

Student Handbook for National Exams and Assessments



Who is this student handbook for?

If you are taking any of the following qualifications **this handbook is for you!**

- GCSE
- AS LEVEL
- A LEVEL
- FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1/2
- NCFE TECH AWARD
- BTEC TECH AWARD
- RSL QUALIFICATIONS

This Handbook is intended to inform and advise students on exams and assessments. It will advise on the expected student behaviour and conduct required in exam and assessment settings.

All candidates **must ensure** they are aware of and are following the **JCQ guidance and information to candidates** in addition to reading this guide.

This guide will inform you about the use of student personal data and copyright. Provided you with all relevant information about your exams and assessments in advance of these being taken and direct students to any related policies/procedures you must be aware of.

Candidate Handbook Content:

What you need to know:

- Current Awarding bodies
- Private candidates
- Different types of exams & assessments
- JCQ Candidate information
- Statement of Entries & Timetables
- Start and End Times of Written Exams
- Clashes
- Exam absence, illness & special considerations
- Access Arrangements
- How to be prepared
- What can I take into an exam?
- Formal Exam conditions
- Announcements at the start of formal Exams
- Personal Data and copyright

Current Awarding Bodies

The BRIT School currently have approval for delivery and entering Internal candidate with the following awarding bodies:

- AQA
- PEARSON (EDEXCEL)
- WJEC
- UAL
- NCFE
- RSL

Private Candidates

The BRIT School does not accept private candidate. A Private candidate is a student who is not enrolled on / timetabled for and is not taught the subject they wish to sit as an exam for, at the school/centre entering them.

Private candidates pay for entry, invigilation and administration of exams. The BRIT School is a free at point of entry school and only enters internal students for the subjects they are enrolled on, timetabled for, have subject reports for and are taught full specifications for, at the school.

Different types of Exams & Assessments

What are the different types of Exams and assessments you will take during your qualification?

Written Exams:

What are they?

Written exams are set date and time, paper based question papers, they are set nationally so cannot be rearranged. They are collated together in an exam season that can last from 2 - 12 weeks. The BRIT School enter students in the National November resit season for post 16 mature maths and English and the full National Summer exam season annually between May-June for GCSE, and GCE qualifications.

What is the format?

Written papers may include additional inserts and sources and in some open book exams, a copy of the studied text is allowed to be used in the exam, these will be provided by the school and have no annotations, underlining or revision notes in. All other allowed materials such as calculators or equipment needed will be noted at the front of the exam paper.



Different types of Exams & Assessments

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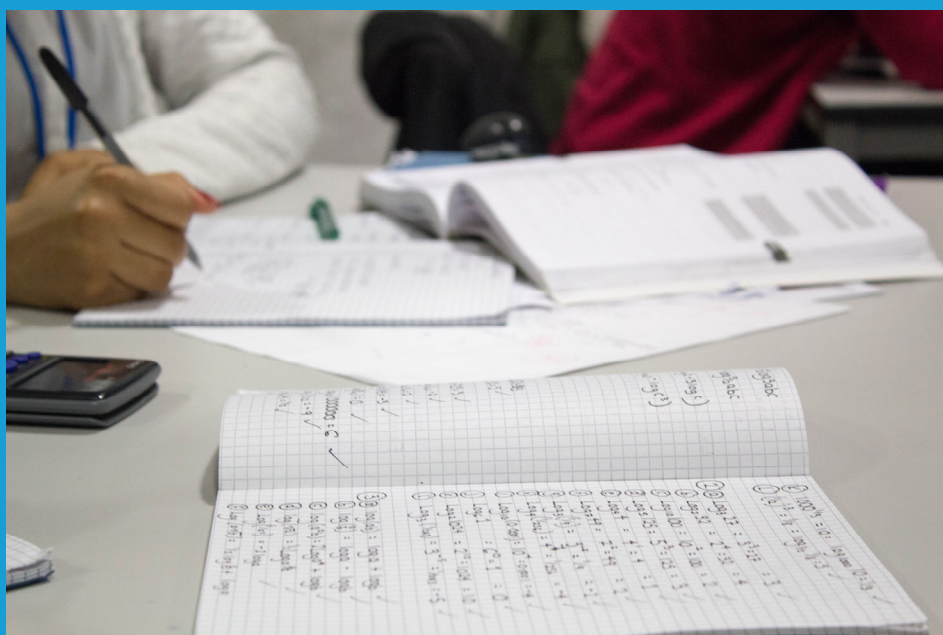
Written Exams continued:

What do they cover?

