

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS

EXAMINATIONS SUMMER 2024



School Reception

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Exams Office

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INTRODUCTION

It is our aim to make the examination experience as stress-free, informed and successful as possible for all candidates.

Please read this booklet carefully and keep it to hand so that you are aware of the examination regulations and the procedures to follow in the event of any problems occurring.

The awarding bodies (or examination boards) set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations. You should therefore, pay particular attention to the **Warning to Candidates** and **Information for Candidates** that are printed at the back of this guide. These will also be displayed outside the examination rooms on the day of your exam.

If there is anything you do not understand or any question that has not been addressed, PLEASE ASK.

If you or your parents have any queries or need help or advice at any time before, during or after the examinations please contact the Exams Office.

Remember – we are here to help.

Key dates for 2024 GCSE Exams	
End March 2024	Individual Exam Timetables distributed to students
Monday, 9 th May 2024	First exam on national timetable
Wednesday, 19 th June 2024	Last exam on national timetable
6 th June, 13 th June and 26 th June 2024	Exam contingency dates
Thursday, 22nd August 2024	Results Day. Collection from school from 9.30am to 11.30am, or posted out first class.
5 th September 2024	Final date to apply for Review of Marking
Beginning November 2024	Arrival of certificates at school - students informed how to collect nearer the time.

BEFORE THE EXAMINATIONS

INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE TIMETABLE:

- All Candidates receive an individual candidate timetable from school indicating the subjects they have been entered for and the levels of entry, where applicable. Please check that these are correct. Some subjects only have one tier of entry, some have Foundation or Higher tiers.
If you think something is wrong, contact the Exams Office as soon as possible.

EXAMINATION BOARDS:

- The school uses the following Examination Boards: AQA, Edexcel (Pearson), OCR, WJEC and NCFE.

CANDIDATE NAME:

- Candidates are entered under the name format of (legal) First Name + One optional middle initial + (legal) Surname, e.g. Adam J. Smith.

CANDIDATE NUMBER:

- Each candidate has a unique four-digit candidate number (sometimes referred to as 'exam number'). This is the number you will enter on examination papers. It will appear next to your name on seating plans and examination registers and on your individual candidate timetable.

UCI:

- In addition to a candidate number, each candidate must have a Unique Candidate Identifier (12 numbers and 1 letter) which is shown on the top of your individual candidate timetable. This number will usually begin with the Centre Number (53609) unless you have transferred from another school that had already issued your UCI. Your UCI is used for administration purposes and it is not necessary for you to remember it.

ULN:

- A Unique Learner Number (ULN) is a 10-digit identifier which is applied to the Personal Learning Record of anyone over the age of 14 involved in UK education and training. Learners will retain the same number for accessing their Personal Learning Record throughout their lives, whatever their level of learning and wherever they choose to participate. Your ULN is used for administration purposes and it is not necessary for you to remember it.

EXAM TIMETABLE

- A copy of the school's general Summer 2024 GCSE timetable is available from the school website and will be advertised on the Exams Noticeboard in school.
- Students will be issued with a full, personalised timetable nearer to the time of their exams.
- Some candidates may have a clash where two subjects are timetabled at the same time. The school will make special timetable arrangements for these candidates only. If you think there is a clash on your timetable that has not been resolved, please speak to Susie Ballerstedt in the Exams Office immediately.
- Exam boards will allocate contingency dates for students who miss exams due to unavoidable circumstances. You are asked to ensure that you are available for these dates in case it is called on.

CONTACT NUMBERS

- Please check that the school has at least one up-to-date contact number for you.

EQUIPMENT

- Make sure you have all the correct equipment before your examinations. Check the regulations in the Notice to Candidates (see Appendix) and the information on the following pages.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- Some candidates will have access arrangements in place for their examinations, such as Readers, Scribes and Extra Time. Invigilators will be aware of which candidates are eligible for which access arrangements.
- If you are unsure of any access arrangements you may have, or need clarification, please contact the Exams Office who will advise.
- If you believe you have access arrangements in place, but these have not been applied to your exams, please alert the invigilator at the time of the exam.
- Candidates who use aids such as coloured overlays to assist their reading may take these into the exam room.
- Students who use their mobile phones to monitor health conditions are exempt from the mobile phone ban and will be allowed to take their phone into exams under supervision.

