

Student Exam Guidelines

2025/26

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Personal Details

It is important that we hold the correct personal details for you, as they are printed on your exam certificates.

Your legal name must be the same as the one on your birth certificate unless you have had your name changed by deed poll.

Please check your official name and date of birth are correct via your SIMS Parent account, under Data Collection and then Student Information.

Any errors should be reported to info@st-marks-southampton.org.uk

Entries

Your statement of entry will be sent home via School Gateway. This will list all exams that you have been entered for.

Check this statement carefully and report any errors to exams@st-marks-southampton.org.uk

Timetable

Your exam timetable will list the date, time, location and seat number for each exam.

You must remain available to sit exams until the final examination reserve day has passed in case an awarding body needs to invoke a contingency arrangement.

Exams will normally take place in the Sports Hall but sometimes exams will take place in classrooms. If you do not know where a particular exam room is please ask a member of staff in plenty of time to get to the exam room.

Adjustments to Exam Arrangements

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access arrangements e.g extra time or the use of a word processor.

The provision of access arrangements will usually follow an assessment by Student Support.

The access arrangement should reflect your normal way of working (in lessons and mock exams), and must be agreed in advance of exam time. If you believe that you require adjustments to your exam arrangements please contact student support.

Access arrangements that have been granted should appear on your exam timetable. If they do not, you should contact exams@st-marks-southampton.org.uk

Dress Code and Headwear

Full school uniform must be worn at all times.

If you wear headwear for religious or medical reasons you will need to inform the Examinations Officer in advance of your exams

At the start of each exam an invigilator will ask you to uncover your ears to show that you are not wearing headphones. You may request that the invigilator performing this check is the same sex and it takes place in a private location e.g the dance studio.

If you have long hair which conceals your ears, an invigilator will also ask you to demonstrate compliance with the regulations by uncovering your ears.

Arrival

If you are timetabled in the Sports Hall, you should wait outside on the Astro Turf until you are instructed by a member of the teaching staff to go to the dance studio to drop off your bags.

If you are timetabled in a classroom you should wait outside the exam room until an invigilator instructs you to enter.

You must read the notices for candidates on display outside the exam room.

Late Arrival and Absences

Please refer to the Late Arrival of Candidates for examinations Policy for further information.

During the summer exams the School will try to phone students who are absent from exams. If you have forgotten your exam, this may give you the opportunity to get to school and sit it.

If you fail to attend an examination for which the school has paid without good reason, you will be charged the entry fee.

Late Arrival for Examinations Policy

JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) regulations dictate the published starting time of all general qualification morning examinations is 9am and the starting time of all afternoon examinations is 1:30pm.

Candidates will be provided with an exam timetable in advance of their examination. It is the candidate's responsibility to attend on the correct date and in sufficient time for their examinations.

Any candidate who arrives after the start of the examination may be allowed to sit the exam at the discretion of the school.

Any candidate who is admitted late to sit an examination will be given the full time allowance for the examination, provided that suitable organisational and supervision arrangements can be made.

A candidate will be considered 'VERY LATE' if they arrive more than one hour after the published starting time i.e. after 10am or 2:30pm. For examinations that last less than one hour, a candidate will be considered very late if they arrive after the published finishing time for the examination.

'VERY LATE' candidates will be allowed to sit the examination at the discretion of the school as long as the conditions have been met:

- The candidate has made all reasonable attempts to report to the Exam Officer safely before 10am/2:30pm
- The candidate has been under parental or suitable adult supervisions from 10am/2:30pm and has been escorted by the supervisor to the Exams Officer
- The candidate has not been in contact with any candidates taking the examination (regardless of the exam centre)

- The candidate has not been in possession of a mobile phone or similar communication device and has not had access to the internet from 10am/2:30pm
- The supervisor can confirm that the above conditions have been met and will sign a declaration form to that effect

Awarding bodies reserve the right to reject the work of very late arrivals. Failure to arrive for an examination without a justified reason, or a very late arrival for which the exam paper is rejected, will be chargeable to the candidate. There will not be another opportunity for the candidate to sit the examination during the current session.

Illness

If you are ill for an examination please register the absence in the normal way.

Inform the Exams Officer if you are ill, but able to attend your examinations, we will ensure suitable exam arrangements are in place and request special considerations from the exam board if appropriate.

You will need to provide some kind of medical evidence within 7 days of your exam.

