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Candidate Exam Handbook

2026/2027 Exam Series

It is the aim of The Cottesloe School to make the examination experience as stress-free and successful as possible for all candidates.

This booklet will prove informative and helpful for you and your parents. Please read it carefully and show it to your parents so that they can also be aware of the examination regulations and the procedures to follow in the event of any problem arising.

The awarding bodes (examination boards) set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations and The Cottesloe School is required to follow them precisely. The school has to follow the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) rules and regulations for all exams.

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the information supplied on The Cottesloe School website, exams section: https://www.cottesloe.bucks.sch.uk/curriculum/examinations

Some of the questions you may have, are hopefully answered in this booklet. If there is anything you do not understand or any question that has not been addressed, please contact me in the Exams Office.

Remember we are here to help you!

Kind regards
Miss Hall
Exams Manager
The Cottesloe School

Before The Examinations

Confirming Entries

- All parent & candidates will be asked to confirm entries in Exams assist in the Spring Term indicating the subjects they are being entered for and the levels of entry, where applicable. Please check that these are correct. Some subjects have one tier of entry, some have two, Foundation and Higher tiers.
- You must check all details very carefully. Particularly check that all personal details (date of birth, spelling of names) are accurate as these will appear on certificates, and you will be charged to change them later once the certificates are awarded. Your legal forename and surname must appear on your statements, please inform us if your preferred names are recorded, as it will need to be amended.
- You must inform the Exams Manager of any errors or omissions asap.

Examination Boards

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

Candidate Name

- Candidates are entered under the format of First Name + (Legal) Surname, eg. Adam Smith.

Candidate Number

- Each candidate has a four-digit candidate number. This is the number you will enter on examination papers. It will appear next to your name on your candidate desk cards and on your statements of entry, individual candidate timetable and on your provisional results information.

Unique Candidate Identifier (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 statements of entry. This number will usually begin with the Centre Number (52141) unless you have transferred from another school that had already issued your UCI. If you have transferred from another school and sat exams at that centre, please ensure the Exams Office is aware of your previous UCI number. Your UCI is used for administration purposes, and it is **not** necessary for you to remember it.

Candidates With Access Arrangements

- An access arrangement is the name given to exam concessions and it embraces all sorts of procedures e.g., additional time, readers, scribes etc.
- These procedures are designed to support students with a genuine need to access exams. They must not give students an unfair advantage over other students and, as a result, the awarding of access arrangements is governed by strict regulations.
- Access arrangements for all GCE and GCSE level examinations are awarded by the individual examination boards in line with the recommendations of the examination regulatory bodies.
- If you have queries relating to access arrangements, please contact the Sendco Department.

Timetables

- You will receive an individual timetable via Exams assist showing your own specific examinations with details of date, time, and duration of exam, and venue. Check it carefully. If you think something is wrong, see Miss Hall in the Exams Office immediately.
- A few candidates may have a clash where two subjects are timetabled at the same time. The school will make special timetable arrangements for these candidates. If you have a supervised break between clash exams, we advise you to bring a packed lunch/snack with you on that day to eat during this time.

You must check your individual timetable and see Miss Hall if you are unsure what to do. If you think there is a clash on your timetable that has not been resolved, please see Miss Hall immediately.

- All exam timetables are published on the school website.

During The Examinations

Examination Regulations

- Copies of "Information to Candidates" can be found on the school website under JCQ Rules & Regulations

Candidates must read them carefully and note that to break any of the examination rules or regulations could lead to disqualification from all subjects. The school must report any breach of regulations to the Awarding Body.

Attendance At Examinations

- Candidates are responsible for checking their own timetable and arriving at school on the correct day and time, properly dressed and equipped. **Candidates must arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of their examination**. Please wait quietly outside your exam room.
- Candidates who arrive after the start of the examination may be allowed to enter the exam room and sit the examination. This is entirely at the discretion of the centre. A candidate who arrives late and is permitted by the centre to sit the examination, must be allowed the full time of the examination.
- Do not attempt to communicate with or distract other candidates. **Looking around and smiling at other candidates is classed as communication. Please always sit and face the front.**
- 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 risk being disqualified from the examination.
- Please do not write on examination desks or your desk cards. This is regarded as vandalism.
- Do not draw graffiti, doodle or write offensive comments on examination papers – if you do the examination board may refuse to accept your paper.
- Listen carefully to instructions and notices read out by the Exams Manager/Invigilators – there may be amendments to the exam paper that you need to know about.
- Check you have the correct question paper – check the subject, paper and tier of entry.
- If there are any problems put your hand up and wait for an invigilator to come to you.
- Read all instructions carefully and number your answers clearly.