DURING THE EXAMINATIONS

EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

- Information for candidates can be read [here](#). Schools are required to bring these to the attention of exam candidates before they are entered for exams. Please make sure you take time to read these as they clearly set out the expectations of candidate behaviour when undertaking qualifications.

ATTENDANCE AT EXAMINATIONS

- Candidates are responsible for checking their own timetable and arriving at school on the correct day and time, in school uniform and equipped with the correct stationery. Candidates must arrive **10 minutes prior** to the start time of their examination. Please wait quietly outside your exam room until you are invited to enter by the examination invigilators.
- Candidates who arrive **late** for an examination will still be admitted and allowed the full time of the exam. However, if you arrive later than one hour after the published start time (that's the national start time set by exam boards: 9am for morning sessions and 1.30pm for afternoon sessions) you may not be allowed to take the examination.
- **All late arrivals must report to Reception immediately** where the Exams Officer will be called. **Do not go directly to the exam room.**
- All items of equipment, pens, pencils, mathematical instruments, etc. should be visible to the invigilators at all times. You must either use a **transparent pencil case** or **clear plastic bag**.
- Pens should be **black ink or ballpoint**. No gel pens, highlighters, erasers or correction pens are allowed in your answers. If you wish to cross out a mistake, do this neatly with one or two lines.
- For Mathematics and Science exams, students should make sure their **calculators** conform to the examination regulations and **do not store any data prior to the exam**. If in doubt, check with your teacher. Remove any covers or instructions before entering the exam, and make sure batteries are in good working order.
- Candidates must take off any **watches** and leave these outside the exam room.
- Candidates must remove all items from pockets before entering the exam room.
- Do not attempt to communicate with or distract other candidates once inside the exam room.

- Examination regulations are very strict regarding items that may be taken into the examination room (see FAQs at the end of this booklet). If you break these rules you will be disqualified from the examination.
- **Mobile telephones and any device that can store information/data MUST NOT BE BROUGHT INTO THE EXAMINATION ROOM.** If a mobile phone (or any other type of electronic communication or storage device) is found in your possession during an examination (even if it is turned off) it will be removed from the exam and a report made to the appropriate exam board.
- The school cannot accept responsibility for **items of value** that must be left outside the examination room. Please consider leaving such items at home or place them in your school locker prior to the exam. If you leave bags in open spaces outside the examination room, please do not obstruct gangways and doorways.
- **No food** is allowed in the examination rooms, drinking water is available from the invigilators upon request. If you wish to bring a bottle of still water into the exam room it must be in a **clear plastic bottle** with all labels removed. No other drinks are allowed.
- Please do not write on examination desks. This is regarded as vandalism and you will be asked to pay for any damage.
- Do not draw graffiti or write offensive comments on examination papers – the examination board may refuse to accept your paper. Do not deface the bar code on exam papers, this will hamper your entry.
- Listen carefully to **instructions and notices** read out by the invigilators – there may be amendments to the exam paper that you need to know about. If you cannot hear the invigilator or are unsure of their instructions, please ask them to repeat the instructions before the exam starts.
- Check you have the **correct question paper** – check the subject, paper and tier of entry and compare this to your candidate ticket which will be on your desk. If you think something is wrong, clearly put up your hand and alert an invigilator immediately.
- Read all **instructions** carefully and number your answers clearly.
- Candidates must stay in the examination room for the duration of the exam. You will not be allowed to leave an examination room early. If you have finished early, use any time remaining to check over your answers and that you have completed your details correctly on the front page.
- At the end of the examination all work must be handed in. If you have used more than one answer book make sure your name is on the front and you insert these inside the front cover of the main answer book.
- Invigilators will collect your exam papers before you leave the room. This will take a few minutes. Remember you are still under examination conditions until you have left the room.
- Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper must **NOT** be taken from the exam room by exam candidates.
- Remain seated in silence until told to leave the examination room. Please leave the room in silence and show consideration for other candidates who may still be working.
- If the **fire alarm** sounds during an examination the invigilators will tell you what to do. If you have to evacuate the room you will be asked to leave **in silence** and in the order in which you are sitting. You will be escorted to a designated assembly point. Leave everything on your desk. You must not attempt to communicate with anyone else during the evacuation. When you return