IF YOU FEEL UNWELL DURING AN EXAM PLEASE TELL AN INVIGILATOR!

Materials

You must **ONLY** take items which are authorised for the exam into the exam room in a clear plastic pencil case. You are not allowed to borrow or share any equipment so you must bring your own.

You must bring the following

- Black pens
- HB Pencil
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Calculator
- Compass and Protractor (if sitting mathematics or physics)

You must not use correcting fluid or tape, highlighters or gel pens in your answer booklet but you may use highlighters in your question paper.

You may bring a drink with you to your exam but it **MUST BE TRANSPARENT**.

NO mobile phone, **NO** watches, **NO** potential technological/web enabled sources of information.
This includes iPods and even wireless headphones!

You must not have access to items other than those stated in the instructions on the question paper.

This means that any wallets/purses, keys or other personal items are not allowed in the exam room and must be left in your bag, at home or with a friend who is not taking the exam. Please note that the school cannot accept responsibility for any valuables left in bags during exams.

You must not take a dictionary or notes into the exam room unless they are required for the exam.

POSSESSION OF ANY UNAUTHORISED MATERIAL IN THE EXAM ROOM IS CONSIDERED MALPRACTICE AND IF IT IS DISCOVERED YOU MAY BE DISQUALIFIED FROM ALL EXAMS.

Use of Calculators

Where the use of electronic calculators is allowed in exams, candidates are responsible for ensuring that their calculators meet the regulations. Candidates should note the following:

1. The calculator must be of a size suitable for use on the desk
2. Calculators must be battery operated. Note that solar powered calculators may not work in the Sports Hall or other locations
3. Calculators must be free of lids, cases and covers which have printed instructions and formulas
4. The power supply and working condition of the calculator is the responsibility of the candidate
5. The clearing of anything stored in the calculator is the responsibility of the candidate
6. Calculators must not be borrowed from another candidate during the exam
7. Calculators designed or adapted to offer any of the following facilities are prohibited
 - Language Translators

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

8. Calculators that have any retrievable data stored in them are prohibited. This includes:

- Data banks
- Dictionaries
- Mathematical formulas

- Text

The introduction or use of any calculators with the functions or facilities listed in 7 and 8 will be treated as suspected malpractice.

Sitting Your Exam

- Enter the exam room in silence when instructed by an invigilator. You will be advised where to leave your bag. Take out items you need for your exam and leave everything else behind.
- Find the desk with your ID card on it and sit down. It is important that you sit in the correct seat. If you are unsure, check with an invigilator; do not just sit in an empty seat
- Once seated a recorded announcement will be played.
- Once issued, check you have the correct exam paper and answer booklet. If not, raise your hand and let an invigilator know immediately.
- Read the instructions on the front of the question paper carefully and complete the details on the front of the answer booklet. You **MUST** use your official name, as per your birth certificate, unless it has been changed officially by deed poll. Your candidate number can be found on the ID card on your desk.
- Do not open the question paper until you are told to start.
- Do not attempt to communicate with any other candidates during the exam.
- Exam finish times plus any extra time will be displayed on a screen or written on a whiteboard at the front of the room. If you are unsure of yours, ask an invigilator.
- You will be expected to stay in silence for the duration of the exam. If you finish your exam early check your answers thoroughly. You will not be allowed to leave the exam room before the end of the exam. If, during the exam you experience any kind of disturbance inform an invigilator immediately. If you think there is an error on your question paper, tell an invigilator and continue with the exam.
- Invigilators are not permitted to offer advice on how to interpret or answer a question on any exam.
- If you need the toilet during an exam, you will be escorted there by an invigilator. You will be asked to turn out your pockets before entering the toilet in order to demonstrate that you do not have any unauthorised items.
- Stop writing immediately when you are told to do so and close your question paper and answer booklet.
- Continuation sheets and inserts with answers on should be clearly named and attached or tucked in your answer booklet (as advised by an invigilator).

- Your exam paper and answer booklet will be collected in.
- You will be told when you may leave the exam room. When you are dismissed you must leave in silence as other candidates may still be working. Move away from the area quickly and quietly. If you have an exam clash you should remain in your seat and await further instructions.

Clashes

If you have exams timetabled in the same exam session, we will move one exam to the other session on the same day. This will make you a 'CLASH STUDENT'.

In these circumstances you will need to be supervised in between your exams.

If you are to be supervised over lunchtime you must bring a packed lunch including a drink and leave it with the exam office staff before the morning exam.