- Candidates must stay in the examination room for the duration of the examination and may not leave early. If you have finished the paper use any time remaining to check over your answers and ensure that you have completed your details correctly.
- At the end of the examination, all work must be handed in – remember to cross out any rough work. If you have used more than one answer book or loose sheet(s) of paper, ensure your details are written on each booklet/sheet of additional of paper.
- Invigilators will collect your exam papers before you leave the room. Absolute silence must be maintained during this time. 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.
- Remain seated in silence until you are given permission to leave the exam room. Please leave the room in silence and show consideration for other candidates who may still be working in your exam room.

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 e.g. communicating, making noises and disturbing other candidates.
- Exchanging, obtaining, receiving, or passing on information that could be examination related (or the attempt to).
- Offences relating to the content of candidates' work.
- Undermining the integrity of examinations/assessments.
- Refer to ICE 26 and the *Indicative sanctions against candidates* (Appendix 6, Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures)
- Refer to relevant Information for candidates documents, such as social media, as example:

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 and/or non-examination assessments and coursework, as example:

Research And Using References

- ... Where AI has been used, your reference **must** show the name of the AI tool used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT. You should also acknowledge the sources used by the AI tool in generating the content.
- You must retain a copy of the question(s)/prompts used to generate the AI content and the AI generated content itself in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief

explanation of how you used it. This must be submitted with your work for final assessment so that your teacher can review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used...

- If you copy the words, ideas or outputs from other sources and do not show your sources in references and a bibliography, this will be considered as cheating.
- Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts, ideas or outputs and not crediting the source. This includes outputs from AI tools. Plagiarism is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously...
- You may also want to make reference to your centre's Behaviour Policy (Exams) and/or Malpractice Policy (Exams)

Malpractice in the exam room will be dealt with by the Invigilators and the Exams Manager. In cases of minor behaviour problems, a warning will initially be given to the candidate to stop. If the behaviour persists or there is a more serious malpractice incident such as possession of a mobile phone in the exam room, immediate action will be taken by the Exams Manager. Malpractice within the classroom whilst carrying out the non-examination assessment will be dealt with by the Subject Teacher and the Exams Manager.

Personal Data

- The awarding bodies collect information about exam candidates.
- To understand what information is collected and how it is used, you must read the Information for candidates - Privacy Notice **(found on the school website).**

Timetables

- A few months before your external exams you will be issued with an individual exam Timetable on Exams Assist **https://examsassist.co.uk/**
- Please check the information on the timetable carefully and if there is anything wrong, advise your Subject Teacher and the Exams Manager as soon as possible.
- A more detailed timetable will be issued nearer to the exams which will include details of which room you are sitting the exam in and your seat number. Please check the room and seat number for each exam as it may not be the same for all exams.
- Exam room posters – **Warning to candidates** and **Unauthorised items poster** will be displayed outside each room. Please look at these as you enter the room to remind yourself of the regulations – copies are available under the Examinations section on the school website and also at the end of this booklet.

What Time Your Exams Will Start And Finish

- Your exam will normally start at 9am for a morning session and 1pm for an afternoon session however please check your timetable for afternoon exam start time.
- Please make sure you arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam. An exam briefing will take place before you enter the exam room.
- Please make sure you go to the toilet before the exam as you will only be allowed to go to the toilet during the exam in exceptional circumstances. If you have a medical issue which means you have to go to the toilet regularly, please inform the Exams Manager in advance of your first exam.
- You will not be allowed to leave the exam before the end. Also, if the exam finishes before 10am in the morning or 2:30pm in the afternoon you will have to stay in the exam room under supervision,

until that time. This is to make sure we maintain the security of the exam and comply with JCQ regulations.

Supervision During Your Exams

- Exams are supervised by a team of invigilators who are employed by the school at exam times. They are fully trained to make sure the exams are carried out in accordance with the JCQ strict regulations.
- Invigilators are required to read the announcement at the start of every exam, even though you have heard it before!
- It is the job of the invigilator to watch students as they do their exams. They will not approach you unless they think you are breaking the regulations or you put up your hand for assistance.
- The invigilator cannot give you any help with your exam.
- You should come fully equipped for every exam. Each exam room will have a small supply of stationery e.g pens and if you need anything, please raise your hand and they will come to you.
- The Exams Manager and the invigilators are also responsible for making sure your exams go as smoothly as possible and that the process is fair for everyone.

