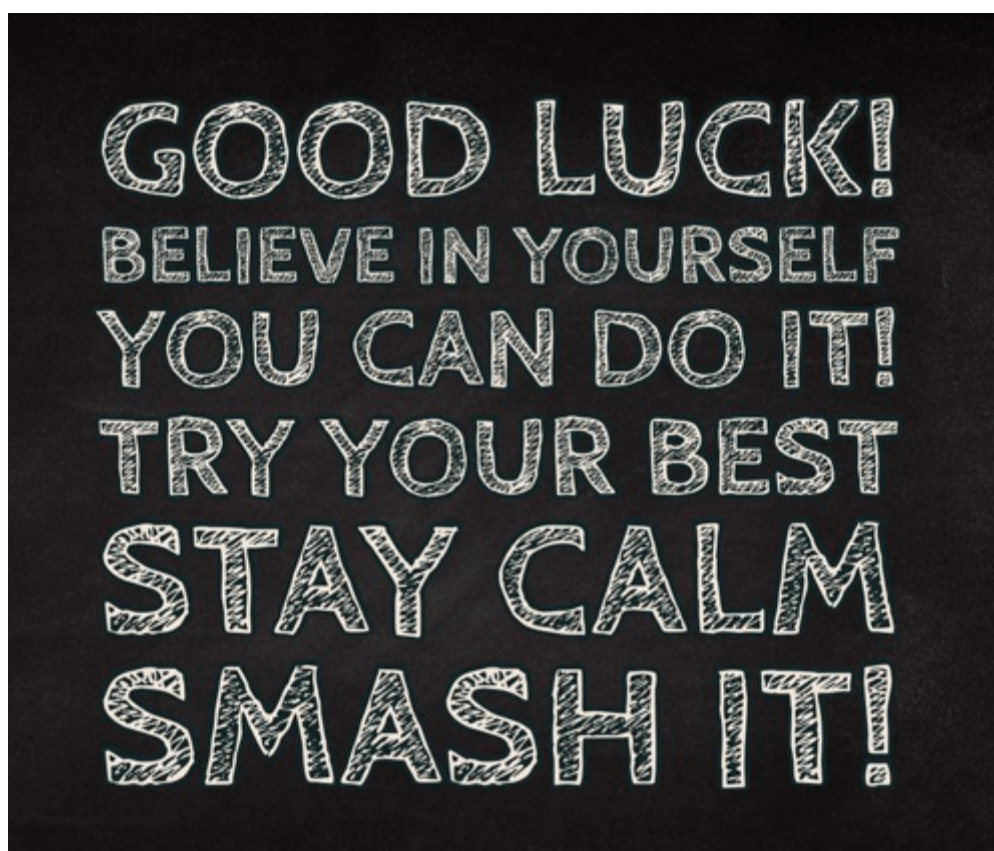


EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

STUDENT HANDBOOK



Joint Council for
Qualifications ^{CIC}



2026-2027

Contents

- Key Exam Regulations
- Social Media & Exam Security
- Attendance, Timing & Logistics
- What to Do If You Are Running Late or Miss an Exam
- Equipment & Materials
- During the Exam
- End of the Exam
- Exam Results Process
- Certificates

Public examinations can be a stressful time for students and parents/guardians so it is important that all those involved be advised of what to expect in advance of the start of exams. The rules and regulations are designed to ensure fairness and it is in the best interest of all that exams run smoothly.

Need Help? If there is anything you do not understand, or if you feel anxious about your exams, speak to your Form Tutor, Head of Year, or the Exams Officer immediately.

Key Regulations - Make sure you understand the rules

Breaking any of these rules is considered malpractice and can lead to disqualification from individual papers or your entire GCSE qualification.

- **Unauthorised Items:** You must NOT have any of the following on your person or in your pockets inside the exam room:
 - Mobile phones or electronic communication devices (must be switched off in bags).
 - Watches of any kind (analogue, digital, or smart watches - JCQ rules are absolute).
 - AirPods, earphones, earbuds, or smart glasses.
 - Revision notes, scraps of paper, or books.
- **Check Your Pockets:** You will be given a final opportunity to check your pockets before each exam starts. Possession of unauthorised items, even if unintentional, will be reported to the exam board and may lead to disqualification.
- **Exam Room Conduct:** Complete silence is required from the moment you enter the hall/room. Do not talk, communicate, make faces, or disturb other candidates.
- **Bags & Belongings:** All bags and coats must be stored securely at the back of the exam room as instructed.
- **Appropriate Content:** Do not write or draw inappropriate, obscene, or offensive material on answer booklets. Exam boards will report this to the school, triggering severe penalties.

Social Media & Exam Security

Exam boards actively monitor social media platforms during the exam series and can track accounts sharing content.

- Do not buy, ask for, or share exam/assessment content online.
- Do not pass on rumours about what might appear in an exam.
- Do not share coursework or controlled assessment material online.
- If you see exam content leaked online, report it to a teacher immediately.

**HARD WORK + STUDYING =
EXAM SUCCESS EVERY TIME
GUARANTEED**

Attendance, Timing & Logistics

Exam Timings

- **Morning Exams:** Start at 9:00 AM (Arrive at the assembly point by 8:40 AM).
- **Afternoon Exams:** Start at 1:30 PM (Arrive at the assembly point by 1:00 PM).

