



**Smithdon High School**

# **CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK**

**2023/24**

This handbook is reviewed and updated annually

Produced/reviewed by	
Date of next review	

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## Introduction

Smithdon High School is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the examination and assessment process in place in the centre and are made aware of the required JCQ/awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

## Purpose of this handbook

This booklet provides information and advice in preparation for the Summer series GCSE examinations.

The awarding bodies (or examination boards) set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations and Smithdon High School is required to follow them precisely. You should therefore pay particular attention to the JCQ Notices printed at the back of this booklet.

If you or your parents/carers have any queries or need help or advice at any time before, during or after the examinations please contact the Exams officer.

Exams Officer – Mrs Broughton -  
School direct telephone number – **01485 536115**.  
Centre Number 18513

## Malpractice

Malpractice, including maladministration, means any act, default or practice which is a breach of the regulations that apply to the exam or assessment being taken.

Any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice will be investigated and reported to the relevant awarding body/bodies

Awarding bodies may, at their discretion, impose one or more of the following sanctions against candidates:

1. Warning
2. Loss of all marks for a section
3. Loss of all marks for a component
4. Loss of all marks for a unit
5. Disqualification from a unit
6. Disqualification from all units in one or more qualifications
7. Disqualification from a whole qualification
8. Disqualification from all qualifications taken in that series
9. Candidate debarment (banned from taking exams for a set period of time)

For further information please refer to JCQ Examples of malpractice , JCQ Using social media and examinations/assessments, JCQ AI and Assessments printed at the back of this handbook.

## Personal data

Awarding bodies need to have a variety of information about you when you are entered for an exam. 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. In turn the awarding bodies will create certain information about you such as a candidate number, examination results and certificates.

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.

For further information please refer to JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres and Regulations or JCQ Information-for-candidates-privacy-notice printed at the back of this handbook.

## Copyright

The copyright of any form of work created by you that is submitted to an awarding body for assessment (referred to as Assessment Materials) belongs to you. By submitting this work, you are granting the awarding body a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use your assessment materials (referred to as Assessment Licence).

If you wish to terminate the awarding body's rights for anything other than assessing your 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

For further information please refer to JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres ([GR 6](#))

## Coursework assessments/non-examination assessments

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

If you worked as part of a group on an assignment, for example undertaking field research, you must each 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 and you must independently 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 or share it with anyone, including posting it on social media. You must always keep your work secure and confidential whilst you are preparing it; do not share it with your classmates. 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 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.

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, encyclopaedias, 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 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.

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 called '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](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/newsid_2621000/2621915.stm), downloaded 5 February 2024.

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/>), 25/01/2024. You should retain a copy of the computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes.

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

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.

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

the piece of work will be awarded zero marks

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**

### **Written timetabled exams**

You will receive copies of an individual timetable showing your specific exams with details of date, time, and duration of exam. Check it carefully and if you think something is wrong speak to Mrs Broughton in the Exams Office immediately.

Please arrange for your parents/carers and you to sign the yellow copy of your timetable and return it to the Exams Office before the deadline printed on the bottom of the timetable.

Individual timetables showing your seating arrangements will be sent to you nearer the date of the first exam.

### **Contingency sessions - Summer 2024**

The awarding bodies have designated the following days as 'contingency days' for summer 2024 examinations: Thursday 6 June 2024 afternoon. Thursday 13 June 2024 afternoon. Wednesday 26 June 2024 full day.

### **On-screen tests**

Details of on-screen tests will either be included on your exam timetable or provided to you prior to the date of the exam if it is to be taken outside of the main summer exam season.

In addition to the rules and regulations listed elsewhere in this handbook:

Unless you are told otherwise, you must not have access to:

- (a) the internet, email, data stored on the hard drive, or portable storage media such as floppy disks, CDs and memory sticks;
- (b) pre-prepared templates

Always listen to the invigilator and follow their instructions.

Tell the invigilator at once if:

- (a) you have been entered for the wrong on-screen test;
- (b) the on-screen test is in another candidate's name;
- (c) you experience system delays or any other IT irregularities.

You may be given a question paper or the instructions may be on screen. In either case, read carefully and follow the instructions. Do not open the question paper until you are instructed that the exam has begun.