Exam Room Conditions

- When you arrive at your exam room you will be informed where to leave any bags, therefore you must make sure you have all the required equipment for your exam out of your bag in a clear pencil case or even a clear plastic wallet for ease. Ensure that your mobile phone is switched off and any other electronic devices have been left in your bag and that you have **nothing in your pockets**. All watches must be removed also. (smart or not!)
- Once seated you will be given one last reminder to hand in your phone and watches, if you do have anything to hand in at that point they will be kept in a numbered plastic wallet to which you will be given the corresponding number therefore you can be sure you will receive your own belongings back! You will not be in trouble if you hand items over at this point however after this final warning there will be consequences which are likely to be your paper will score 0 or worse if actually caught using them. Unauthorised items cannot be on your person even if switched off and you have no intention of using it. IT IS AGAINST THE REGULATIONS AND THE CENTRE IS COMMITTING MALPRACTICE IF WE FAIL TO REPORT AN INCIDENT.
- You will be under formal exam conditions from the moment you enter the exam room until you are given permission to leave by the invigilator. This means that **you must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once you have entered the room.**
- You should find your seat quickly and quietly. There will be letters on the walls to help you find the row you will be sat on. Invigilators will help you if you can't find your seat. **Do not ask** another candidate.
- You must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times in the exam room.
- The exam paper will have been placed on your desk before you enter the room. Please do not attempt to look inside and read anything. This is malpractice.
- Please don't write anything on the front of the paper until you are advised to do so by the invigilator.

- At the front of the room, you will see that the centre number, name/code of the exam, day, date and time are displayed. You will need this information when you are asked to fill in the front of your exam paper.
- When you are asked to fill in the details on the front of your exam paper, please use your legal name and not your preferred name. If a signature is required, please enter this, it is very important.
- When the exam starts, the invigilator will display the start and finish times of the exam.
- If you need to leave the room because you are feeling unwell, please put your hand up and an invigilator will assist you. You are not allowed to leave the room on your own.
- Please make sure that you put your Name, Centre number, candidate number and question the number on any additional sheets of paper you may use.

How Your Identity Is Confirmed In The Exam Room

- Your exam desk will have a candidate card on it with your photo on it so that invigilators can identify you please Do Not remove these or deface them.

What Equipment Do You Need To Bring To Your Exams

You will need:

- A black ball-point pen (must be black) and spares
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Highlighter (can highlight the question paper but not your answers)
- Clear pencil case
- Scientific calculator (unless the exam does not allow a calculator) without a lid/cover. **PLEASE NOTE IF YOU FORGET YOUR CALCULATOR YOU WILL NOT BE ISSUED WITH ONE,** a replacement will only be given if the battery fails in yours.
- Maths exams will also require a protractor, set square and compass. Your Maths teacher will give you more information regarding the equipment needed.
- Some exams may need coloured pencils. Your subject teacher will advise you.

<table>
<tr><td>Calculators must be:
of a size suitable for use on a desk;
either battery or solar-powered;
free of lids, cases and covers which have printed instructions or formulas.
Graphic calculators must be in exam mode prior to entering the examination room.</td><td rowspan="2">Calculators must not:
be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities: -
language translators;
symbolic algebra manipulation;
symbolic differentiation or integration;
communication with other machines or the internet;
be borrowed from another candidate during an examination for any reason.
have retrievable information stored in them
this includes databanks
dictionaries
mathematical formulas
text</td></tr>
<tr><td>The candidate is responsible for the following:
the calculator’s power supply
the calculator’s working condition
clearing anything stored in the calculator</td></tr>
</table>

What You Should Not Bring Into The Exam Room

It is very important that you do not enter the exam room with any unauthorised items in your possession. These items include:

- Mobile phones
- MP3/4 players
- Any watch (Smart or not!)
- IPods
- Smart glasses
- Any other similar electronic devices
- Electronic Earphones
- Notes and study guides
- Own blank paper
- Calculators, unless allowed for the exam
- Calculator lid/cover
- Dictionaries, unless allowed for the exam

- Miscellaneous items such as make-up, lip salve, bus passes, money and keys, student reports and exam timetables.
- If a mobile phone, smart watch/wristwatch or AI glasses (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 taken from you and a report made to the appropriate exam board. This could result in disqualification from the examination. No exceptions can be made.

Food And Drink In Exam Rooms

- You are allowed to take a clear water bottle into the exam. The label must be removed before you enter the exam room.
- Food is not permitted in the exam room unless for medical reasons which have been discussed with the Exams Manager in advance.
- If you have any medication to take during the exam, please advise the Exams Manager in advance.

