



Birchwood
Community High School

**REVISION
ADVICE
MINDFULNESS
PHYSICAL
WELLBEING
SUPPORT
WE ACHIEVE
TOGETHER**

A Guide to Exams

As a Year 11 student, exams are a crucial part of your academic journey. To help you navigate this period with confidence, this guide is based on key information from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and OCR. It provides top tips, important exam rules, and advice on how to avoid common pitfalls, including social media misuse during exams.

Important:

Certificates available from November 2026.

Look out for confirmation on social media for invitation to Presentation Evening.

Results Day:

20 August:
GCSEs,
Cambridge Nationals,
and Level 2 qualifications.

UNDERSTAND YOUR EXAM RULES

JCQ Guidelines are essential to ensure that all students follow the rules and regulations set for exams. Any violation of these rules can lead to penalties, including disqualification...

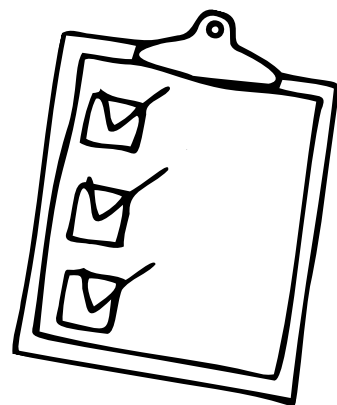
- **What can you take into the exam room?** Bring only the items specified by your school and JCQ into the exam room, such as pens, pencils, rulers, and calculators (if allowed). These items should be carried in a clear pencil case.
- **Prohibited Items:** Mobile phones, smartwatches, and other electronic devices are strictly forbidden. Make sure to leave these at home, in your locker, or with the invigilators before the exam begins. Carrying these items into the exam room, even if you don't use them, can result in disqualification.
- **Always follow School and Exam Invigilator Instructions:** Always listen to the invigilator during exams. If unsure about the exam rules, ask your teacher or exams officer for clarification prior to the start of exams.

JCQ Exam Room Instructions

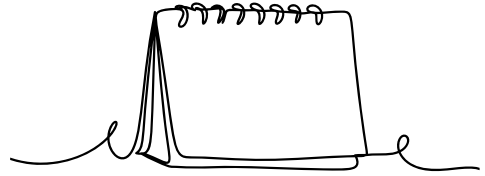
- **Be Punctual:** Arrive 10 minutes before the exam starts to avoid last-minute stress.
- **Communication in Exams:** Talking to or attempting to communicate with other candidates during the exam is prohibited. If you have any questions, raise your hand and speak to the invigilator.
- **Plagiarism:** Copying from or attempting to cheat in any form is strictly against the rules. All work should be your own.
- **Identification:** Make sure you have any ID or candidate information required to sit the exam.

The JCQ document also reminds students to familiarize themselves with the JCQ Information for Candidate booklet.

If you are unsure about any rule or guideline, it's crucial to speak with your teacher or exams officer.



YOUR EXAM TIMETABLE



Keep Track of Exam Dates: Mark down all your exam dates and times (morning or afternoon). Don't forget to note your seat number. Keep your timetable in a safe place and consider taking a screenshot on your phone or have a copy on your fridge at home.

Make a Revision Schedule: Plan your study sessions around your exam timetable. Break up your study time into manageable chunks to avoid burnout and include breaks to recharge.



START YOUR REVISION EARLY

Find Your Revision Style: Whether it's mind maps, flashcards, quizzes, or teaching others, find what works for you. Don't feel pressured to revise the same way as your friends.

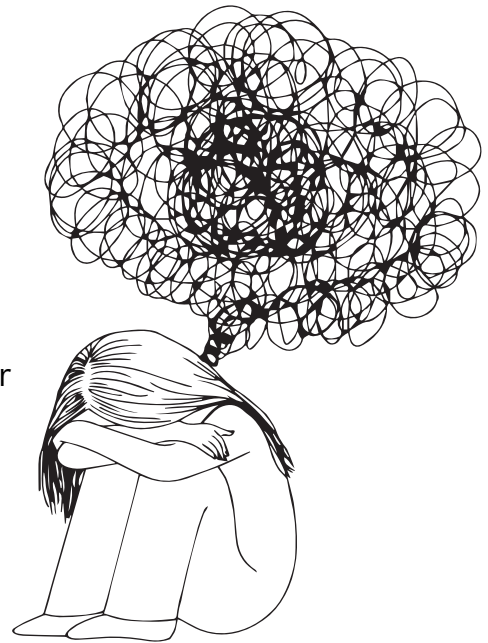
Use Past Papers: Familiarize yourself with past exam papers. This helps you understand question formats and improves your time management during exams.