Ensure that the software closes at the end of the on-screen test.

If you are required to print off work outside the time allowed for the on-screen test, ensure that you collect your own work. You must not share your work with other candidates. Make sure that another candidate does not collect your printout(s).

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

Do not take any stationery from the exam room. This includes rough work, printouts or any other materials provided for the on-screen test.

### **What to do if you identify you have two or more exam papers timetabled at the same time (a timetable clash)**

Candidates may have a clash, where two subjects are timetabled at the same time. The school will make special timetable arrangements for these candidates and letters will be sent home to parents/carers. You must check your individual timetable and let staff know if you are unsure what to do. If you think there is a clash on your timetable that has not been resolved contact Mrs Broughton immediately.

It is possible that afternoon examinations will finish after the end of the school day. This may apply to any candidate but particularly those who have special arrangements or examination clashes. Alternative travel arrangements will need to be made in this instance as the school is unable to hold buses.

## Where you will take your exams

Exams for the majority of candidates will take place in the Sports Hall. However, there may be individual classrooms or offices used for a small number of candidates. Please check your individual timetable to see where you are due to sit your exam. If you are unsure then please see Mrs Broughton in the Exams Office.

## What time your exams will start and finish

At Smithdon High School exams will **START** at:

AM Session 9.00am

PM Session 1.00pm

Candidates are expected to be ready and waiting outside their exam room at least 10 minutes prior to the START time of the exam. You will also remain in the exam room for the entire duration of the exam as required by the relevant awarding body.

## Supervision during your exams

The school employs invigilators to conduct all examinations. Candidates are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards all invigilators and follow their instructions at all times.

Invigilators must follow strict rules and regulations and are in the examination rooms to supervise the conduct of the examination. They will distribute and collect the examination papers, tell candidates when to start and finish the examination, hand out extra writing paper if required and deal with any problems that occur during the examination, for example if a candidate is feeling ill.

Please note that invigilators cannot discuss the examination paper with you or explain the questions.

Candidates who are disruptive or behave in an unacceptable manner will be removed from the examination room by invigilators or the Exams Officer and will be dealt with by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

## Exam room conditions

Please be ready with all the equipment you need to complete your exam at least 10 minutes before the start time of the exam. Line up quietly in the order in which you are sitting outside the exam room and wait for a member of staff to call you in.

You are under formal exam conditions as soon as you enter the exam room and **must not disturb or communicate in any way with any other candidate in that exam room.**

Stand behind your desk and wait for the invigilator to say you can sit down.

Always listen to the invigilator and follow their instructions. There may be amendments to the exam paper that you need to know about.

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.

**It is your responsibility to check that you have been given the correct paper.** Inform an invigilator immediately if you think something is wrong.

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

Details of the centre number (**18513**), subject title, paper number, the actual starting and finishing times, and date of each exam will be displayed on the whiteboard at the front of the exam room.



Details of your candidate number will be on the individual exam label on your desk.

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 before you start the exam. Do not open the question paper until you are instructed that the exam has begun.

Remember to write your answers within the designated sections of the answer booklet and number your answers clearly.

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.

Please check your desks on arrival and report any evidence of graffiti. Do not write on the exam desks. This is regarded as vandalism and you may be asked to pay for any damage.

Do not draw graffiti or write offensive comments on exam papers – if you do the examination board may refuse to accept and mark your paper.

Candidates must stay in the exam room for at least one hour after the published start time of the exam (or for the duration of the exam if it is less than one hour). The published start time for afternoon exams is 1:30pm and therefore candidates will not be permitted to leave the exam room until 2:30pm.

You will not be allowed to leave the exam room 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 exam all work must be handed in – remember to cross out any rough work. If you have used more than one answer book or supplementary answer sheets ask for a tag to fasten them together in the correct order. Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use.

Invigilators will collect your exam papers before you leave the room. Absolute silence must be maintained during this time. Remember you are still under formal exam 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 told to leave the examination room.

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

Please leave the room in silence and show consideration for other candidates who may still be working.

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.

### **Where you will sit in the exam room**

Details of where you will sit will be shown on your exam timetable.

A copy of the exam seating plan will be displayed on the wall/door outside the exam room.

