

Candidate  
exam  
handbook

2024/25

# Contents

Contents .....	2
Introduction .....	3
Information you will receive about your exams and assessments.....	3
Information about coursework/controlled assessment .....	3
Where you will take your exams.....	3
What time your exams will start.....	3
Supervision during your exams .....	4
Exam conditions.....	4
Where you will sit in the exam room.....	4
What equipment you need to bring to your exams .....	5
What you should not bring into the exam room .....	5
What you should wear for your exams .....	5
What to do if you arrive late for an exam.....	5
What will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room .....	6
Malpractice in exams and the penalties imposed .....	6
Access arrangements for exams.....	6
Results day .....	8
Certificates.....	8
Appendix 1 .....	9
JCQ Information for Candidates –Privacy Notice .....	9
Appendix 2 .....	12
Internal Appeals & EAR Services .....	12
Appendix 3 .....	
Information to candidates on coursework assessment .....	14

## Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to guide you through the exam and assessment process and answer any questions you may have.

### Information you will receive about your exams and assessments



There are up to four exam series throughout the year, depending on the qualifications available. These are November, January, March and June. You will receive a timetable of any exams you have been entered for.



### Information about coursework/controlled assessment

Throughout the year you may be required to undertake coursework and controlled assessments. These will be sent to a moderator for marking and count towards your final grade. More information can be found in Appendix 3 of this document.

### Where you will take your exams

All exams take place in the school classrooms, you will be notified, prior to your exam, which room you should go to and at what time.

### What time your exams will start

The published start time for examinations is 9am for a morning exam and 1.30pm for an afternoon exam. Occasionally we may alter the time, but you will be notified in advance.



## Supervision during your exams

During exams staff act as Invigilators. An invigilator has a key role in upholding the integrity of the external exam.

The role of the invigilator is to ensure that the exam is conducted according to regulations. They must:

- Ensure all candidates have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities;
- Ensure the security of the exam before, during and after the exam;
- Prevent possible candidate malpractice;
- Prevent possible administrative failures.
- Be able to observe each candidate in the exam room at all times;



They must not

- Assist the candidates in any way

Quiet Please



Genius @ Work!

### Exam conditions

Candidates must only enter the exam room when told to do so by an invigilator or the Exams Officer. You will be under exam conditions from the moment you enter the exam room until you are given permission to leave. You must listen to and follow the instructions at all times in the exam room, and must not communicate with other candidates.

### Where you will sit in the exam room

The invigilators will show you where to sit and you will have a candidate slip on your desk with your personal details on.

## What equipment you need to bring to your exams

Candidates are not required to bring any equipment into the exam room. It will all be provided.

## What you should not bring into the exam room

The following items are prohibited from the exam room and failure to hand them in could lead to disqualification:

- iPods/Any watches
- Mobile phones
- MP3/4 players
- Any potential technological/web enabled sources of information
- Cans
- Pencil cases
- Scarves, gloves, hoodies, caps or hats
- Bags
- Food, sweets etc



This list is not exhaustive.

## What you should wear for your exams

You must wear your full uniform for all exams.



## What to do if you arrive late for an exam

If you arrive late for an exam you may not be able to sit it. The awarding body will be notified and may not accept your exam script.

## What will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room

In the event of an emergency evacuation, you will be asked to leave all possessions and the exam scripts on the desk and follow the invigilators. You must remember that you are still under exam conditions and must not communicate with each other or anybody else. Upon returning to the exam room your time will recommence to ensure you have the full working time set.



## Malpractice in exams and the penalties imposed

If a candidate is suspected of malpractice they may be removed from the exam room. The awarding body will be informed and may disqualify them. The invigilator will record what has happened and report to the EO/Head of Centre immediately. More about malpractice can be found on Appendix 3 of this booklet.

## Access arrangements for exams

Prior to being entered for any examinations you will be assessed to see if you require any assistance during exams. Some students may need help with reading or writing and an application is submitted to JCQ. If you have an arrangement for a reader and/or a scribe a member of staff will work specifically with you during the exam. You will also be given a memory aid prior to the exam starting explaining exactly what you can ask them to do.



