



CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK

Btec National & Cambridge Technical External Examinations January 2025

This handbook is reviewed and updated annually

Produced/reviewed by	
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Introduction

Mark Rutherford 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

- To support/complement candidate briefings/assemblies
- To inform candidates about malpractice in examinations/assessments
- To inform candidates about the use of their personal data and copyright
- To ensure candidates are provided with all relevant information about their exams and assessments in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To ensure copies of relevant JCQ information for candidates documents and exam room posters are provided in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To answer questions candidates may have etc.
- To inform candidates of/signpost candidates (and where relevant parents/carers) to any exams-related policies/procedures they need to be made aware of

Malpractice

To ensure candidates are aware of what malpractice is and the possible consequences.

- 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
 - Exchanging, obtaining, receiving, or passing on information which could be examination related (or the attempt to)
 - Offences relating to the content of candidates' work
 - Undermining the integrity of examinations/assessments

The awarding body will complete a thorough investigation of any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice which may result in a sanctions please refer to [Information for candidates documents](#) and the *Indicative sanctions against candidates* (Appendix 6, [Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#)).

Mark Rutherford School has in place for inspection a **Malpractice Policy** (Exams) that is reviewed and updated annually, this policy covers all qualifications delivered by the centre detailing

- how candidates are informed and advised to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments,
- how suspected malpractice issues should be escalated within the centre and reported to the relevant awarding body;
- it must also acknowledge the use of AI (e.g., what AI is, when it may be used and how it should be acknowledged, the risks of using AI, what AI misuse is and how this will be treated as malpractice) (GR 5.3)

Social Media

Information for candidates – social media. www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents/

Candidates should be aware that the following would be malpractice:

- copying or allowing work to be copied – e.g., posting written work on social networking sites prior to an examination/assessment;
- collusion: allowing others to help produce your work or helping others with theirs;
- asking others about what questions your exam will include (even if no one tells you);
- having or sharing details about exam questions before the exam - whether you think these are real or fake;
- not telling exam boards or your school/college about exam information being shared.

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

Research and using references

- 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.

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.

AI & Assessments

- AI stands for artificial intelligence and using it is like having a computer that thinks
- AI tools like ChatGPT or Snapchat My AI can write text, make art and create music by learning from data from the internet, but watch out – they can also make things up and be biased
- You're not allowed to use AI tools when you're in an exam. AI misuse is when you take something made using AI and say it's your own work. THIS IS CHEATING! [JCQ-AI-poster-for-students-2.pdf](#)

Personal data

The awarding bodies collect information about exam candidates, please see the links below to each Awarding bodies privacy notice for further information:

- AQA [Privacy notice \(aqa.org.uk\)](https://www.aqa.org.uk/privacy-notice)
- Pearson [Pearson privacy notice](#)
- OCR [Candidate privacy policy \(ocr.org.uk\)](https://www.ocr.org.uk/candidate-privacy-policy)
- WJEC/Eduqas [Privacy Policy | Eduqas](#)

Examples of how personal data may be shared Refer to GR 6

- Any person involved in completing examinations/assessments where malpractice is suspected, or alleged, personal data about them will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved. Personal data about them may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies...
- The centre will provide relevant personal data including name, date of birth, gender to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications.
- Materials which are submitted by candidates for assessment may include any form of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programmes and data ("Student Materials"). Awarding bodies may use the Student Materials to evaluate candidates' performance in the relevant assessment. They may also use the Student Materials for other purposes as outlined in their privacy policies and in accordance with their terms. Candidates should be directed to the relevant awarding body's privacy notice if they require further information about how their Student Materials may be used by the awarding body.

Written timetabled exams

- Candidate statement of entry: candidates must check that personal details and exam entries are correct. If any information is incorrect candidates should email exams@mrus.co.uk upon receipt of their statement of entry.
- Candidates receive a seating exam timetable (to ensure candidates know the date and time of all their exams/assessments), and to include relevant information regarding seating arrangements, exam rooms, etc.
- The JCQ information for candidates' documents – Issued in hardcopy annually in the information for candidates' booklet which is also available on the school website
- Exam room posters – Warning to candidates & Unauthorised items - Issued in hardcopy annually in the information for candidates booklet which is also available on the school website

Where you will take your exams

- Candidates in the January Series will complete their examinations in a classroom.
- Candidates will receive an examination timetable confirming seating arrangements

What time your exams will start and finish

- External morning examinations start at 9am and afternoon examinations start at 1.30pm.
- Candidates are required to arrive at their examinations room, a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the examination start time.
- All candidates are required to remain in the examination room for the full published exam duration. Requests for candidates to leave an examination early will not be granted.

