



STUDENT EXAM HANDBOOK

2024/25



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Introduction

John O'Gaunt is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the examination and assessment process and are made aware of the required JCQ/awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

Purpose of this handbook

The purpose of this handbook is:

- To support the information given to students in exam assemblies
- To inform candidates about malpractice in examinations/assessments
- To inform candidates about the use of their personal data and copyright
- To ensure candidates are provided with all relevant information about their exams and assessments in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To ensure copies of relevant JCQ information for candidates documents and exam room posters are provided in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To answer questions candidates may have etc.
- To inform candidates of/signpost candidates (and where relevant parents/carers) to any exams-related policies/procedures that they need to be made aware of

Malpractice

To maintain the integrity of qualifications, strict regulations are in place. Malpractice means any act or practice which is in breach of the regulations. Any alleged, suspected, or actual incidents of malpractice will be investigated and reported to the relevant awarding body/bodies

JCQ provides information regarding what constitutes malpractice:

- Introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room
- Breaches of examination conditions
- Exchanging, obtaining, receiving, or passing on information which could be examination related (or the attempt to)
- Offences relating to the content of candidates' work
- Undermining the integrity of examinations/assessments

Things not to do on social media

- Buy/share exam or assessment content
- Pass on rumours of what is in exams or assessment
- Share your work
- Work with others so your assessment is not your independent work.

Use of AI in your work

Please be aware that where computer generated content has been used (Such as AI Chatbox), 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/>), 25/01/2025. You **must** submit a copy of the computer-generated content with your work for reference and authentication purposes.

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.

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.

If you are suspected of malpractice the school is obliged to report this to the exam board.

1. The Exams Officer will:
 - Ask the centre staff involved to write witness statements.
 - Advise the candidate about the process, their rights, and timescales involved.
 - Inform the Head of Centre about the incident and may decide to call a senior member of staff to be present in the room when talking to the candidate.
 - Will notify the awarding body and send any relevant evidence.
 - Will confirm actions to the candidate in writing, and their parents/carers.
2. When the awarding body's decision has been received by the Head of Centre, the Exams Officer will advise the candidate and their parents/carers in writing.
3. The candidate has a right to request an appeal if they are not happy with the decision, and the Head of Centre will decide whether this is appropriate. The final decision is made by the Head of Centre.

There are several penalties that could be applied if an exam board decide that malpractice has been committed:

- Letter of warning.
- Marks could be reduced.
- Zero Marks could be awarded for:
 - A paper or unit of an exam
 - A specified subject
 - All the exams for a specified exam board
 - All the exams for a specified exam season.
- Information relating to a serious case of malpractice may be shared with other awarding bodies, the regulators and other appropriate authorities.

Mock Exams

Although malpractice in the mock exams will not be reported to the exam board, candidates and their parents/carers will still be informed of any cases of suspected malpractice and the possible outcome, had the malpractice occurred in a GCSE exam.

Personal data

The awarding bodies collect information about exam candidates, so it is important that it complies with GDPR

[Appendix 3- Information for Candidates- Privacy Notice](#) explains more about what data is collected and how it is used.

Copyright

The copyright of any work created by a candidate and submitted to an awarding body for assessment (referred to as Assessment Materials) belongs to the candidate

By submitting this work, a candidate is granting the awarding body a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use their assessment materials (referred to as Assessment Licence)

If a candidate wishes to terminate the awarding body's rights for anything other than assessing his/her work, the awarding body must be notified by the centre and it is at the discretion of the awarding body whether or not to terminate such rights

Non-examination assessments

Some qualifications include Non-Examination Assessments (NEAs). These are marked by teaching staff in line with the subject specification and then moderated by the exam board.

Check with your subject teacher for NEA deadlines and the course requirements.

All submitted work must be the candidates own. Any words or ideas that are copied without references will be considered as cheating.