A brief explanation of our main arrangements are below.

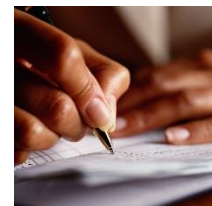
## The rules for staff acting as a reader

- **may** help a vision impaired candidate retrieve information found in diagrams, graphs, maps and tables so that he/she has access to the same visual information as a sighted candidate. The candidate **must** make clear what help they requires;
- **may** read numbers printed in figures as words (e.g. 356 would be read as three hundred and fifty-six, but when reading the number it should also be pointed to on the question paper). An exception would be when the question is asking for a number to be written in words (e.g. write the number 356 in words);
- **may** decode symbols and unit abbreviations in Maths and Science examinations for candidates who require this arrangement to access the assessment, reflecting the candidate's current and normal way of working within the centre;
- **may**, if requested, give the spelling of a word which appears on the paper but otherwise spellings **must not** be given;
- **may** read back, when requested, what the candidate has written without any emphasis on any errors;

- **must** read accurately;
- **must** have appropriate subject knowledge in order to act effectively as a reader in Maths and Science examinations, and decode symbols and formulae with accuracy;
- **must** only read the instructions of the question paper and questions, and must not explain or clarify;
- **must** only repeat the instructions of the question paper or questions when a candidate indicates a specific need for help;
- **must** only read the instructions/rubric of a paper testing reading and must not read individual questions or text
- **must abide by the regulations since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the candidate;**
- **must not** advise the candidate regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, nor the order in which questions should be answered;
- **must not** decode any symbols in a Music examination.

### **The rules for staff acting as a scribe**

- **must** type or write accurately, and at a reasonable speed, what the candidate has said;
- **must** draw or add to maps, diagrams and graphs strictly in accordance with the candidate's instructions, unless the candidate is taking a design paper, in which case a scribe will only be permitted to assist with the written parts of the paper;
- **must** abide by the regulations since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the candidate;
- **must** write or word process a correction on a typescript or Braille sheet if requested to do so by the candidate;
- **must** immediately refer any problems in communication during the examination to the invigilator or examinations officer;
- **must not** give factual help to the candidate or indicate when the answer is complete;
- **must not** advise the candidate on which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, or the order in which questions should be answered;
- **may**, at the candidate's request, read back what has been recorded.



### **Prompter**

Staff may be asked to act as a prompter for a candidate where they persistently lose concentration or have little or no sense of time. In these instances they will be required to keep the candidate focussed on the need to answer a question and then move onto answering the next. They must not give any factual help to the candidate.

## Results day



You will receive a letter from school confirming the date and time you will be able to obtain your results. On results days there will always be a senior member of staff available to talk to. You can find information about Post Results Services in this handbook.

## Certificates

Once certificates arrive in school they will be posted to you by first class post and will require a signature upon delivery. It is important that you let us know if you change your address, even if you have left the school. Certificates cannot be replaced, so you must ensure you keep them safe.



## JCQ Information for Candidates –Privacy Notice



### Information for Candidates

#### Information About You and How We Use It

You have entered general or vocational qualifications such as GCSE, A-level, functional skills qualifications etc with one or more of the awarding bodies listed above. In order to be able to provide examinations and assessments, the awarding body needs to collect and use information about you. This notice provides you with a high level summary of the information the awarding body is required by law to give you about what happens to that information. For more detail see each awarding body's full Privacy Notice:

AQA	<a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/about-us/privacy-notice">https://www.aqa.org.uk/about-us/privacy-notice</a>
CCEA	<a href="https://ccea.org.uk/legal/privacy-notice">https://ccea.org.uk/legal/privacy-notice</a>
City & Guilds	<a href="https://www.cityandguilds.com/help/help-for-learners/learner-policy">https://www.cityandguilds.com/help/help-for-learners/learner-policy</a>
NCFE	<a href="https://www.ncfe.org.uk/legal-information">https://www.ncfe.org.uk/legal-information</a>
OCR	<a href="https://www.ocr.org.uk/about/our-policies/website-policies/privacy-policy/">https://www.ocr.org.uk/about/our-policies/website-policies/privacy-policy/</a>
Pearson	<a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/about-us/qualification-brands/qdpr.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/about-us/qualification-brands/qdpr.html</a>
WJEC	<a href="https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/privacy-policy/">https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/privacy-policy/</a>