If you are a clash student then you will be emailed detailed instructions on what to do on the day of your clash. These **MUST** be read carefully and it is important the procedure is followed.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

- Listen to and follow the instructions given to you by the invigilator
- If you are told to evacuate the exam room, do so calmly and ensure you remain under the supervision of the invigilators
- Do not remove any exam materials for the exam room. Leave your question paper and answer closed on your desk.
- Gather at the evacuation assembly point as instructed by the invigilator
- Do not talk to any student, regardless of whether they are from the exam or not
- Communication with other candidates will constitute malpractice and will be reported to the exam board
- When the emergency situation is over you will be taken back into the exam room
- You will not lose any of the allocated time during an emergency evacuation

Key Dates

24th June 2026 - Candidates must remain available to sit exams until this date has passed, in case an awarding body needs to invoke its contingency plans.

20th August 2026 - GCSE Results day

Special Considerations

Where the School can provide signed evidence to support an application, it will apply for special considerations at the time of the assessment/exam for a candidate who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or some other event outside of their control when the event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on the candidate's ability to take an assessment/exam or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment/exam.

Post Results, EAR (Enquiry about Results)

If you are unhappy about an exam result you can ask for a clerical check or a review of marking or you can request that a copy of your marked script is returned. All post-results services must go through the Exams Officer exams@st-marks-southampton.org.uk, who will make requests to the awarding bodies. These services do come with a fee from the awarding bodies, which I will publish nearer to the GCSE results day. Students and parents cannot contact the awarding bodies themselves.

FINALLY

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate in contacting me on exams@st-marks-southampton.org.uk or pop into the Data and Exams Office and ask for Miss Guo

GOOD LUCK!

Information for Candidates - Non-examination Assessments

Effective from September 2024. Produced on behalf of the exam boards.

This document tells you about some things that you must and must not do when you are completing your work.

When you submit your work for marking, the awarding body will normally require you to sign an authentication statement confirming that you have read and followed the regulations.

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

Preparing your work — good practice

If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your teacher, you must tell your teacher. They will then record the assistance given to you.

If you worked as part of a group on an assignment, for example undertaking field research, you must write up your own account of the assignment. Even if the data you have is the same, you must describe in your own words how that data was obtained. You must draw your own conclusions from the data.

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. Do not leave it lying around where your classmates can find it. Do not share it with anyone, including posting it on social media. You must always keep your work secure and confidential. 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.

Do not 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.

Research and using references

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, encyclopedias, 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, information from these sources may be incorrect or biased. You must take care how you use this material - you cannot copy it and claim it as your own work.

Using information from published sources (including the internet) as the basis for your assignment is a good way to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject. You must take care how you use this material though – 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’.

When producing a piece of work, 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 known as 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/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/newsid_2621000/2621915.stm, downloaded 5 February 2025.

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/>), 25/01/2025. You must submit a copy of the computer-generated content with your work for reference and authentication purposes.

3

You may be required to include a bibliography at the end of your piece of written work. Your teacher will tell you whether this is necessary. Where required, your bibliography 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.

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 it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following penalties will be applied:

- you will be awarded zero marks for your work;
- you will be disqualified from that component for the examination series in question;
- 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.

Information for Candidates - Written Examinations

A. Regulations – Make sure you understand the rules

- 1 Be on time for all your exams. If you are late, your work might not be accepted.
- 2 Do not become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice during the exam.
- 3 If you try to cheat, or break the rules in any way, you could be disqualified from all your exams.
- 4 You must not take into the exam room:
 - (a) notes;
 - (b) AirPods, Earphones/Earbuds, an iPod, a mobile phone, a MP3/4 player or similar device, a watch, smart glasses or any other smart device.

Any pencil cases taken into the exam room must be see-through.

Remember: possession of unauthorised material is breaking the rules, even if you do not intend to use it, and you will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification.

- 5 If you have a watch, the invigilator will ask you to hand it to them.
- 6 Do not use correcting pens, fluid or tape, erasable pens, highlighters or gel pens in your answers.
- 7 Do not talk to or try to communicate with, or disturb other candidates once you have entered the exam room.
- 8 You must not write inappropriate, obscene or offensive material.
- 9 If you leave the exam room unaccompanied by an invigilator before the exam has finished, you will not be allowed to return.
- 10 Do not borrow anything from another candidate during the exam.