Supervision during your exams

- Exams are supervised by a team of invigilators under the management of the Exams Office.
- All Invigilators must follow strict rules and regulations when conducting exams as directed by JCQ awarding bodies.
- All Invigilators must have received up to date training of the rules and regulations in order to supervise candidates
- Should an Invigilator have a relative taking the exam, they will only invigilate in another room to that of the candidate.

Exam room conditions

- All candidates are under formal exam conditions from the moment they enter the room until the point at which they have left the room having been given permission to leave by the invigilator. Candidates must therefore not talk or attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once they have entered the room.
- All candidates must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times in the exam room.
- Invigilators will direct candidates where their bag/coat should be placed.
- Candidates must bring with them all the equipment they require to complete the exam. Candidates should remove all equipment they need from their bag prior to taking their seat. Only see-through pencil cases are permitted at exam desks.
- Candidates must place unauthorised items such as notes, AirPods, Earphones/Earbuds, an iPod, a mobile phone, a MP3/4 player or similar device, a watch, smart glasses or any other smart device in the named pouch on their desk. These will be collected during the invigilator announcement and will be returned to them at the end of the exam by exams office staff.
- The following information is displayed in the exam room: centre number 15125, subject title, paper number, the actual starting and finishing times and date of each exam.

- Candidates must not complete the front of their question paper until they are instructed to do so by the Invigilator. They must use a first name and surname that matches their entry information (i.e., legal forename/surname, exam number etc.).
- Candidates must not make any notes on the front of the paper or elsewhere whilst waiting for the examination to start.
- Candidates must not open their exam paper or resources provided until they are instructed that they may start the examination.
- If candidates use additional answer sheets/answer books all relevant details must be completed (legal forename/surname, exam number, and centre number 15125).

How your identity is confirmed in the exam room

- Invigilators must establish the identity of all candidates completing examinations. Candidates must sit at the desk that has been allocated to them and ensure that the desk card on the desk identifies them. Invigilators are able to access an exam candidate record sheet for the purpose of confirming a candidate's identity.
- Candidates should check the desk card on the desk they are seated at contains their name and exam number and advise an invigilator if this isn't the case as they may be seated at the wrong desk.

What equipment you need to bring to your exams

- Candidates **must** attend each exam with all the equipment they require in a clear pencil case (list below).
 - Black pen (plus spare)
 - Pencil (plus spare)
 - Eraser
 - Ruler
 - Highlighter
 - Protractor
 - Pair of Compasses
 - Calculator with lid removed
 - Colouring Pencils if subject requires
- Mathematical equipment tins such as the one shown above are not permitted: Equipment must be in a clear pencil case.
- A clear water bottle with label(s) removed containing only water. Bottles showing branding or measurements are not permitted eg Nike or ml gauge.



Using calculators

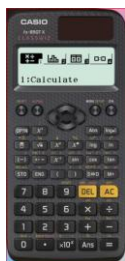
Candidates must be aware of JCQ awarding body instructions regarding the use of calculators in your exams Refer to [ICE 10](#)

- A calculator is defined as an electronic device whose primary purpose is to carry out mathematical calculations.
- This is the published guidance on calculators unless specifically varied by an awarding body in a qualification specification.

- The instructions on the question paper will say whether calculators are allowed or not. If the instructions do not include such a statement, calculators should be treated as standard equipment and may be used by candidates.
- Where the use of a calculator is allowed, candidates are responsible for making sure that their calculators meet the awarding bodies' regulations.
- Candidates must be told these regulations beforehand and be familiar with the Information for candidates documents.
- 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, such as the periodic table (with the exception of scientific constants); b. dictionaries; c. mathematical formulae; d. text.
- A calculator must not be borrowed from another candidate during an examination.
- Some calculators have an 'exam mode'. This is acceptable in examinations where the exam mode is activated and the exam mode results in the calculator becoming compliant with the above requirements.
- An invigilator may give a candidate a replacement calculator.
- Where access is permitted to a calculator for part of an examination, it is acceptable for candidates to place their calculators on the floor under their desks in sight of the invigilator(s) for the non-calculator portion of the examination.
- A series of FAQs on the use of calculators in examinations may be found at: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

Candidates using Scientific Calculators

- Where the use of calculators is allowed, candidates are responsible for making sure that their calculator meets the regulations
- For GCSE and Core Maths candidates, MRS recommends use of the Casio FX83-GTX
It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure the memory is cleared before the start of the exam
The memory can be cleared by pressing: SHIFT CLR (9) to access the reset menu, then press 3 = AC
- A level Pure Maths and Further Maths students are recommended to use the Casio FX –CG50
The candidate must ensure that this calculator is put in UK exam mode before the start of the exam, this is the candidate's responsibility
To put the calculator into UK Exam mode: Turn calculator OFF – press and hold keys UK (1 `), continue to hold down UK key and then press AC/on button. Screen states "exam mode 2", click Yes then press F1 followed by F2 to continue to UK exam mode. The screen will then show a Magenta coloured border.