Written exam question papers tests how well a student can demonstrate in written form that they have acquired the knowledge, understanding and skills set out in the specification. It is often not possible to test an entire subject's content in a single paper or sitting, and so the specification content is split over two or more papers / split over different assessment types such as one exam and some non-exam units. For example, the AQA GCSE Maths Specification 8300 has three papers covering the content of the subject, two allow use of calculators.

Top Tip!

It is worth checking with your teachers how many papers you have per subject and revising for each paper's specifically covered content and format before the set date exam.



Different types of Exams & Assessments

What are the different types of Exams and assessments you will take during your qualification?

Practical Exams and Practical non exam assessments:

What are they?

Practical exams could be a set date performance or task, or booked moderated practical session, where learners are observed or recorded performing their practical skills in a subject.

These assessments are used ensure evidence of practical skills which build students' competence in the subject in a controlled environment. Many teachers will use practical approaches to introduce of content knowledge in the course of their normal teaching. Students' practical assessments can also contribute towards the overall grade or endorsement grades as in French, and Spanish speaking exams, or English language non exam components for spoken language.

Some GCSE's such as Art and Design, Textiles, Photography, Drama and Dance have performance set external tasks or non exam units that contribute towards the overall subject grade. This is done by practical being invigilated/ recorded/ or observed by external moderators and marked externally or internally marked, and externally moderated by awarding bodies.

Your teachers can advise you on when practical exams or assessments for your subjects will be set, so you can prepare in advance.



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On Screen Exams:

What are they?

Onscreen exams can be online on demand exams or online set date exams. The Brit school currently do not deliver onscreen exams, but reserve the right to do so in the future. These onscreen exams are different to sitting a written exam paper with access arrangements of a word processor, which still falls under written exam formats.



External set task assessments:

What are they?

The set task external assessments maybe either written tasks, practical tasks or a combination of both. They are often a whole unit of a subjects specification, and take place over a window of 2-12 weeks.

What is the format?

Depending on the subject and the awarding body requirements these can be completed in class in medium supervised sessions or invigilated in sessions with high controls. It is common for the mixed practical and written tasks, which are between 4- 20 hours duration, to be set over a few weeks. The practical elements of the external set tasks could be completed over a few set days, that may mean you come out of your normal school timetable for two or more consecutive days.

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Internal assessments /Non exam units/ portfolios/ coursework:

What are they?

All of the above assessments could be required for a subjects specification and make up the evidence for a whole unit.

These are often completed over a longer duration of time, compared to a high control assessments. Some may span over the full two years of the course for a portfolio units, in subjects such as Art and design, Textiles or Photography. This type of assessment will evidence your technical ability and skills throughout the course and show your progression and development.

Coursework or internal assessments maybe a set written essay or practical task such as performances that are lower or medium controlled, authenticated by students completing a declaration form and teachers supervising the work completed in class. They are internally marked and graded and externally moderated and sampled by awarding bodies. Performance units maybe externally examined in person or videoed and sent to external examiners.



JCQ Candidate Information

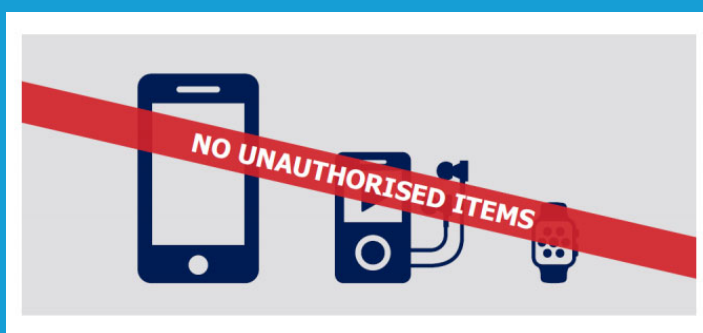
It is the students responsibility to ensure they have read and understood the JCQ requirements for candidates taking qualification assessments.