Candidates will be informed of their marks before they are submitted to the exam board and given the opportunity to appeal if they think the marking does not meet with the following criteria:

- All NEAs will be marked by staff with appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, who have been trained in this activity.
- The marking will be done fairly, consistently and in line with the specification of the awarding body.
- Work is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. If more than one member of staff is involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking

Refer [Appeal Procedures](#) and [Appendix 1: JCQ information for candidates documents - coursework, non-examination assessments, social media](#) for more information.

Written timetabled exams

For written examinations you will be provided with a statement of entry. This is for you to check that you have been entered for the correct exams at the right tier.

If you notice a mistake on your statement of entry, please speak to the subject teacher or inform Mrs Robinson, the exams officer.

Once entries are confirmed, you will be given an exam timetable which will show the date, time and room for all your written exams.

The JCQ Information for Candidates- written examinations will be printed on the back of your exam timetable. This document outlines the rules for the exams and what to expect.

A copy is also included in this handbook. [See Appendix 2](#)

Contingency sessions - Summer 2025

In the event of a serious national disruption to examinations, the exam bodies and government have agreed upon exam contingency days. This is so any affected exams can be rescheduled.

If there is a change to an examination, schools will be informed.

Any candidates entered for the exams would need to be available to sit the exam at the new time. Therefore, it is good to be aware of these dates and make sure you would be available, should the contingency days be used.

For 2025 for the exam contingency dates are:

11th June (afternoon only)

25th June (all day)

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

A timetable clash is when a candidate is taking two or more examinations in the same session of the same day.

If you have a timetable clash one of the exams will be moved to an alternative time. The alternative time will be given to you alongside your exam timetable.

A clash is the only circumstance, other than if a contingency day is used, that an exam can change time. Changes cannot be made for due to a candidate's personal arrangements, such as a holiday.

If the length of the two exams is less than 3 hours, the two exams will be sat one after the other, with a supervised break of no more than 20 minutes between. The break must take place within the exam room and candidates cannot use the time to revise.

If the total time of the exams exceeds 3 hours, one of the exams can be conducted earlier or later in the day, as appropriate. Candidates would need to remain under supervision, without electronic devices, until both examinations are complete. This is to ensure that candidates can't communicate with candidates who have either sat the exam or are due to sit the exam in a later session.

Where you will take your exams

Exams will mostly be sat in the Sports Hall or in the Pod.

Occasionally, exams will be timetabled in alternative rooms if there are specific requirements that can't be met in either the Sports Hall or the Pod. For example, Media Paper 2, which requires a screen to play video clips.

All rooms will be listed on your exams timetable. If there is a room change candidates and their parents will be informed as early as possible.

What time will your exams will start and finish?

At John O'Gaunt exams start at 9:00am for the morning session. Afternoon times may vary from 13:00 to 13:30 depending on the length of the exam. All times will be listed on candidate's exam timetables.

Mock exams

For the mock exams the exams start at 9:10 and 13:30. This means we can ensure that all exams are complete before the end of the school day. Lunch is usually rearranged for earlier in the day to accommodate this.

Supervision during your exams

Exams are supervised by a team of external invigilators, sometimes supported by internal staff who have invigilator training.

Invigilators are there to make sure that everyone follows the rules and to make sure that the exams remain as fair as possible. They must be highly trained and follow the strict rules and regulations set out by JCO and the awarding bodies.

Exam room conditions

Students will gather in Bear Grylls before their exams. This is where bags and other personal belongings can be left during the exam.

Students who are sitting their exams in the sports hall will be asked to line up on the tennis courts in candidate number order.

Students sitting their exams in the pod will wait outside until invited in by the invigilator.

Candidates are under formal exam conditions from the moment they enter the exam room until they are given permission to leave by the invigilator. This means that they must not have any unauthorised items and they should not communicate with any other candidates during this time. If a candidate communicates with another candidate this must be reported to the exam board as malpractice.

Exam information such as the centre number, subject title, paper number and the start and finish times will be displayed on a whiteboard. A clock will also be visible.

Before the exam begins invigilators will instruct candidates to complete the information on the front of their answer books. **For mock exams students will also need to write the name of their teacher on the front of their paper.** No information must be written on the paper before the invigilator's instruction. The question paper must not be opened until the exam begins.