CASIO FX83-GTX



CASIO FX-CG50

What you must not bring into the exam room

All candidates must be familiar with the **Information for candidates –Written exams**. can be viewed via link below www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents/

Point 4 outlines what is classified as unauthorised materials

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.

JCQ information regarding unauthorised materials.

- Candidates must either leave at home or hand in all potential technological/web sources of information such as an **AirPods, Earphones/Earbuds, an iPod, a mobile phone, a MP3/4 player or similar device, a watch, smart glasses or any other smart device.**

In addition, **watches** are not permitted and regarded as unauthorised materials.

These items should be placed in the desk pouch (switched off) which will be collected by an invigilator before the exam starts. It is not permitted for these items to be left in a candidate's bag in the examination room as this would still constitute malpractice.

- Candidates should not be in possession of any notes. These should be left at home or in their bag. Candidates should thoroughly check their pockets prior to entering the examinations room. If a candidate realises, they have notes in their possession once they have taken their seat, they should place them in their desk pouch or raise their hand to gain an invigilators attention.

What will happen if the regulations are breached?

- If a candidate is found to have unauthorised materials in their possession this will be reported to the awarding body. Mark Rutherford will follow the JCQ guidance for reporting suspected malpractice. The awarding body will complete a thorough investigation which may result in the following sanctions: the candidate receiving a warning, loss of marks or loss of aggregation or certification opportunity, further details are shown in appendix 6 of JCQ guidance document, link below. www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/

Food and drink in exam rooms

- Candidates may bring a clear water bottle with label removed containing only water. Bottles showing branding or measurements are not permitted eg Nike or ml gauge.
- Food is not allowed in an exam or assessment unless the candidate has a medical need.

What you should wear for your exams

- The sixth form dress code must be adhered to.
- No candidates are permitted to wear a coat/outdoor jacket whilst completing an examination

Where your personal belongings will be stored during your exam

- Candidates will be directed by the Invigilators in the exam room where to put their bag containing their personal belongings during the exam.
- Unauthorised materials must be handed in to the invigilator as previously advised

What to do if you arrive late for your exam

- The start time for External examinations is 9am in the morning and 1.30pm in the afternoon.
- Candidates are required to arrive to the exam venue a minimum of 15 minutes prior to their examination starting.
- If a candidate is delayed due to unforeseen circumstances, they must contact reception (01234 290200) as a matter of urgency.

Please leave a contact number as this will allow Examination Office to contact you. In the interim, if possible, please continue your journey to school, there are protocols set by JCQ which candidates need to follow. Please try not to panic, each season candidates are delayed for a variety of reasons in most circumstances providing the correct protocols are followed the candidate is able to complete the exam and awarded the full exam duration.

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

If a candidate is unwell on an exam day, please contact the sixth form office. Please contact us as soon as possible to allow us to provide advice of the options available to the candidate.

What you would expect the candidate or parent/carer to do if the candidate is unwell and unable to attend an exam

- If a candidate is unwell on an exam day, please contact the sixth form office. Please contact us as soon as possible to allow us to provide advice regarding options available to the candidate. When leaving an answer phone message, please speak clearly leaving a contact number on which you will be available.

What to do if a candidate is unwell but manages to attend the exam

- If a candidate is unwell on exam day but able to complete the examination, we may be able to make an application for special consideration on their behalf. In order to make the application to the examination board we will need supporting information such as self-certification form, evidence of medication prescribed (this can be a photo copy of the medication box as the patient label will include the date prescribed to whom and its dosage). If the illness required treatment as a hospital out/in patient please provide copies of correspondence from the hospital.

What to do if the candidate feels unwell during the exam

- If a candidate is feeling unwell during the examination, the candidate should raise their hand to get an invigilators attention. They should make the invigilator aware that they feel unwell, the nature of the illness and if they require access to a toilet (candidates must be appropriately chaperoned whilst accessing the toilet). Invigilators can access water bottles or tissues should candidates require them. The candidate may be offered a supervised rest break if it is appropriate. The invigilator will contact the exam office or a first aider should the candidate require further assistance.

Provide any relevant JCQ information regarding absence from exams for illness or other acceptable reason

- If a candidate's is absent from an exam for medical reasons or completed an examination but was unwell at the time, an application for special consideration may be made. Awarding bodies require supporting evidence to be available for applications for special consideration. The supporting evidence may include some or all of the following, self-certification form, evidence of medication prescribed (this can be a photo copy of the medication box as the patient label will include the date prescribed to whom and its dosage). If the illness required treatment as a hospital out/in patient please provide copies of correspondence from the hospital.