This information is available on the school website under the exam information tab, and on the JCQ website. Please check the JCQ website for the most up to date candidate information:

Please type these links into your web browser.

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/exam-room-posters/>

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents/>



JCQ information for candidates includes:

- Information for candidates coursework
- Information for candidates non exam assessments (NEA)
- Information for candidate on screen tests
- Information for candidates written examinations
- Preparing to sit exams
- Information for candidates privacy notice
- Information for candidates social media notice.

Please note as of September 2019 **students must enter the exam room in complete silence**, any talking or communication in the exam room except to the invigilator will be considered malpractice.

If you need to get the invigilators attention, please sit silently at your desk and raise your hand, the invigilators will come to you. Please speak clearly and quietly to the invigilator, but there is no need to whisper or be nervous. The invigilators are there to assist you if you need help or equipment. Please understand they are not able to help read to you any of the exam paper and cannot advise on any questions/ text in your exam paper or answers.

Statements of Entries & Timetables:

Statements of entries and timetables will be sent out prior to exam series to inform students which subjects they have been entered for and when to attend. Letters also contain:

Access Arrangements information: If you feel this is not correct when you receive your entry letter or timetables please contact the AEN team directly to advise on current approvals. You will only receive awarding body approved Access Arrangements in exams and assessments.

Clashes: If your letter has a clash in exams contact the exams team directly asap.

Contingency days: Each national exams series has a contingency day, listed on the school timetable and entry letters, you must be available on this date in the event of a change to timetables.

National November Series GCSE:

The BRIT schools overall timetable for the November series resits for GCSE Math and English exams, is uploaded to the school website in August.

The individual statement of entries and timetables are posted home in October, not all resit students are automatically entered you must speak to your teacher if you are ready for entry for the resit series.

January Mock Series GCSE:

The BRIT schools overall timetable for the January Mock series for year 11 and GCE Pathway subjects will be uploaded to the school website in November. Individual student statement of entries and timetables will be posted home in Late November/ Early December.

National Summer Series GCSE/GCE:

The BRIT schools overall timetable for the Summer series resits for GCSE and GCE exams, is uploaded to the school website in February.

Statements of entry will be posted home at the end of February.

Individual Timetables will be posted home in April 2022.

June/July year 10 only Mock Series GCSE:

The BRIT schools overall timetable for the January Mock series for year 10 and GCE Pathway subjects will be uploaded to the school website in March. Letters will be posted home before May 2022.

Start & End times of Written Exams

National Exam series : November 2021 and Summer 2022

AM Exam Sessions : 9AM

PM Exam Session: 1PM

Mock Exam Series:

Statements of entries and timetables will show your start time and the duration of the exam, due to the short mock series windows it is common to have three more exams in a day depending on your chosen option subjects. Where possible option clashes will be moved to a separate clash session.

Arriving on time for all series Exam session :

You must ensure you arrive at least 15 minutes before the exam start time, and be waiting outside the exam hall.

Late Students:

Late students must go to the main reception and ask to speak to the exams manager. Students later than 30 minutes to an exam will be very late and are not be guaranteed to sit the examination. Late entry is at the discretion of the centre.

If you are late and are allowed to sit the exam in a national exam series you will be given the full duration , you may not receive the full time for mock exam series.

Very Late student for national exam series who can prove they have been under centre supervision without access to unauthorised items, since the national start time of the paper (see above), will be allowed to start but will be reported to awarding bodies who will decide if they will mark the unit paper.



Exam Clashes

It is the students responsibility to ensure they check their written exam timetable for any clashing written examinations. You must contact the data and exams team as soon as you become aware of the clash.

Students who have a clash in an AM or PM session that is less then three hours, will be required to sit the exams one after the other and the centre will decide the order within the timetabled session in which to conduct the examinations. Normally the longer exam will be scheduled first. Students may be given a short supervised break of no more than twenty minutes between papers within a session, as long as it does not extend into the next session. This must be conducted within the examination room, under formal examination conditions at all times. This means that candidates cannot use this time to revise or be left unsupervised over the break.