Timetables & Seating

- You are responsible for knowing the dates, times, and room locations for all your exams. Request a reprint from your Form Tutor or the Exams Office if you lose yours.
- Your desk label will show your legal name, candidate number, and centre number. Key exam details will also be displayed on the hall/room projector screen or wall. Always check that you have been given the correct paper and tier (Foundation/Higher, Combined/Triple etc.).

National Contingency Days

Candidates must remain available on all national contingency days (dates will be printed on your final timetable). If an exam is postponed nationally, it will be rescheduled to one of these dates.

What to Do If You Are Running Late or Miss an Exam

1. Call the School Immediately

If you realise you are going to be late, a parent/carer must call the school office (01253 355493) as soon as possible. State clearly that you are an exam candidate running late.

2. Rules En Route

- Do not use your phone or look at social media on the way to school.
- If driven by a parent/carer, remain under supervision and do not communicate with anyone outside your household.

3. Understanding "Very Late" Arrival (JCQ Rules)

- Late Arrival: Arriving after the official start time but within 1 hour of the published start time means you will usually be allowed to sit the exam with your full time allowance.
- Very Late Arrival: Arriving more than 1 hour after the published start time (or after a shorter paper has finished):
 - We will still allow you to sit the paper in school where logistically possible.
 - However, we must submit a formal report to the exam board. In most cases, exam boards refuse to mark work from candidates who arrive "Very Late".

The Bottom Line: Even if you think you are "too late," still come to school as fast as you can. Do not assume you cannot take the exam, let us manage the situation for you when you arrive.

Equipment & Materials

Provided Equipment

To remove stress, **the school provides all core equipment on your assigned desk**, including:

- Black pens, pencils, rubbers, rulers, highlighters, tracing paper, and geometry sets.
- Exam-compliant scientific calculators (for permitted papers).

Personal Equipment & Water

- If bringing your own stationery, it must be in a **completely clear, transparent pencil case**. Personal stationery will be checked by invigilators prior to the exam start.
- **Writing Rules:** Use **black ink or ballpoint pen ONLY**. No gel pens, erasable pens, or correcting fluid/tape. Highlighters may only be used on question texts, never in your answers.
- **Calculators:** If using your own calculator, ensure cases/lids are removed and memory is cleared (SHIFT, 9, 3, =, AC).
- **Water Bottles:** Must be clear, transparent plastic with **all labels completely removed**.

During the Exam

- **Listen to Invigilators:** Always follow invigilator instructions immediately.
- **Before Writing:** Do not open question papers or start writing until told to do so. Fill in your details on the front cover using your **legal name, candidate number and centre number**.
- **Checking Your Paper:** Raise your hand immediately if you think you have the wrong paper, if pages are missing, or if printing is unclear.
- **Rough Work & Extra Paper:** Do rough work in the answer booklet and neatly cross it through. If you require additional paper, raise your hand. Ensure your name and candidate details are on all additional sheets.
- **Toilets:** Toilet visits are strictly for emergencies to minimise disruption. Raise your hand, and an invigilator will escort you.

Emergency Evacuation

If the fire alarm sounds, **stay seated and silent**. Stop writing and wait for the Senior Invigilator's instructions. Leave all papers on your desk. If evacuated, you must remain completely silent and strictly separated from non-exam students.

Illness & Special Consideration

If you feel unwell during an exam, raise your hand and inform an invigilator. If severe illness or exceptional circumstances affect your performance, inform the school on the day; official medical evidence (e.g., a doctor's note) may be required to apply to the exam board for **Special Consideration**.

The End of the Exam

- Remain seated in silence until all papers are collected and you are dismissed by an invigilator.
- Ensure additional answer sheets are placed neatly inside your primary exam booklet with your candidate details filled out.
- Do **not** take any stationery, question papers, or answer booklets from the room.
- If you have used a **laptop**, remember to sign the print out of your answers. The exam boards require your signature to verify that you are confirming that the work is your own.

Exam Results Process

- **Collection Date:** GCSE results will be available for collection from Unity Academy on **Thursday 20th August 2027 at 10:00 AM.**
- **Nominated Collection:** If you cannot collect them in person, you may nominate someone else in writing to collect them on your behalf. Call the school in advance to arrange this; your representative must bring a photo ID.
- **Access to Scripts & Remarks:**
 - On results day, you will be asked to sign a consent form allowing teaching staff to view your marked scripts to check for marking errors or inform future teaching.
 - If you are close to a grade boundary, school staff may discuss submitting a **Review of Marking (Remark)**. *Note: Grades can go up, down, or stay the same.*
 - If a student requests a remark against department advice, a fee (~£40 per paper) will apply, which is refunded if the overall subject grade increases.

Certificates

- **Presentation Evening:** You will be invited to a Celebration Evening in **November/December 2027** to collect and sign for your official GCSE certificates.
- **Legal Identity:** Check all personal details on your certificates carefully upon collection. Your name must match your legal documents for future employment and higher education applications.
- **Storage & Retention:** Schools are only required to retain uncollected certificates for **one year** after issue, after which they are securely destroyed per JCQ guidelines. The school will keep unclaimed certificates for up to 5 years from the date of issue to assist former students who may return to collect them late. Replacement certificates must be ordered directly from exam boards at your own expense (~£50+ per board).

THE ROOTS OF EDUCATION
ARE BITTER, BUT THE FRUIT
IS SWEET.

ARISTOTLE