



Quarrydale Academy

# Exam Guide for Parents



Public exams can be a complicated and stressful time for all those involved, and it helps if everyone is as well informed as possible.

This guide has been designed to inform you about exam procedures, to answer some of the most frequently asked questions, and to guide parents through the exam process.

## **Who is responsible for the exams?**

The school **Examinations Officer** is responsible for administering all public exams and for oversight of students during exams, under direct responsibility from the Head Teacher. A team of invigilators are present during the exams and are trained and supervised by the Examinations Officer. The Joint Council for Qualifications (the JCQ) set down strict criteria for the conduct of exams, and the school is required to follow them precisely.

## **Who is entered for public exams?**

Students who are being taught a subject will be entered for the most appropriate level of exam. Only by exception, after consultation with staff, students and parents, and with the consent of the Head Teacher, will students not be entered.

## **Exam dates**

Dates for exams are fixed by the Examination Boards and are unable to be changed by school.

## **Student's examination timetables**

Students have already received their statement of entry detailing the subjects they have been entered for.

Students have already received a copy of their individual candidate timetable detailing dates, timings, rooms and seat numbers and a further copy will be provided shortly.

This should be checked thoroughly, and you must inform the Examinations Officer if there are any errors or problems with subjects/tiers or any errors regarding personal information e.g., date of birth/ name changes.

It is helpful if parents make sure that a copy of this timetable is available to their children in a visible place with all the exams they are sitting clearly highlighted.

## **Where will the exams be held?**

The main location for your child's exams will be shown on their individual timetable. Students are asked to be there 20 minutes before the advertised start time to enable seating procedures to be carried out efficiently. The students will sit in candidate number order, which appears on their individual candidate timetable.

## **How do I know the dates when the exams take place?**

The Summer period for exams is from the start of May until the end of June, but some oral exams and practical exams will take place earlier. A copy of the exam timetable can be found on the school website.

There is an additional day that has been added to the exam calendar which is classed as a **'contingency day'** and has come about due to events that have occurred in the past e.g. Manchester bombing. This means that all students must be available to sit an exam up to and including that day ***"in the event of widespread, sustained national or local disruption to examinations this date will be used during the examination series."***

## At what time of day do the exam sessions begin?

Exams are scheduled to begin at 9am and 1pm, unless indicated otherwise on their timetable. The length of the exam papers varies and unfortunately some exams may finish after the end of the school day. Some students may also receive an allowance of extra time for their exams and so their finishing times will be later – students and parents should be aware of this and make appropriate arrangements for getting home.

It is the students' responsibility to be aware of the start time of each exam, but parents should be aware that sometimes students confuse am and pm sessions. Please ensure that your child checks their exams for each day on the previous evening.

## How are students supervised during exams?

Adult external invigilators will supervise students under the direct management of the Examinations Officer. Once students enter the exam room they must be supervised and follow the invigilators instructions at all times. The invigilators are experienced in exams procedures and are subject to strict regulations, references and police checks. Papers will be on exam desks - these must not be looked at until students are advised to do so.

## What happens if a student is late?

If parents are aware that their child has missed the starting time, they should call the school immediately and get a message to the Examinations Officer. Depending on how long the exam has been in progress, it may be possible for the student to be admitted.

## What should students bring to the exams?

Students should bring to *every* exam:

- Two black pens – not gel pens
- A pencil
- A ruler
- A rubber
- Calculator – if required for the exam i.e.) mathematics, Science etc,
- Maths equipment (protractor and compass)

All of this equipment should be kept in a clear pencil case. ***Students are responsible for ensuring that they bring everything they need to the exam.***

## What should students NOT bring with them?

Some items are ***strictly banned*** and should not be brought into the exam room under any circumstances. The Examination Boards consider possession of these items in an exam as malpractice, and the most likely outcome would be disqualification from that paper:

- Mobile phones
- Watches of any kind
- Any form of smart technology – EarPods, smart glasses etc,

This applies to all public and school/mock exams. Any student found to have any unauthorised items in their possession will be reported to the appropriate Examination Board and could face disqualification or loss of marks for that paper.

## Behaviour expected during exams

The school, the JCQ and the Examination Boards take breaches of regulations very seriously. Parents should impress on their child the importance of good behaviour in an exam.

Students are asked to wait quietly outside the exam venue, and to enter and leave in silence. This avoids disturbance to other students and helps to maintain a calm atmosphere for those students who are nervous about their exams.

Students must ensure they have had something to eat and before the exam begins. Should a student need to bring a drink it must be in a transparent bottle with all labels removed.

Toilet visit will not be allowed during the first and last 15 mins of the exam to avoid disruptions; if a student has a toilet pass, they will be allowed to visit the toilet.

Only one student at a time is allowed to be out of the exam room and must be supervised at all times. Should a student have supervised rest breaks granted they will take priority.

Any behaviour that distracts, disturbs, or upsets other candidates will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Examination Board. Students who attempt to communicate with others inside the exam venue, who bring unauthorised items into the exam room, or who cause any form of disturbance during the examination may be asked to leave the room and the incident will be formally reported.

In accordance with Examination Board regulations, such incidents can result in a range of sanctions, including:

- A warning recorded by the centre
- Loss of marks for the exam paper or a specific section
- Disqualification from the entire exam paper
- In serious or repeated cases, disqualification from all exams in that subject, or even from all qualifications taken in that exam series

These sanctions are determined by the Examination Board and are **outside the school's control**, meaning they may directly and significantly affect the student's overall results.

## What should students wear for exams?

Exams are a school activity and students must wear normal uniform. All students know the uniform rules and it is their responsibility to ensure they observe them. Coats and bags must be left outside the exam room.

## What should I do if my son/daughter is unwell at the time of one of the exams?

Please telephone the school immediately if your child will not be attending an exam or if they will be present but are unwell.

## What do students do if they finish early?

Students should use all available time for their exam and spend any time at the end checking their answers. In any event they are not permitted to leave before the duration of the exam. They must sit in silence at their desk so as not to disturb other students.