#### Who we are and how to contact us

Each awarding body is a separate organisation. Your school or examination centre will be able to confirm to you which awarding body is delivering each qualification you are undertaking and you will receive a statement confirming what qualifications you have been entered for and which awarding body. You will find links to each awarding body's website and information on how to contact them here: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/contact-our-members/>

#### Information about you and from where it is obtained

Each awarding body whose qualifications you enter will need to use a variety of information about you. This includes obvious identification details such as your name, address, date of birth and your school or examination centre. It also includes information about your gender, race and health, where appropriate. This information is provided by you or your parents/guardians and/or by your school or examination centre.

Each awarding body will create certain information about you such as a candidate number, examination results and certificates.

You will find further information about this in the awarding bodies' full Privacy Notice (see links above) or by contacting the awarding body (see above).

### **What happens to the information about you**

The awarding bodies use the information about you to deliver the examinations and assessments which you have entered. This includes making a variety of arrangements for you to sit the examinations or assessments, marking, providing you and your school or centre with results and certificates. The awarding bodies also use some of the information about you for equality monitoring and other statistical analysis.

The awarding bodies may share information about your results with official bodies such as the Department for Education and the examinations regulators (e.g. Ofqual in England) and also relevant local authorities and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). An awarding body may also use information about you to investigate cheating and other examination malpractice and will share information about malpractice with other awarding bodies.

The awarding bodies take the security of the information about you that they hold seriously.

You will find further, technical information about what the awarding bodies do with information about you, why and the legal basis in the awarding bodies' full Privacy Notice, which can be accessed here (see links on page one) or by contacting the awarding body (see above).

### **Your rights**

The law gives you a number of rights in relation to the information about you that the awarding bodies hold. Those rights are:

- Access – you are entitled to ask each awarding body about the information it holds about you.
- Rectification – you are entitled to ask each awarding body to correct any errors in the information that it holds about you.
- Erasure – in certain circumstances you are entitled to ask each awarding body to erase the information about you that it holds.
- Object to or restrict processing – in certain circumstances you are entitled to ask each awarding body to stop using information about you in certain ways.
- Complain – you are entitled to complain to the Information Commissioner (the body regulating the use of personal information) about what each awarding body does with information about you.

You will find further information about your rights in relation to information about you in the awarding bodies' full Privacy Notice, which can be accessed here (see links on page one) or by contacting the awarding body (see above).

### **How long the information about you is held**

Each awarding body retains information about you only for as long as it is needed. Some of the information is needed only during the period in which you are undertaking the examination or assessment and is securely destroyed a short while afterwards. Other information about you, such as your name, gender, address, qualification and subjects entered and the results, are held indefinitely and for at least 40 years.

Each awarding body has its own retention policy that sets out what information it retains, how it is retained and for how long. You can find out more about retention policies by contacting each awarding body (see above).

### **How to find out more about the information about you that the awarding bodies use**

To find out more about the information about you that the awarding bodies collect and use, including what happens to that information and why, you can review the awarding bodies' full Privacy Notice, which can be accessed here (see links on page one) or contact the awarding body. You will find links to each awarding body's website and information on how to contact them here: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/contact-our-members/>.

### **Please note**

It is important to note that this notice concerns only how the awarding bodies use information about you (called your "personal data"). Complaints about how an awarding body handles your personal data can be made to the Information Commissioner ([www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)). Information about the examinations and assessments themselves, including the rules about assessments, can be found on the JCQ Exams Office pages ([www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office)). The awarding bodies are regulated by Ofqual (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>) in England; Qualifications Wales ([www.qualificationswales.org](http://www.qualificationswales.org)) in Wales, and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (<http://ccea.org.uk/regulation>) in Northern Ireland.