For candidates with approved access arrangements of a supervised rest breaks, the rest break may be conducted outside of the examination room if required to assist with medical needs, with the candidate being supervised at all times.

Students have two or more examinations timetabled for the same session and the total time is more than three hours may have one examination moved to be in a later or earlier session within the same day. Between the sessions the student will be supervised at all times. Students between clashing sessions students may revise using their own resources between examinations but must not:

- be in possession of unauthorised items such as phones/ electronic communication/storage device or have access to the internet;
- have contact with any other students outside their own clash cohort
- be coached by a member of centre staff.

In rare cases where a candidate has three or more examinations timetabled for the same day that meet the JCQ requirement for duration that allows overnight supervision, this maybe considered by the centre in exceptional cases. This would be a last resort and would be managed in line with section 8 of the JCQ 'ICE' booklet for information on overnight supervision arrangements. See link below.

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/>



Exam Absences, Illness, & Special Considerations

It is the students responsibility to ensure they attend all exam sessions required for all their core and option subject with written exams, please carefully check your written exam timetable and prepare in advance.

- Students who are absent for assessments or exams must call the attendance officer to report the absence.
- Student who attend but are disadvantaged due to being unwell on the day of an assessment or have a flare up of a long term conditions on they day must inform the invigilator and speak to the data and exams team on the day. Please ensure you or parents/guardians also inform the data and exams team in writing within 48 hours of the assessment, confirming the date and time of the assessment effected and the symptoms of the illness. In most cases mild illness on the day can be reported as a reason for special considerations.
- Students who are absent due to domestic crisis / bereavement/ short term illness or injury should also contact the exams and date team via email on the date of the assessment, as soon as possible to advise of absence/ disadvantage. In most cases, evidence of absence/disadvantage for these reasons can be submitted to the awarding body as a reason for absence for the unit paper missed/ effected.
- Special considerations must be processed and requested by the centre, not the student, these are per unit paper or assessment and maybe given at the awarding bodies discretion.
- To qualify for special considerations you must completed the delivery of the qualification for GCE and GCSE with AQA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC specifications, 25% of the total assessments must have been completed. Please note that partially completed GCSE, GCE AS or A2 units are not acceptable.
- Please ensure you request special considerations from the date and exams team via email: dataandexams@brit.croydon.sch.uk—be sure to submit appropriate evidence of reason for absence.

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are assessed by the AEN team before an assessment and require approval from the awarding body before the assessment by the set JCQ deadlines.

Please contact the AEN team for any concerns or enquires regarding access arrangements.

What are Access Arrangements?

Access Arrangements allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

For the JCQ Access Arrangement regulations see the website below:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/>

Access Arrangements at the BRIT School:

All students with Access Arrangements will be seated in full exam conditions.

The Library will be the main seating for our students with approval for Word Processors and computer readers, prompters, rest breaks.

Students who have approval for only a word processors maybe seated in smaller rooms or the main halls, on laptops where rooming requires.

Students with extra time only will be provided their access arrangements in the main exam halls which maybe the Obie / Lecture Theatre/ Gym/ The BRIT Theatre.

The AEN department will hold the small room allowances due to separate invigilation for human reader/ scribes or specific medical needs.

A candidate may only take their examinations in a smaller environment away from the main examination room where he/she has an established difficulty – see section 5.16 of the JCQ document A.

How to be prepared for Exams :

- **Preparations start with revision:** Check our The BRIT school student revision guide!
- Make a **revision schedule** as soon as possible for all subjects to revise in a balanced way and focus your revision on topics you struggle with.
- Put your individual timetable somewhere you will remember it, make a copy for parents/guardians/ for your room and to carry with you at school in exam seasons.
- Add all your exam times and date to your phone diary and set an alarm to go off to remind you before the start of the exam.

The weekend before the first exam date:

Check you have all the equipment you require, a black pen, pencil, geometry set, calculator, clear pencil case and clear unlabeled clear water bottle, and not a tinted coloured or metal water bottle.