Please make sure you know where you are sitting and speak to an invigilator if you are unsure.

### **How your identity is confirmed in the exam room**

Individual photo cards will be placed on candidate's desks to enable invigilators to confirm identity.

## What equipment you need to bring to your exams

You are responsible for providing all the equipment you need for the completion of your exam.

All items of equipment, at least three black pens, two pencils, erasers, rulers, mathematical instruments (Should include a compass and protractor), etc. should be visible to the invigilators at all times. Pencil cases must be clear and with no writing on the case. Mathematical equipment tins are not permitted in examination rooms. Please take all equipment out of the tin and place it inside your clear pencil case.

Pens **must** be black ink or ballpoint. No erasable pens, gel pens, highlighters or correction pens may be used in your answers.

For Mathematics and Science exams, students should make sure their calculators conform to the examination regulations (see below). Any data stored in the memory must be deleted and cases must be removed and placed under the desk. If in doubt, check with your teacher **before** the exam.

Do not borrow anything from another candidate while you are in the exam room. You must put your hand up and ask the invigilators if you may borrow an item of equipment.

## Using calculators

You are responsible for making sure that your calculator meets the awarding bodies' regulations.

During an examination a calculator must not be able to offer any of these facilities:

- a) language translators;
- b) symbolic algebra manipulation;
- c) symbolic differentiation or integration;
- d) communication with other machines or the internet.

During an examination a calculator must not give access to pre-stored information. This includes:

- a) databanks;
- b) dictionaries;
- c) mathematical formulae;
- d) text.

A calculator must not be borrowed from another candidate during an examination.

## What you should not bring into the exam room

AirPods, earphones/earbuds, iPods, mobile phones and watches are not permitted in the exam room.

Notes, books and papers are not permitted in the exam room.

If you are found to have any unauthorised items in your possession during the exam you may be disqualified.

## Food and drink in exam rooms

Water is allowed in the examination rooms so long as it is in a clear bottle with no labels attached.

## What you should wear for your exams

**Full school uniform must be worn by all students for all examinations.**

## Where your personal belongings will be stored during your exam

Your personal belongings (bags, coats, unauthorised items including switched off mobile phones, watches, etc.) will be stored in A1 and A2 which will be locked whilst the exam is taking place.

## **What to do if you arrive late for your exam**

Candidates are responsible for checking their own timetable and arriving on the correct day and time, properly dressed and equipped. Candidates must arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the start time of their examination. Please wait quietly outside the exam room until you are invited to enter by the Exams Officer or invigilators.

Candidates who arrive late for an examination will be permitted to sit the exam and will be allowed the full time for the exam.

If you are late, you should get to school as quickly as possible and report to Mrs Broughton as you will need to be escorted into the exam room. You must not enter an exam room without permission after an examination has begun.

A candidate who is considered very late (more than 1 hour after the awarding body's published starting time for that exam or the end time for the exam) will be permitted to sit the exam. However, the awarding body may not accept the script.

If special consideration applies then you must speak to the Exams officer.

## **What to do if you are unwell on the day of your exam**

If you feel unwell on the day of your exam then you must inform the school at the earliest possible point so we can help or advise you.

In the case of an accident which means you are unable to write, it may be possible to provide you with a scribe but we will need as much prior notice as possible as JCQ permission is required.

If you start to feel ill during the exam then put your hand up and an invigilator will assist you.

You will need to obtain medical evidence (from your GP or hospital) if you wish the school to make an appeal for Special Consideration on your behalf.

## **Absence from your exam**

If you experience difficulties during the examination period (eg illness, injury, personal problems) please inform Mrs Broughton, a member of the pastoral team or Mr Chapman / Mr Ward at the earliest possible point so that help and advice can be given and arrangements made.

Only in 'exceptional circumstances' are candidates allowed special consideration for absence from any part of an examination. Approval will need to be obtained from the awarding bodies. It is essential that medical or other appropriate evidence is obtained on the day by the candidate/parents/carers and given to Mrs Broughton without delay in all cases where an application is to be made for special consideration. A self-certification form (JCQ/ME Form 14) can be obtained from Mrs Broughton which can be countersigned by your doctor or nurse.