If you need additional answer sheets during an exam, please put up your hand and ask for some from the invigilator.

All students are expected to stay until the end of the examination. No candidate should leave without permission from the invigilator, exams officer or senior member of staff. Leaving the room without permission will be reported as malpractice.

Where you will sit in the exam room

In both the Sports Hall and the Pod candidates are seated on individual desks that are placed in rows.

In the Pod students will have an assigned seat, which will be the same for every exam (unless a different room is required).

In the Sports Hall, the seat will vary depending on the exam and the tier that is being sat. Students will be directed into the hall with other candidates sitting the same paper. Invigilators will help lead students to the correct seat where their exam card is displayed.

How your identity is confirmed in the exam room

Invigilators are required to establish the identity of all students sitting exams.

Exam cards which include a candidate's legal name, exam number, any access arrangements and a photograph will be displayed on each desk to help identify students.

What equipment you need to bring to your exams

It is suggested that you have the following equipment for your exams:

- Clear pencil case
- **BLACK** Biro x 2 (the only colour accepted by the exam boards)
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Pencil sharpener
- Protractor/compass
- Ruler
- Calculator (if allowed)
- Highlighters (these can only be used to highlight question papers, not on written answers)

Using calculators

The instructions on the question paper will say if a calculator is not allowed. If there is no statement regarding calculators this means they are allowed in the exam.

Students are responsible for making sure their calculator meets the requirements on the awarding body.

A calculator must **not** be used for:

- Language translators
- Symbolic algebra manipulation
- Symbolic differentiation or integration
- Communication with other machines or the internet

Calculators must not be passed between students in an exam

Calculators must not contain any prestored information

If calculators have an 'exam mode' function, this is permitted.

What you must not bring into the exam room

The following items must not be brought into the exam room:

- AirPods;
- Earphones/earbuds;
- iPods;
- Mobile phones;
- MP3/4 players or similar devices;
- Watches.
- Labels on water bottles
- Notes

These items can be placed in the locked filing cabinet outside the sports hall or in the box in the pod. If students are found to have any of these items in their possessions this would need to be reported as malpractice.

Food and drink in exam rooms

- Water is permitted in the exam room. It must be in a clear bottle free of labels.
- Food is not permitted in the exam room

What you should wear for your exams

Students should wear their full school uniform for exams, including appropriate school shoes.

Where your personal belongings will be stored during your exam

Personal belongings can be left in Bear Grylls before the start of the exam.

Electronic items and other items of value can be placed in the locked filing cabinet outside the sports hall or in the designated boxes in the Pod.

What to do if you arrive late for your exam

If you arrive late to the exam you will still be allowed to sit it with the full-time allowance. However, if you arrive very late for an exam (more than an hour after the start time) the exam board might not accept your script.

It is recommended that you aim to arrive on time so you can feel prepared and calmly sit your exam. If there are unavoidable circumstances that mean you are late, it is recommended that you contact the school

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

Mock exams

If you are unwell on the day of your mock exam, please contact the school via the absence line. We will try to reschedule the mock exam for another time.

GCSE Exams

If you are unwell on the day of a GCSE exam and are unable to attend please contact the school. If you are able to provide medical evidence the school might be able to apply for special consideration. To qualify for special consideration a candidate must meet the awarding bodies' minimum requirement of having completed at least one component or 15% of the total assessment. Special Consideration cannot be applied for without sufficient evidence to support the application.

If you are unwell but are able to attend the exam then let the school know. If a candidate is disadvantaged by an illness on the day of the exam, they may be eligible for special consideration.

If you feel unwell during an exam, please raise your hand and alert an invigilator.

What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from your exam

If you are absent from an exam the school will contact home. If there is not an acceptable reason for the absence, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

The candidate will not receive a mark for the missed component and they could be recharged the entry fee for the exam.

What happens in the event of an emergency in the exam room?

In the unlikely event of an emergency, candidates must follow the instructions of the invigilators.

Candidates will be asked to stop writing

If an evacuation is necessary, all exam papers will be left in the exam room and answer booklets will be closed. Invigilators will lead students to the evacuation point where they will take the register.