# Policy on Appeals against internal assessment of work for external qualifications

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## Policy Details

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<b>Status:</b>	<b>In-house</b>
<b>Frequency of review:</b>	<b>Yearly</b>
<b>Lead member of staff:</b>	<b>Karl Adamski</b>
<b>Last reviewed:</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2023</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2025</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	<b>FE1</b>

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## 1.0 Policy

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The Smith Foundation is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assesses students work for external qualification; this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments are conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity. The centre is committed to ensuring that assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant specifications for each subject. Where a set of work is divided between staff, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency.

If a student feels that this may not have happened in relation to his work, he may make use of this appeals procedure. Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade submitted by the centre for moderation by the awarding body.

This procedure is available from the Exams Officer.

1. Appeals should be made as early as possible and at least three weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examination series (e.g. the last GCSE written paper in the June GCSE exam series).
2. Appeals should be made in writing by the candidate's parent/carer to the Exams Officer, who will investigate the appeal with at least two other members of staff who have not been involved in the internal assessment decision. If the Exams Officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, the [Principal](#) will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. This will also be the case if the Exam Officer is not able to conduct the investigation for some other reason.
3. The purpose of the appeal will be to decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the awarding body and the examinations code of practice of the QCA.
4. The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any relevant correspondence with the awarding body and any changes made to the procedure relating to internal assessment.
5. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the [Principal](#) and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of the Smith Foundation and is not covered by this procedure. If you have concerns about it, please ask the Exams Officer for a copy of the appeals procedure of the relevant awarding body.

### 1. Exam board reviews of results

**Review of marking:** exam boards review their marking to ensure your work was marked accurately in line with the mark scheme

**Review of moderation:** exam boards review the moderation of the coursework from your school or college to ensure it was done fairly, reliably and consistently

**Clerical re-check:** exam boards re-check that all marks have been included and added up correctly

### 2. Appeal

Your school or college can only request an appeal after the exam board has reviewed your result.

A preliminary appeal can take up to 42 calendar days. If your school or college believes the preliminary appeal has not addressed the issue, it can decide to submit an application for an appeal hearing and that can take up to 70 calendar days.

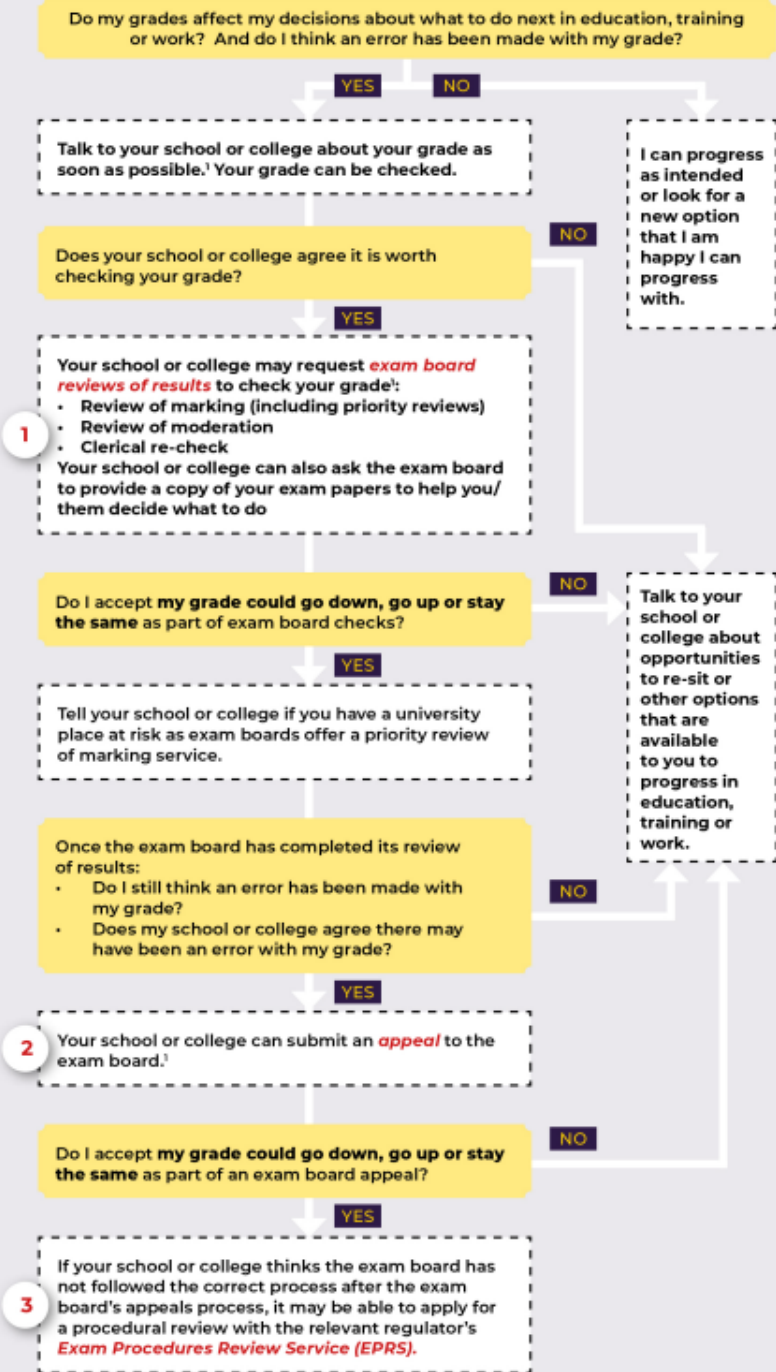
*Please note, appeals are not the first step in checking your grade.*