For the award of a grade by special consideration, where a student misses part of an examination through illness or personal misfortune, one whole component, which is a minimum of 15% of the total assessment, must have been completed.

Timetables are regulated by the awarding bodies and therefore you will not be permitted to take the exam on another day.

Parents/carers and candidates are reminded that the school will require payment of entry fees should a candidate fail to attend an examination without good reason and without informing the school.

Please note that misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.

## What happens in the event of an emergency in the exam room

If the **fire alarm** sounds during an examination the invigilators will tell you what to do. Don't panic. If you have to evacuate the room you will be asked to leave **in silence** and in the order in which you are sitting. **You must remain under examination conditions at all times.** You will be escorted to the designated assembly point. Close your exam paper and leave everything on your desk. **You must not attempt to communicate with anyone else during the evacuation. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.** When you return to the exam room do not start writing until the invigilator tells you to. You will be allowed the full working time for the examination and a report will be sent to the awarding body detailing the incident requesting Special Consideration.

## Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

Arrangements for candidates entitled to access arrangements/reasonable adjustments will have been made prior to the exams and communicated to candidate & parents/carers.

Candidates who will sit their exams in a smaller environment away from the main exam room will be informed of the room on their timetable. Any emergency changes to this information will be communicated to the candidate prior to the exam.

Candidates who are entitled to extra time and sit their exams in the main exam room (sports hall) will, where possible, be seated together separate from other candidates who finish earlier so as to minimise disturbance.

Invigilators will include the amount of extra time candidates are entitled to, the finishing time as well as the finishing time including the extra time on the whiteboard in all exam rooms/smaller environment.

## Results

Provisional statements of GCSE results will be released on:

**Thursday 22 August 2024**

Details regarding the collection of results will be published towards the end of the summer term.

## Post-results services

Details of Post-results services will be published towards the end of the summer term.

## Certificates

Certificates will not be available for collection until the end of 2024.

Certificates will need to be signed for and collected in person at the 2024 Prize Presentation Evening.

If you do not attend the presentation evening then you will receive your certificates by secure post.

## Internal appeals procedure

Details of the school's Internal Appeals Procedure can be found on the website.

## Complaints policy

Details of the school's Complaints Policy (Exams) can be found on the website.

**JCQ Malpractice notice to be attached**

**JCQ Information for candidates – social media**

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

[Insert the current document *Information for candidates – social media*  
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents> or direct candidates to the document on the centre's website and insert an appropriately worded message here]

**JCQ AI Poster to be attached**

**JCQ Information for candidates – Privacy Notice**

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

[Insert the **current** document *Information for candidates – Privacy Notice*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents> or direct candidates to the document on the centre's website and insert an appropriately worded message here]



**JCQ Unauthorised items poster**

This poster will be displayed outside each exam room. You **must** note that "*Possession of unauthorised items, such as a mobile phone or any watch, is a serious offence and could result in **DISQUALIFICATION** from your examination and your overall qualification.*"

[Insert the current *Unauthorised items* poster <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/exam-room-posters> or direct candidates to the poster on the centre's website and insert an appropriately worded message here]

**JCQ *Warning to candidates* poster**

This poster will be displayed outside each exam room. You **must** note all the warnings.

[Insert the current *Warning to candidates* poster

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/exam-room-posters> or direct candidates to the poster on the centre's website and insert an *appropriately worded message* here]

## CANDIDATE CONFIRMATION

To confirm you have received, read and understood the contents of this handbook, please sign and date the tear-off slip below and return to the Exams Office.

If there is anything you do not understand, you should ask Mrs Broughton for clarification.



### CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK

**NAME:** Overwrite your name here

Date I received the handbook: DD / MM / YYYY

#### I have read the contents

**I understand** (Tick all of the boxes that apply)

- What constitutes malpractice in examinations/assessments
- What my personal data is used for by awarding bodies
- Copyright

**I have read and understand the current JCQ information for candidates documents** as they relate to the qualifications I am taking (Tick all of the boxes that apply)

- Coursework
- Non-examination assessments
- On-screen tests
- Privacy Notice
- Social media
- Written exams

By signing here, I am confirming all of the above

**Candidate Signature:** Overwrite your signature here

Date of signature: DD / MM / YYYY