Parent/Carers and students must complete the Self Certification form (available by request to exams@mrus.co.uk) and return this to the Exams Office promptly in order that an application can be considered.

What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from your exam

In the event that a candidate is absent from an examination and their absence is unauthorised the candidate's Parent/Carer will be invoiced the entry fee for the subject from which the candidate was absent.

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

What happens if the fire alarm sounds?

- The invigilator will advise you to stop working and remain silent. They will note on the exam notice board the time the exam was stopped.
- Candidates must remain seated and remain under exam conditions for the duration of the stoppage. No communications between candidates can occur, if a candidate requires assistance, they should raise their hand to attract the invigilators attention.
- Once a decision is made by Senior Leadership whether it is necessary to evacuate the exam room the Invigilator will make an announcement.
- In the event of an evacuation all exam candidates will register on the **Sports field** not the Tennis Courts as they would normally. Exam conditions are still required and must be observed, students should stand in row/room order an arm width apart from candidates to the side, front and rear of them. Candidates should leave their bags and coats in the exam room. No communications between candidates can occur, if a candidate requires assistance, they should raise their hand to attract the invigilators attention.

What happens when the exam is restarted?

- Candidates will be given the remaining exam duration to complete the examination. The time the exam was restarted and new finish time will be noted on the exam notice board.

Will the awarding body be informed?

- Special consideration will be requested for all candidates that were affected by the fire alarm.

Special Consideration

What is special consideration?

- This is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, injury or some other event outside of the candidate's control at the time of the assessment, which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had a material effect on a candidate's ability to demonstrate his/her normal level of attainment in an assessment.
For further assistance or guidance please contact sixth form office.

How does a candidate make an application for Special consideration?

- The Parent/Carer and the candidate must complete and return the application form to Mark Rutherford Exams Office exams@mrus.co.uk

Results

January 2025 provisional statements of results will be issued/distributed (results are 'provisional' until a certificate has been produced by the awarding body).

- Cambridge Technical Results day- Wednesday 12th March 2025
- Btec National Results day- Thursday 20th March 2025
- Members of the senior leadership will be available in school, please contact exams@mrus.co.uk for further information.
- Examination results will be distributed to candidates on results day more information to follow regarding arrangements.
- Results may be emailed to the candidate if this is requested in advance of results day, email request should be made by the candidate to exams@mrus.co.uk
- No results will be given out by telephone under any circumstances.

Post-results services

What services are available?

- Awarding bodies offer two post results services to candidates Review of results (either clerical check and/or review of marking) and Access to script.

Service 1 Clerical check

- This service includes the following checks: That all parts of the script have been marked. The totalling of marking. The recording of marks. The application of any adjustments. The application of grade thresholds. The application of any special consideration, where applicable. The outcome of the re-check will be reported along with a statement of the total marks awarded for each unit, or component, included in the enquiry. Only Service 1 clerical re-check can be requested for objective tests (multiple choice tests). The target for completion is within 10 calendar days of the exam board receiving the request.

Service 2 Review of Marking

- This is post-results review of the original marking to ensure that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly. It is not a re-marking of the candidate's script. This service will include the clerical re-checks detailed in Service 1 and a review of marking as described above. The target for completion is within 20 calendar days of the awarding body receiving the request.

ATS (Access to scripts)

- A photocopy of the candidate's original script.

Requests for post-results services must be made through the centre

- Requests for post results services can only be made by the centre at which the candidate's entries were made and with the candidates written consent, (informed consent via candidate email is acceptable).

The centre's procedures

- The internal appeals procedure outlines the centre's procedures in relation to post-results services; the procedure is available on the school website.

How and when candidates are informed about the deadlines, fees and charges for these services

- Following the issue of results, awarding bodies make post-results services available.
- Final date for Access to Scripts, clerical checks, reviews of marking, reviews of moderation or other results enquiries (e.g., Missing and Incomplete Results) to be applied for is 1pm on the 13/02/2025
- Full details of these services, deadlines for requesting a service and fees charged are provided by the Exams office in results envelopes (contact exams@mrus.co.uk or 01234 290235).

Internal appeals procedure

This procedure covers appeals relating to:

- Internal assessment decisions (centre assessed marks)
- Centre decisions not to support an application for clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal
- Centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration
- Centre decisions relating to other administrative issues

Candidates and parents/carers are able to access the centre Internal Appeals Procedure on the school website.

Complaints policy

Candidates and parents/carers are able to access the centre complaints procedure on the school website.