### 3. Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS)

Your school or college can only ask the relevant regulator to review what the exam board has done after the exam board has completed the appeal hearing.

The EPRS will look at whether the exam board has followed the regulator's rules and its own procedures. It will not review your work and cannot change your grade. The relevant regulator can ask the exam board to look at your appeal again if they think the exam board made a mistake.

Not all qualifications are covered by the EPRS so please check the relevant regulator's website (Ofqual, CCEA Regulation or Qualifications Wales) for more information.



<sup>1</sup> If you are a private candidate, you can apply directly to your exam board for a review of your result and an appeal. If not, you must talk to your school or college and they will contact the exam board as needed.

This section tells you about some things that you **must** and **must not** do when you are completing coursework.

When you submit any coursework for marking, you will be asked to sign an authentication statement confirming that you have read and followed these regulations.

If there is anything that you do not understand, you must ask your teacher.

In some subjects you will have an opportunity to do some independent research into a topic. The research you do may involve looking for information in published sources such as textbooks, encyclopaedia's, journals, TV, radio and on the internet.

You can demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject by using information from sources or generated from sources which may include the internet and AI. Remember though, you must take care how you use this material – you cannot copy it and claim it as your own work.

The regulations state that:

'the work which you submit for assessment must be your own';

'you must not copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you'.

If you use the same wording as a published source, you must place quotation marks around the passage and state where it came from. This is called 'referencing'. You must make sure that you give detailed references for everything in your work which is not in your own words. A reference from a printed book or journal should show the name of the author, the year of publication and the page number, for example: (Morrison, 2000, p29).

For material taken from the internet, your reference should show the date when the material was downloaded and must show the precise web page, not the search engine used to locate it. This can be copied from the address line. For example: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthistoday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/newsid\\_2621000/2621915.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthistoday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/newsid_2621000/2621915.stm), downloaded 5 February 2024.

Where computer-generated content has been used (such as an AI Chatbot), your reference must show the name of the AI bot used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>), 25/01/2024. You should retain a copy of the computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes.

You may be required to produce a bibliography at the end of your work. This must list the full details of publications you have used in your research, even where these are not directly referred to, for example: Curran, J. *Mass Media and Society* (Hodder Arnold, 2005).

**If you copy the words, ideas or outputs of others and do not show your sources in references and a bibliography, this will be considered as cheating.**

### **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**