The day before the exam:

Pack your bag with your required equipment for the next days exams, do not bring bulky coats or bags as all your personal items must fit in your locker. Ensure you have layered clothing and a jumper prepared as exam rooms temperature can vary depending on the room and day. You are not allowed to bring coats into the exam room.

JCQ requirements for calculators and dictionaries:

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.

How to be prepared for Exams :

Candidate Identification for Authentication:

Remember to bring your ID card, (lanyard) this is required to ensure you can sit your exam. The invigilators will not always know you and will require ID to sign off the attendance list.

JCQ require candidate authentication, and your school ID is issued to you based on your enrollment. This is your form of identification for exams without it you may not be able to sit the formal exams. Please speak to the exam manager on the day if you have forgotten your ID as you will need a new one from box office.

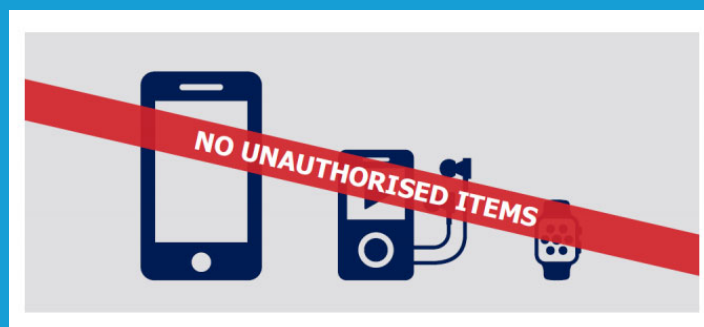


Medical Needs:

If you have medical needs you need to attend to in an exam such as diabetes or set time medicine intake for a long term medical need with require attention during exam times please check they are listed on your candidate statement of entry or on your individual timetable.

Medical needs that that are not listed on the candidate statement of entry or on your individual timetable you must identify them to the exam team and medical officer as **soon as possible and before** the exam series begins, to ensure appropriate support is provided as needed and JCQ approvals for medical rest breaks if needed, can be apply for by the AEN team.

What can I take into the exam?



Before you enter the examination room, it is your responsibility to you make sure you **do not have** any of the following items; mobile, iPod, earphones/earbuds; Air Pods MP3/4 player, and any other product with text/digital facilities. Watches must **not** be worn. There will be a clock visible to all candidates in the examination room.

You must not use correcting pens, fluid or tape, highlighters or pale coloured gel pens in the answer book but may use highlighters in the source books.

In open book exams, clean copies of the allowed text will be provided please do not attempt to bring in your own copies.

The BRIT School do not take responsibility for any personal items you have brought to school that you cannot take into the exam room, and which you cannot store in a personal locker.

You may bring drinking water in a clear plastic bottle with the label removed, the bottle cannot be coloured and no fizzy or concentrated drinks are allowed. No food is allowed in the exam room, candidates who require medical rest breaks for medicine or substance intake must have access arrangements approval in place.

Candidates with Asthma who have inhalers for this medical condition, must bring their medical inhaler and have it accessible to use. If you have a longer term medication or allergies you must ensure you have any medication needed accessible to use if needed.

No other items will be permitted on your desk during the exam.



Formal Exam Conditions :

Supervision:

High control or invigilated Exams are supervised by invigilators. They are external staff who are trained according to JCQ regulations to ensure the JCQ strict rules and regulations are followed are required in the exam room. Many of our invigilators are Alumni BRIT students and will know exactly how it feels to sit formal exams. You must listen to and follow the invigilators and exam teams instructions and be polite to all staff in exams. Raise your hand for any enquires you have and wait until they come to your desk to assist you.

Entering the Exam room:

You will be invited to enter the exam room by the invigilator 15 - 10 minutes before the exam begins. **You must ensure you do not bring into the room any unauthorised equipment or notes or you will be disqualified.**

Silence in Exam rooms: You must be silent in all exams rooms as soon as you enter the room, JCQ rules are strictly followed students must not communicate with or disturb other students in the exam rooms.

JCQ Ratio's:

There will be a 1:30 Invigilator to student ratio for formal written exams.