Beat Procrastination: Everyone procrastinates at times. Create a daily to-do list, eliminate distractions, and stick to your revision plan.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR WELLBEING

Mental Health Matters!

Feeling anxious is normal. If you're feeling overwhelmed, talk to someone—a friend, teacher, or family member. It's okay to ask for help. Exam nerves is completely normal.



Physical Wellbeing

These simple steps can improve your concentration and energy during exams:



1. Get enough sleep.



2. Eat nutritious meals



3. Stay hydrated.

EXAM DAY ESSENTIALS CHECKLIST



Prepare the Night Before:

- ☐ **Pack Your Bag:** Prepare everything you'll need in advance, including...
 - Black pens (always bring a few extras).
 - Pencils, erasers, and rulers (clear pencil case required).
 - Calculator (if allowed for the exam).
 - Any approved materials (like texts for open-book exams).
- ☐ **Check the Exam Rules:** Remind yourself of key exam room rules, including what is allowed and what is prohibited (especially no electronic devices).
- ☐ **Plan Your Morning:** Set your alarm to allow plenty of time to get ready, eat breakfast, and reach the exam venue.

On the Morning of the Exam:

- ☐ **Eat a Nutritious Breakfast:** Choose a balanced meal that will give you energy without making you feel sluggish. Try eggs, whole grains, or fruit, and drink water to stay hydrated.
- ☐ **Double-Check Your Equipment:** Make sure you have all necessary materials in your clear pencil case...
 - Black pens, pencils, ruler, eraser.
 - Calculator (if needed and allowed).

Arriving at the Exam

- ☐ **Arrive Early:** Aim to arrive at least 10 minutes before the exam starts to avoid rushing or panicking.
- ☐ **Leave Electronics Behind:** Remember, no phones, smartwatches, wireless earbuds, or any electronic devices are allowed in the exam room. Store them securely at home, in your locker, or give them to a friend or family member outside.
- ☐ **Bring Water:** You may bring a bottle of water, however it must be in a completely clear bottle with no labels or logos.
- ☐ **Know Your Seat Number:** Familiarize yourself with your seat number to avoid confusion and delay when you enter the exam hall.

Inside the Exam Hall

- ☐ **Listen to the Invigilators:** They are there to ensure the exam runs smoothly. Follow their instructions carefully.
- ☐ **Check Your Exam Paper:** Once seated, make sure you have the correct exam paper—check the subject, title, and level.
- ☐ **Stay Calm:** When the invigilator announces the start of the exam, breathe deeply and take your time reading through the instructions and each question carefully.

Exam Room Do's and Don'ts

- ☐ **No Electronics/Technology Allowed:** Leave electronic devices outside the exam room, including phones, smartwatches, and wireless earbuds. These items are strictly forbidden and could result in disqualification.
- ☐ **Stay Calm and Focused:** When the invigilator says to begin, take a moment to breathe, read the instructions carefully, and allocate your time wisely for each question. If you get stuck, move on to the next question and return to it later.
- ☐ **Instructions During the Exam:**
 - Make sure you check that the question paper has the correct subject, level, and details.
 - When the invigilator tells you to start, take your time reading and understanding the instructions and each question carefully.
 - Always raise your hand and wait for the invigilator if you need assistance during the exam.

Post-Exam: Relax and Reflect

- ☐ **Relax After the Exam:** Once your exam is over, give yourself time to relax and unwind. If you have concerns about your performance, speak to your teacher, but try not to dwell too much on what has already happened.

Social Media Warning

- ☐ **It's tempting to share your exam experiences on social media, but be cautious.** Sharing specific exam details could be a violation of exam rules and lead to disqualification. JCQ and OCR monitor social media for breaches, and even indirect hints about questions could get you into trouble.

Remember: what you post online could have serious consequences for your results.

Warning to candidates



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|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|
|  AQA |  City & Guilds |  CCEA |  NCFE |  OCR |  Pearson |  WJEC |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|



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 examination or 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.

By following these steps and staying focused, you can reduce stress and increase your chances of exam success. Good luck!