What You Should Wear For Your Exams

Full school uniform or if you are in the Sixth Form - normal Sixth Form dress code must be worn in examinations

What To Do If You Arrive Late For An Exam

- You must arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of your exam.
- If you are late for any reason, please report to the Exams Manager
- The Exams Manager will escort you to the exam room.
- You will be given the full time allowed for your exam. If you arrive extremely late for exams (after 10am for a morning exam and after 2pm for an afternoon exam) you will sit the exam but there is a chance that the exam board will not mark your paper.

What To Do If You Are Unwell On The Day Of An Exam

- It is really important that you attend school for all exams unless you are seriously.
- If you are extremely unwell and cannot attend your exam, please ask your parent/carer to contact Student Absence immediately. You may need to provide medical evidence to confirm your illness.
- If you feel unwell during an exam, please put your hand up and an invigilator will assist you.
- If you feel unwell before the exam starts, please tell the Exams Manager so that we are aware of your situation and invigilators can be advised.
- The date and time of the exam is set by the exam board so that all students are sitting the exam at the same time. We cannot change the date of the exam.

What Happens If You Have An Unauthorised Absence From An Exam

Your exams are extremely important and it is vital that you attend all exams. If you do not turn up for an exam you will receive a zero mark and your parents/carers will be invoiced for the exam entry fee. On average, this is approximately £60 per exam but varies depending on the exam/exam board. Please advise your Head of Year / Exams Manager of any issues you have around exam time.

What Happens In The Event Of An Emergency In The Exam Room

In the event of an emergency, the invigilator will stop the exam and give instructions to you. You must:

- Stop writing and close your exam paper

- Stay seated until the invigilator advises you to leave the room.
- Follow your designated invigilator to the pre-arranged meeting point

You must not:

- Communicate with anyone inside and outside the exam room other than the Exams Manager and invigilators.
- Collect any personal belongings, unless advised to do so by the invigilators. If you do not follow these rules, you may not be allowed back into the exam room to complete your exam.

Candidates With Access Arrangements

If you are a student who is entitled to an Access Arrangement and you are unsure of how your access arrangement will work, please speak to Ms Hibbert.

Results

A Level / Btec results day is Thursday 12th August 2027

GCSE / Cambridge National results day is Thursday 19th August 2027.

Further details to follow.

Post-results Services

Enquiries about results decisions are made together with subject leaders and the students consent will be required before doing so. Further details to be provided and this information will also be available on the school website.

Certificates

Your exam certificates are produced by the exam board and sent to school. We will advise you once they are available for collection (usually mid – late November). Certificates are only required to be kept by the school for one year however we do retain them up to 3 years. Certificates will be available for collection by the student between the hours of 8.30am and 3.00pm Monday to Friday. If you require someone else to collect them on your behalf, written permission must be received from the candidate by the Exams Manager and the person collecting certificates will need to show ID.

Complaints And Appeals Procedure

The Cottesloe School has a policy in place regarding complaints and appeals relating to the delivery or administration of qualifications and an appeals procedure for internal assessment decisions. These are available from the Exams Manager upon request.

JCQ Information For Candidates - AI (artificial Intelligence And Assessments)

You must read this information, prior to beginning your assessments, to help you stay within examination/assessment regulations when using artificial intelligence. This information explains: What is AI? What is an AI tool? When can I use AI? When can I not use an AI tool? If I'm allowed to use AI, how is this breaking the rules? How to make sure you don't misuse AI.

https://www.cottesloe.bucks.sch.uk/_site/data/files/users/10/files/B52DCE26B1D4BDE2F365EBDAA94C988B.pdf

The Following Information Needs To Be Read, The Documents Can Be Found At

https://www.cottesloe.bucks.sch.uk/curriculum/examinations

- JCQ Information for candidates – Written Exams

  You must read this information before you take any externally assessed timetabled written exams.

- JCQ Information for candidates - Coursework

  You must read this information if you are undertaking qualifications that contain elements of coursework assessment.

- JCQ Information for candidates – Non-Examination Assessments

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

- JCQ Information for candidates – On-Screen Tests

  You must read this information if you will be taking any externally assessed on-screen tests as part of your qualification(s).

- JCQ Information for candidates – Privacy Notice

  You must read this notice as it contains "Information About You and How We Use It"

  - AQA
  - Pearson
  - OCR
  - WJEC

- JCQ Information for candidates – Social Media

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

  Unauthorised items poster

  Warning to candidates poster