Exam durations and breaks:

You must be in the room for the full exam duration. You will not be allowed to leave early from an exam duration. There are no breaks in an exam. If you leave without permission you will not be allowed to return to complete the paper and the awarding body will be informed of the time you abandoned the paper and left formal exam conditions.

If you finish early reread your answers and check for errors or grammar and spelling corrections. If you wish to finish before the end of the exam, we recommend you close your paper and rest in silence. Avoid looking around the room or eye contact and communicating with others, as this can be viewed as malpractice.

To maintain ratio's there are no toilet breaks in exams under 1 hour 30 minutes or in the last 15 minutes of an exam, unless you have a medical condition recorded on your desk slip to allow escorted rest breaks. For all allowed toilet breaks in longer exam durations you will have to wait until a support staff member is able to come and assist you, please be patient for assistance.

Formal Exam Conditions :

Door lists outside the Exam room:

There will be a door list outside each exam room, check you are listed for entry to that exam room and check your seat number. The Obie, Gym and BRIT Theatre seating are arranged in a grid formation such as in the Obie you may be seat A3. The seats are listed from A1 to A 12 in a column and rows go along from A-M. The lecture hall seating are arranged from 1-70 in rows. The library is seated either at the computers or at the library tables in smaller cohorts. The AEN room cohorts do not exceed 10 students in a room. Finding your seat quickly and silently is very important. Go straight to the invigilator if you are unsure where to sit, but do not wander around the exam room checking each seat, the invigilator will assist and they will have a seating plan.

Exam room information:

In the exam room you will see on display, commonly on the white board/ projector/ or screen the **centre number, subject title, paper number;** and the actual **starting and finishing** times, and date, for each exam taking place in the exam room.

Clocks in the Exam room:

There will be analog clocks visible in the exam room, if you are unable to see the clock raise your hand for assistance. There is no watches allowed in the exam room these are unauthorised items under JCQ regulations, as it is now common for watches to be smart watches which break exam conditions.

There are no exceptions to this regulation, check your watch is removed before entering the exams room or you will be disqualified from the exam.

Desk slips in the Exam room:

There will be a desk slip on each desk, that has a candidate name and candidate number, as well as the candidate assess arrangement information on it. You must ensure you are sitting at the correct desk! Check the desk slip to make sure you are in the correct seat and correct room.

Seating:

Once seated put your clear pencil case on the desk, your lanyard (student ID) face up on the desk, and your clear unlabeled water bottle on the floor next to you. You will not receive a second paper if you knock your water over your paper, as the papers are numbered to exact entries of students in the cohort.

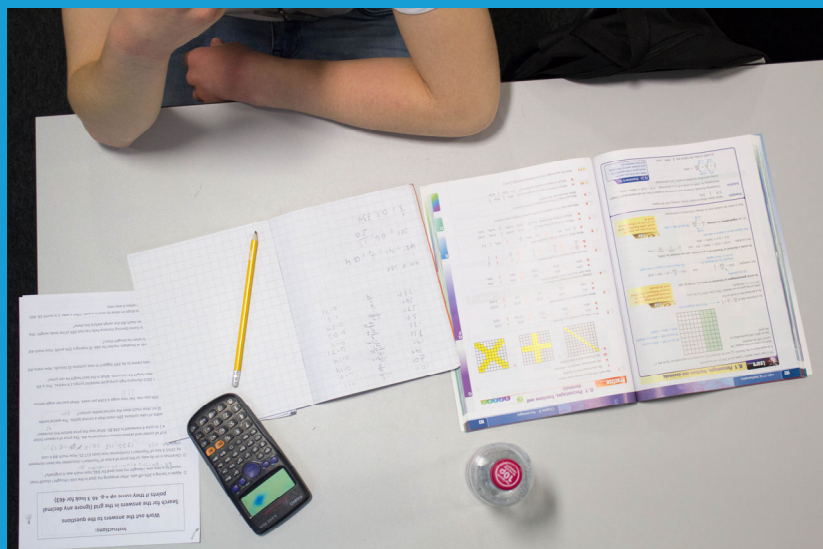
Announcements at the Start of Formal Exams :



Announcements at the start of Exams:

You must listen at the start of the exam to all announcements.