If possible, candidates will remain under exam conditions until the exam is able to resume.

Invigilators will note how long the disruption lasts and candidates will be given the full time to complete the exam

A full report will be submitted to the awarding body, including an application for special consideration where candidates have been disadvantaged by the disruption.

Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

Access arrangements are awarded to candidates as a reasonable adjustment where assessment arrangements would put a candidate at a disadvantage.

All applications for access arrangements are made by the SENDCo where there is sufficient evidence to support an application.

All candidates and their parents/carers will be informed of the agreed access arrangements ahead of the examination

Some students will take their exams in the POD to facilitate their access arrangements.

Results

GCSE Results Day 2025 is on Thursday 21st August.

Students will be able to collect their results from gam and senior members of staff will be available on the day to answer any queries.

If a candidate is not able to attend results day in person, they can nominate someone to collect the results on their behalf. There is a form on the school website that must be completed before this can happen.

Alternatively, results can be posted if a stamped, addressed envelope is handed in to the school office before results day.

Post-results services

There are several post results services available.

Including:

Clerical Check- Your exam paper is checked to ensure marks have been correctly totalled. There is a fee for this service.

Review of marking- Your exam paper is checked to make sure it was marked correctly according to the mark scheme. Marks are changed only if the new examiner feels the mark scheme was not applied correctly. You also get a copy of your reviewed script. There is a fee for this service.

Access to script- You get a copy of your exam paper back

All post-results services must be requested within the deadline by completing a form that is issued on results day.

More information about the deadlines, fees and services will be sent to candidates in a letter.

On results day candidates will be asked to complete a form, indicating if they give consent for John O'Gaunt School to access their exam scripts. Without this permission the school will be unable to provide students with access to their script via post-result services or look at a paper to advise on whether a review of marking or clerical check might be appropriate.

Certificates

Certificates are distributed on Prize Giving which usually takes place in January.

If candidates are unable to collect their certificate at prize giving, they can be signed for at the school office.

If a candidate would like for someone else to collect their certificates on their behalf, they need to complete the form on the school website to give them permission to do so.

Unclaimed certificates only need to be retained by the centre for a year. After that, they can be confidentially destroyed or returned to the awarding body.

Internal appeals procedure

Some qualifications contain a non-examination component with internally assessed marks. Before the work is sent to the exam board to be moderated candidates must be made aware of their mark and given the opportunity to appeal that mark if they feel the marking did not meet the following requirements:

- All NEAs will be marked by staff with appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, who have been trained in this activity.
- The marking will be done fairly, consistently and in line with the specification of the awarding body.
- Work is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. If more than one member of staff is involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking

Upon request, copies of materials will be made available to the candidate within 2 working days

The deadline to request a review of marking must be made within 5 working days of the candidate receiving copies of the requested materials

The process for completing the review, making any changes to marks, and informing the candidate of the outcome will be completed within 10 working days, all before the awarding body's deadline for the submission of mark

For further information see the exams page of the school website.

APPENDIX 1

JCQ Information for candidates – non-examination assessments

You **must** read this information if you are undertaking qualifications that contain components of non-examination assessment.

Document can be viewed online here: https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/IFC-NE_Assessments_2024_FINAL.pdf

APPENDIX 2

JCQ Information for candidates – Written examinations

This document can be viewed online: https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/IFC-Written_Examinations_2024_FINAL.pdf

APPENDIX 3

JCQ Information for candidates – social media

You **must** read this information to help you stay within examination/assessment regulations when using social media.

Document can be viewed online here: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/JCQ-Social-Media-Infographic-v6.pdf>

APPENDIX 4

JCQ *Unauthorised items* poster

This poster will be displayed outside each exam room. You **must** note that "*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.*"

Document can be viewed online here: https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022-Unauthorised-Items-poster-live-text_September22.pdf

APPENDIX 5

JCQ *Warning to candidates* poster

This poster will be displayed outside each exam room. You **must** note all the warnings.

Document can be viewed online here: https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Warning-to-candidates-poster_2024_5.pdf