to the exam room do not start writing until the invigilator tells you to. You will be allowed the full working time for the examination and a report will be sent to the awarding body detailing the incident.

- Candidates who use a **word processor/lap top** will have their font size set to 12 and double spacing. Please do not change these settings.

INVIGILATORS

- The school employs external invigilators to conduct external examinations. Students are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards all invigilators and follow their instructions at all times.
- Invigilators are in the examination rooms to supervise the conduct of the examination. They will distribute and collect the examination papers, tell candidates when to start and finish the examination, hand out extra writing paper if required and deal with any problems that occur during the examination, for example if a candidate is feeling ill.
- Please note that invigilators cannot discuss the examination paper with you or explain the questions.
- If you wish to gain the attention of an invigilator during an exam, please raise your hand clearly and the invigilator will come to you.
- Pupils who are disruptive or behave in an unacceptable manner will be removed from the examination room by invigilators and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

ABSENCE FROM EXAMINATIONS

- If you experience difficulties during the examination period (e.g. illness, injury, bereavement) please inform school at the earliest possible opportunity so we can help or advise you.
- Only in 'exceptional circumstances' are candidates allowed **special consideration** for absence from any part of an examination. It is essential that medical or other appropriate evidence is obtained on the day by the candidate/parent and given to the Examination Officer without delay. A self-certification form (JCQ/ME Form 14) can be obtained from the Examinations Officer which can be countersigned by your doctor or nurse.
- For the award of a grade by special consideration a minimum of 25% of the examination (including coursework) must be completed. If you have not completed at least 25% of the examination, then you will need to resit the whole exam at a later date.
- Parents and candidates are reminded that the school will **require payment of entry fees** should a candidate fail to attend an examination without good reason and without informing the school.
- Please note that **misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.**

AFTER THE EXAMINATIONS

CANDIDATES WITH ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- Candidates who have used word processors/laptops to produce work in the exam must report to the Exams Office immediately after their exam to sign their printed work. Candidates must sign every sheet of paper.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

- **Results will be available for collection on Thursday, 22nd August 2024 between 9.30am and 11.30am in the Assembly Hall.**
- **If you wish any other person** (including family members) **to collect your results on your behalf**, you must give your written authorisation to school before results day. A form is included at the end of this pack. Please ensure you hand it in to Reception in plenty of time. The school cannot release your results to anyone other than you without your permission.
- Candidates who do not collect their results on results day will receive results through the post.
- No results will be given out by telephone under any circumstances.

POST RESULTS

- If you feel that your results are not correct, there is a process in place to query marks. This is called 'Enquiries about Results' (EAR) and you will be sent information about this nearer Results Day. You can make an application for EAR on results day or as soon as possible after you have received your results.

DISTRIBUTION OF CERTIFICATES

- Candidates will be alerted when their certificates are ready for collection from the school.
- Sir James Smith's School is only obliged to keep certificates for a period of one year after issue. If candidates do not collect their certificates within this time (or if they lose their certificates) they can only be replaced by direct application to the appropriate examination boards. This will require proof of identity (such as a birth certificate) and a fee per examination board. You are therefore encouraged to collect your certificates in person as soon as possible and to keep them safe.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What do I do if there's a clash on my timetable?

- The school will re-schedule papers internally (on the same day) where there is a clash of subjects. Candidates will normally sit one paper then have a 20 minute break during which they will be supervised and must not have any communication with other candidates. They will then sit the second subject paper. The relevant times will be on your individual candidate timetable. It may be necessary for you to bring a packed lunch if you have exams in the morning and afternoon as you will have to remain in isolation until both examinations are completed. If in doubt consult the Examinations Officer.

