you know:

- the date, time and location of your exams – you might find it helpful to write this information in a calendar or planner
- who to contact at school or college in case there's an emergency that makes you late or unable to sit your exam

What you cannot take into exams:

- any type of phone
 - revision notes
 - any type of watch (this includes analogue, digital and smart watches)
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What you will need:

- a clear pencil case
 - at least two black ink pens – blue pens are not acceptable
 - an approved calculator for relevant exams
 - appropriate apparatus such as a ruler or protractor for relevant exams
 - a clear water bottle if you wish to take one in – it must not have a label
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Other important information:

- Listen carefully to the invigilator's instructions which will be specific to your exam. If you are unsure of anything, please raise your hand and wait for the invigilator.
- Fill in your details on the front of your answer booklet.
- If you need additional answer sheets, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator who will provide you with one. Remember to add your details to this booklet too.
- If you need to use the toilet or feel unwell, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator who will escort you from the exam room.
- Make sure you stay silent – talking to a fellow candidate could result in disqualification from all your exams.

Contingency sessions:

- There are contingency sessions within the Summer 2024 exam timetable – the afternoon of 6 June and 13 June 2024 and the morning and afternoon of 26 June 2024. Make sure you are available on all three dates even if you do not have an exam.

If you have any questions about your exams, please ask your teacher or exams officer.



You can also find useful information about preparing for exams at www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents

EFFECTIVE FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2023

Information for candidates

Written examinations

With effect from 1 September 2023

A. Regulations – Make sure you understand the rules

- 1 Be on time for all your exams. If you are late, your work might not be accepted.
- 2 **Do not** become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice during the exam.
- 3 If you try to cheat, or break the rules in any way, you could be disqualified from all your subjects.
- 4 You **must not** take into the exam room:
 - (a) notes;
 - (b) an iPod, a mobile phone, a MP3/4 player or similar device, a watch, AirPods or earphones/earbuds.

Any pencil cases taken into the exam room **must** be see-through.

Remember: possession of unauthorised material is breaking the rules, even if you do not intend to use it, and you will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification.

- 5 If you have a watch, the invigilator will ask you to hand it to them.
- 6 **Do not** use correcting pens, fluid or tape, erasable pens, highlighters or gel pens in your answers.
- 7 **Do not** talk to or try to communicate with, or disturb other candidates once the exam has started.
- 8 You **must not** write inappropriate, obscene or offensive material.
- 9 If you leave the exam room unaccompanied by an invigilator before the exam has finished, you **will not** be allowed to return.
- 10 **Do not** borrow anything from another candidate during the exam.

B. Information – Make sure you attend your exams and bring what you need

- 1 Know the dates and times of all your exams. Arrive at least ten minutes before the start of each exam.
- 2 If you arrive late for an exam, report to the invigilator running the exam.
- 3 If you arrive more than one hour after the published starting time for the exam, you may not be allowed to take it.
- 4 Only take into the exam room the pens, pencils, erasers and any other equipment which you need for the exam.
- 5 You **must** write clearly and in black ink. Coloured pencils or inks may only be used for diagrams, maps, charts, etc. unless the instructions printed on the front of the question paper state otherwise.

C. Calculators, dictionaries and computer spell-checkers

- 1 You may use a calculator unless you are told otherwise.
- 2 If you use a calculator:
 - (a) make sure it works properly; check that the batteries are working properly;
 - (b) clear anything stored in it;
 - (c) remove any parts such as cases, lids or covers which have printed instructions or formulae;
 - (d) **do not** bring into the exam room any operating instructions or prepared programs.
- 3 **Do not** use a dictionary or computer spell checker unless you are told otherwise.

D. Instructions during the exam

- 1 Always listen to the invigilator. Always follow their instructions.
- 2 Tell the invigilator at once if:
 - (a) you think you have not been given the right question paper or all of the materials listed on the front of the paper;
 - (b) the question paper is incomplete or badly printed.
- 3 Read carefully and follow the instructions printed on the question paper and/or on the answer booklet.
- 4 **Do not** start writing anything until the invigilator tells you to fill in all the details required on the front of the question paper and/or the answer booklet before you start the exam. **Do not** open the question paper until you are instructed that the exam has begun.
- 5 Remember to write your answers within the designated sections of the answer booklet.
- 6 Do your rough work on the proper exam stationery. Cross it through and hand it in with your answers.
Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use, including those used for rough work.

E. Advice and assistance

- 1 If on the day of the exam you feel that your work may be affected by ill health or any other reason, tell the invigilator.
- 2 Put up your hand during the exam if:
 - (a) you have a problem and are in doubt about what you should do;
 - (b) you do not feel well;
 - (c) you need more paper.
- 3 **You must** not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions.

F. At the end of the exam

- 1 If you have used more than one answer booklet and/or any supplementary answer sheets, place them in the correct order.
Place any loose additional answer sheets inside your answer booklet. Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use.
- 2 **Do not** leave the exam room until told to do so by the invigilator.
- 3 **Do not** take any stationery from the exam room. This includes the question paper, answer booklets used or unused, rough work or any other materials provided for the exam.

Information for candidates

Coursework assessments

Effective from 1 September 2023

Preparing your coursework – good practice

If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your teacher, you **must** tell your teacher who will then record the nature of the assistance given to you.

Your parent/carer may provide you with access to resource materials and discuss your coursework with you. However, they **must not** give you direct advice on what should or should not be included.

If you worked as part of a group on an assignment, you **must** each write up your own account of the assignment. Even if the data you have is the same, the description of how that data was obtained and the conclusions you draw from it should be in your own words.

You **must** meet the deadlines that your teacher gives you. Remember – your teachers are there to guide you. Although they cannot give you direct assistance, they can help you to sort out any problems before it is too late.

Take care of your work and keep it safe. **Don't** leave it lying around where your classmates can find it or share it with anyone, including posting it on social media. You **must always** keep your coursework secure and confidential whilst you are preparing it; **do not** share it with your classmates. If it is stored on the computer network, keep your password secure. Collect all copies from the printer and destroy those you do not need.

Don't be tempted to use any pre-prepared or generated online solutions and try to pass them off as your own work – this is cheating. Electronic tools used by awarding bodies can detect this sort of copying.

You **must not** write inappropriate, offensive or obscene material.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts, ideas or outputs and trying to pass them off as your own. **It is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously.**

Don't think you won't be caught; there are many ways to detect plagiarism.

- Markers can spot changes in the style of writing and use of language.
- Markers are highly experienced subject specialists who are very familiar with work on the topic concerned – they may have read the source you are using, or even marked the work you have copied from!
- Internet search engines and specialised computer software can be used to match phrases or pieces of text with original sources and to detect changes in the grammar and style of writing or punctuation.

Penalties for breaking the regulations

If your work is submitted and it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following penalties will be applied:

- the piece of work will be awarded zero marks;
- you will be disqualified from that unit for that examination series;
- you will be disqualified from the whole subject for that examination series;
- you will be disqualified from all subjects and barred from entering again for a period of time.

The awarding body will decide which penalty is appropriate.

REMEMBER - IT'S YOUR QUALIFICATION SO IT NEEDS TO BE YOUR OWN WORK