- The lead invigilator will inform you of the evacuation procedures required, you must ensure you follow the instructions in the event of an emergency alarm. Please ensure you close your papers over and remain in silence at the desk. You will be escorted out in rows, you must be silent throughout the exam evacuation and will on return to the exam room after the alarm ends, where the time lost will be allocated and the exam resumed.
- Once papers are handed out, you will be asked to check your paper / any sources and allowed additional materials, are correctly present on your desk.
- You must check the paper is correct and tier is correct. **You cannot change tier on the exam day.** Any issues with tiers must be identified to the exams team and your teacher when you receive your entry statement and individual timetables.
- You must write your **full legal name and sign** the paper on the front page. If you do not sign and authenticate the paper as your work it will not be marked.
- You must add your **candidate number**, found on your desk slip and add the **centre number** correctly to the front of the paper, to ensure it matches your entry information.
- The invigilator will read the rubric (front page of the exam paper) and any candidate additional announcements to papers.



- The invigilator will announce when you may start the exam.
- The invigilator will give a 5 minute warning at the end, and advise you to check your answers and ensure you have signed your paper.
- The invigilator will give the announcement to finish the exam, you must put down your pens and stop writing. If you are using a word processor you must stop typing and save your work. The invigilator will help you print your work to sign if you are using a word processor.
- You must remain in silence while papers are collected in and counted.
- You will be dismissed in silence in rows. You must consider other students who will be continuing their exams in the hall, do not talk in the corridors near by.

Before you enter the examination room, you must make sure you **do not have** any of the following items; mobile, Air pods, Earphones, earbuds, iPod, MP3/4 player, and any other product with text/digital facilities. Watches must **not** be worn. Please use your lockers to store these items. The BRIT School do not take responsibility for any personal items you have brought for the exam that you cannot take into the exam room, and which you cannot store in a personal locker. There will be a clock visible to all candidates in the examination room.

A seating list will be displayed on the exam room door, please check you are listed in the exam room and wait for the invigilator to ask you to enter. All candidates who start a GCSE exam must stay in the exam room until one hour after the awarding body's published starting time for that examination, if the exam is shorter than an hour you will have to remain in exam conditions in the room until the end of the hour. If you are unwell at the start of the exam this must be identified by you to the invigilator before the exam begins, and the exam manager will discuss with you if you are fit to sit the examination.

You must provide your own writing equipment; i.e. Black pens, pencils, erasers. Please also bring your own rulers & mathematical instruments. All equipment should be placed in a see-through pencil case or clear plastic bag. All scripts are required to be completed in **black ink**. You must not use correcting pens, fluid or tape, highlighters or pale coloured gel pens in the answer book.

You may bring drinking water in a clear plastic bottle with label removed, the bottle cannot be coloured and no fizzy or concentrated drinks are allowed. No food is allowed in the exam room, candidates who require medical rest breaks must have AA approval in place. Please contact AEN regarding access arrangements. Candidates with Asthma who have inhalers for this medical condition, must bring their medical inhaler and have it accessible to use. If you have a longer term medication or allergies you must ensure you have taken any required medication before the examination starts, and have any medication needed accessible to use if needed.

No other items will be permitted on your desk during the exam.



Personal Data and Copyright :

The awarding bodies collect information about exam candidates. *To understand what information is collected and how it is used, you must read the JCQ Information for candidates – Privacy Notice*

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents/>

In line with the JCQ general regulations:

- The copyright of any work created by a candidate that is submitted to an awarding body for assessment (referred to as Assessment Materials) belongs to the candidate
- By submitting this work, a candidate is granting the awarding body a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use their assessment materials (referred to as Assessment licence.)
- If a candidate wishes to terminate the awarding body's rights for anything other than assessing his/her work, the awarding body must be notified by the centre and it is at the discretion of the awarding body whether or not to terminate such rights

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Mock Data:

Mock results are used to help inform teachers of progress and current working at levels for students.

Students results for Mocks series will be released in the next school subject report for that subject. This helps identify topics that require deeper study in class and helps to identify students who require intervention, or who are not on track with their target grades. Teachers will discuss Mock results with parents/ guardians at the relevant year groups consultation day.