Q. What do I do if I think I have the wrong paper?

- Invigilators will ask you to check before the exam starts. If you think something is wrong put your hand up clearly and tell the invigilator immediately.

Q. What do I do if I forget my Candidate Number?

- Candidate Numbers (or exam numbers) are printed on your timetable, seating plans (which are displayed outside the exam rooms) and the candidate tickets on your exam desks. Invigilators will be able to help you find your number.

Q. What do I do if I forget the school Centre Number?

- The Centre Number is **53609**. It will be clearly displayed in the examination rooms.

Q. What do I do if I have an accident or are ill before the exam?

- Inform school at the earliest opportunity so we can help and advise you. You may need to obtain medical evidence (from your GP or hospital) if you wish the school to make an appeal for Special Consideration on your behalf (see below).

Q. What is an 'Appeal for Special Consideration'?

- Special Consideration is an adjustment to the marks or grades of a candidate who is eligible for consideration. The allowance for Special Consideration is from 0% (consideration given but addition of marks considered inappropriate) to 5% (reserved for exceptional cases). Students should be aware that any adjustment is likely to be small and no feedback is provided by the Awarding Body.
- Candidates will only be eligible for Special Consideration if they have been fully prepared and covered the whole course but performance in the examination or in the production of coursework is affected by adverse circumstances at the time of the exam and beyond their control. Examples of such circumstances may be illness, accident or injury, recent bereavement, domestic crisis at the time of the exam. The Examination Officer must be informed immediately, so that the necessary paperwork can be completed (within 7 days of the last exam session for each subject) and the candidate will be required to provide evidence to support such an application.

Q. What do I do if I feel ill during the exam?

- Put your hand up and an invigilator will assist you. You should inform an invigilator if you feel ill before or during an exam and you feel this may have affected your performance.
- The Exams Officer will make an application for 'special consideration' if appropriate or may award extra time for the candidate to complete their exam if applicable to the situation.

Q. If I'm late can I still sit the examination?

- Provided you are not more than 1 hour late, you will sit the full time for the examination. You should get to school as quickly as possible and report to Reception. A member of staff will escort you to the exam room. You must not enter an examination room without permission once an examination has begun.
- If you start the exam more than 60 minutes after the published starting time, the school must inform the exam board and it is possible that the exam board may decide not to accept your work. Please ensure that you allow enough time to get to school so that if you are delayed (e.g. through transport problems) you will still arrive on time.
- If you are so late that your exam has finished and the other candidates have left the exam room, we are unable to allow you to take the exam.

Q. If I miss the examination can I take it on another day?

- No. Timetables are regulated by the exam boards and you must attend on the given date and time.

Q. What equipment should I bring for my exams?

- For most exams you should bring at least 2 pens (black ink only).
- For some exams you will need a calculator (Maths/Science/Geography), a 30cm ruler (marked with cm and mm), pencil sharpener and rubber, compass, protractor.
- You are responsible for providing your own equipment for examinations. You must not attempt to loan or borrow equipment from another candidate during the examination.
- If your equipment fails during the exam, put up your hand and an invigilator will assist you.

Q. What items are not allowed into the examination room?

- Only material that is listed on question papers is permitted in the examination room and students who are found to have any material that is not allowed will be reported to the awarding body. In such circumstances a student would normally be disqualified from the paper or the subject concerned.
- Bags and coats and any other items not permitted under examination regulations must be left outside the examination room. Do not bring any valuables into school with you when you attend for an examination.
- No food is allowed in the exam room unless with prior agreement from the Exams Officer.
- Mobile telephones must not be brought into the exam room even if they are turned off.
- Scraps of paper and other items must be removed from pockets prior to entering the examination room.

Q. Why can't I bring my mobile telephone into the exam room?

- Being in possession of a mobile phone (or any other electronic device that can potentially connect to the internet) is regarded as cheating and is subject to severe penalty from the awarding bodies:

The minimum penalties are as follows:

Device found on you and turned **ON** – **disqualification from the entire subject award.**

Device found on you and turned **OFF** – **disqualification from the specific paper** you are sitting at the time.