B. Information – Make sure you attend your exams and bring what you need

- 1 Know the dates and times of all your exams. Arrive at least ten minutes before the start of each exam.
- 2 If you arrive late for an exam, report to the invigilator running the exam.
- 3 If you arrive more than one hour after the published starting time for the exam, you may not be allowed to take it.
- 4 Only take into the exam room the pens, pencils, erasers and any other equipment which you need for the exam.

5 You must write clearly and in black ink. Coloured pencils or inks may only be used for diagrams, maps, charts, etc. unless the instructions printed on the front of the question paper state otherwise.

C. Calculators, dictionaries and computer spell-checkers

1 You may use a calculator unless you are told otherwise.

2 If you use a calculator:

- (a) make sure it works properly; check that the batteries are working properly;
- (b) clear anything stored in it;
- (c) remove any parts such as cases, lids or covers which have printed instructions or formulae;
- (d) do not bring into the exam room any operating instructions or prepared programs.

3 Do not use a dictionary or computer spell checker unless you are told otherwise.

D. Instructions during the exam

1 Always listen to the invigilator. Always follow their instructions. 2 Tell the invigilator at once if:

- (a) you think you have not been given the right question paper or all of the materials listed on the front of the paper;
- (b) the question paper is incomplete or badly printed.

3 Read carefully and follow the instructions printed on the question paper and/or on the answer booklet.

4 Do not start writing anything until the invigilator tells you to fill in all the details required on the front of the question paper and or the answer booklet. Do not open the question paper until you are told that the exam has begun.

5 Remember to write your answers within the designated sections of the answer booklet.

6 Do your rough work on the proper exam stationery. Cross it through and hand it in with your answers.

Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use, including those used for rough work.

E. Advice and assistance

1 If on the day of the exam you feel that your work may be affected by ill health or any other reason, tell the invigilator.

2 Put up your hand during the exam if:

- (a) you have a problem and are not sure about what you should do;
- (b) you do not feel well;
- (c) you need more paper.

3 You must not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions.

F. At the end of the exam

1 If you have used more than one answer booklet and/or any supplementary answer sheets, place them in the correct order.

Place any loose additional answer sheets inside your answer booklet. Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use. For CCEA examinations, any loose additional answer sheets should be placed behind your script.

2 Do not leave the exam room until told to do so by the invigilator.

3 Do not take any stationery from the exam room. This includes the question paper, answer booklets used or unused, rough work or any other materials provided for the exam.

Using social media and examinations/assessments

While we like to share our experiences online, when it comes to exams and other assessments, we have to be careful.

- Sharing ideas online can be helpful when you're studying or revising
- However, sharing certain information (see information on the right) can break the rules and could affect your results
- If you're not sure what you can and can't discuss online, check with your teacher
- If you receive exam content on social media, you must tell your teacher
- Don't be caught out by scammers selling fake exam papers

Things to do on social media:

- Have fun
- Be responsible
- Report any exam or assessment content you see to your teacher

Things not to do on social media:

- Buy/ask for/share exam or assessment content
- Pass on rumours of what's in exams or assessments
- Share your work
- Work with others so that your assessment is not your own independent work

If you do any of the above activities, you may:

- Receive a written warning
- Lose marks
- Be disqualified from a part of or all of your qualifications
- Be banned from taking exams and assessments for a number of years

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the JCQ rules: jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candi-dates-documents

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 of what happens to that information. For more detail see each awarding body's full Privacy Notice:

AQA - <https://www.aqa.org.uk/about-us/privacy-notice>

CCEA - http://ccea.org.uk/legal/privacy_policy

City & Guilds - <https://www.cityandguilds.com/help/help-for-learners/learner-policy>

NCFE - <https://www.ncfe.org.uk/legal-information>

OCR - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/about/our-policies/website-policies/privacy-policy/>

Pearson - <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/about-us/qualification-brands/gdpr.html>

WJEC - <https://www.wjec.co.uk/about-us/data-protection/WJEC%20Privacy%20Notice.pdf>

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: www.jcq.org.uk/contact-us/contact-details-for-jcq-and-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 (eg 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.
- Complaint – 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 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:
www.jcq.org.uk/contact-us/contact-details-for-jcq-and-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). Information about the examinations and assessment themselves, including the rules about assessments, can be found on the JCQ Exams Office pages (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) in Wales, and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment(<http://ccea.org.uk/regulation>)in Northern Ireland.