Q. How do I know how long the exam is?

- The length of the examination is shown in minutes on your individual timetable under the heading 'duration'. Invigilators will tell you when to start and finish the exam. They will write the finish time of the exam at the front of the exam room. There will be a clock in all examination rooms. Please ensure that you are familiar with telling the time on analogue clocks as invigilators are not permitted to tell candidates how much time is remaining in an exam.

Q. Can I leave the exam early?

- It is a requirement of the exam boards that you must stay in the examination room for at least one hour after the published start time of the exam (or for the duration of the exam if it is less than one hour). It is not the school's policy to allow candidates to leave the exam room early, as this is disruptive to other candidates. A candidate may not leave the examination room early without the permission of the invigilators or the prior agreement of the Exams Officer.

Q. What do I do if the fire alarm goes?

- The invigilators will tell you what to do. If you must evacuate the room leave everything on your desk and leave the room in silence. You must not attempt to communicate with any other candidates or other students during the evacuation.
- If you can return to the exam room, you must follow the invigilator's instructions and only re-open your exam paper when told to do so. You will be given the full remaining time of the exam time.
- Where this disrupts journeys home, parents and carers will be contacted and alternative transport organised where possible.
- If you are unable to return to the exam room and continue with the exam, you will be supervised by staff members until such a time the exam content is no longer sensitive. The Exams Officer will make a full report to the Awarding Body and apply for 'special consideration' for the whole cohort affected.

Q. Can I go to the toilet during the exam?

- We encourage students to visit the toilet before entering the exam room.
- Once the exam has started, only those students with a 'red card' will be permitted to leave the exam for a toilet break in the first two hours of the exam. Invigilators will be aware of who holds a 'red card'.
- In addition, girls who are having their period will be allowed a supervised toilet break.
- After the first two hours of the exam, students may request a supervised toilet break.

Q. If I have more than one exam on a day can I get lunch at school?

- Pupils who have examinations in both morning and afternoon sessions may obtain lunch from the canteen in the usual way or bring a packed lunch. After the Record of Achievement day you will not be able to access the school canteen so ensure that you bring a packed lunch.

Q. I am entitled to extra time – how will this affect the way I take my exams?

- Some students receive an allowance of 25% extra time. Where possible such candidates will be seated together to minimize disturbance from other candidates who finish earlier. The invigilators will include the additional time when they display the finishing time of your exam on the board.

Q. What do I do if I don't get the grades I need for college?

- Teaching staff will be available to advise you on results day. If you feel strongly that it is necessary to make an enquiry about your result you should first consult the Head of Subject. They will advise whether it is appropriate to request an enquiry. You should be aware that your mark could go down as well as up or stay the same. Applications must be submitted to the Exams Officer. You must complete a candidate consent form and return it with payment to cover the cost (N.B. the cost differs depending upon the examination board but is on average £34.00 per paper).

Q. I have exam access arrangements, but I don't think they've been applied to my exam

- Invigilators are made aware of candidates with access arrangements before the exam starts. There are a multitude of exam concessions, and these are handled in different ways.
- If you think that your arrangements have not been put in place, speak to the invigilator *immediately* – even if the exam has started.

Candidate permission form



Someone else collecting your results?

Results date: Thursday, 22nd August 2024

Results will be available on Thursday, 22nd August in the well of the school hall, from 9.30am to 11.30am.

Uncollected results will be posted out at the end of results day by 1st class mail to the home address held on our system*. If someone else is collecting your results on your behalf, please complete the information below and return to the Exams Office before results day.

Candidate name			
<input type="checkbox"/> I give permission for my representative (insert name) to collect results on my behalf. I confirm that my representative will provide photographic ID on collection.			
Candidate signature		Date	

*Any change of address should be notified in writing to the school office. The centre does not take any responsibility for results information sent out to addresses where this process has not been followed.

Completed forms should be returned to the Exams Office by 21st August 2024
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