

CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK 2025/26

Introduction

Noel-Baker Academy 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 ensure candidates are provided with all relevant information about their exams and assessments in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To answer questions candidates may have etc.
- To inform candidates of/signpost candidates to any exams-related policies/procedures they need to be made aware of

Malpractice

- To maintain the integrity of qualifications, strict Regulations are in place
- Malpractice means any act or practice which is in breach of the Regulations
- Any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice will be investigated and reported to the relevant awarding body/bodies
- JCQ provides information regarding what constitutes malpractice:
 - Introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room
 - Breaches of examination conditions
 - 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
- **A full document detailing 'Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures' can be found here:** https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Malpractice_Sep25_FINAL.pdf

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

non-examination assessments and coursework:

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/>), 25/01/2025. You **must** submit a copy of the computer-generated content with your work for reference and authentication purposes.



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

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...**

Personal data

- 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 and 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.

Written timetabled exams

You will receive your own timetable for your GCSE exams. You must tell your form tutor immediately if you think any of the information is incorrect

JCQ Unauthorised items and Warning to candidates posters are displayed outside of every examination room – you must make sure that you read and understand the contents (See Appendix 6)

Where you will take your exams

Exams will take place in the Sports Hall. If you are entitled to Access Arrangements your exams will be in the Construction Room or in one of the classrooms in ACE.

What time your exams will start and finish

- Morning exams will begin at 9am (you should be in school for 8.20am for a pre-exam briefing)
- Afternoon exams begin at 1.30pm



- Exams are supervised by a team of invigilators. They must follow strict rules and regulations when conducting exams as directed by JCQ awarding bodies, etc.

Exam room conditions

- Candidates are brought over to the SVB and you will leave your bags and all unauthorised materials such as watches and phones in the Dance Studio.
- Candidates are under formal exam conditions from the moment they enter the exam room until they are given permission to leave by the invigilator. This means you must not talk or communicate with any other candidate
- Candidates must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times in the exam room
- Candidates must not communicate with or disturb other candidates
- centre number, subject title, paper number and the actual starting and finishing times, and date, of each exam will be clearly displayed on the board
- **Candidates must not open the question paper until the exam begins**
- **Candidates must not fill in the front of the exam paper until told to do so by an invigilator**

What equipment you need to bring to your exams

- You need to bring your own equipment for exams. You will need a black pen which should **not** be a gel pen and anything else which you usually use.
- All stationery should be in a clear pencil case or clear polythene bag

Using calculators

- You need to bring your own calculator for exams where one is necessary
- It is your responsibility to make sure that your calculator meets the awarding bodies' regulations
- You must not borrow a calculator from another candidate but you may ask an invigilator for one
- You should remove the case and leave in the Dance Studio with your bag

What you must not bring into the exam room

- Watches
- Phones
- Earbuds
- Any electronic device

Food and drink in exam rooms

No Food is allowed in the exam room

Only plain water in a clear bottle with the label removed is allowed in the exam room



You should be in full school uniform

Where your personal belongings will be stored during your exam

Dance Studio

What to do if you arrive late for your exam

If you are late for your exam then you must come over to the exam room as soon as possible. You may not be allowed in after 10am or 2.30pm

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

- If you are unwell on the day of your exam then you must tell the school
- If you miss an exam then you must provide medical evidence

What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from your exam

If a candidate is not present for an examination then you will be charged for the cost of the examination(s) missed.

If you have a valid reason, such as an emergency hospital visit, you must provide proof of this

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

You must follow the instructions given by the invigilators

Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

- All examinations will take place in either the Construction Room or one of the offices/classrooms in ACE

Results

Results Day is Thursday 20 August 2026

Post-results services

- If your result is within a couple of marks of the next grade boundary we can ask for one of the following services
 1. To look at your script
 2. For a clerical check that all marks were added up correctly
 3. A review of marking to make sure that the mark scheme was applied correctly
- For any of these services we need your written permission. Your school email account will be operational until the end of September so please check this after results in case we need to get in touch with you



- Certificates are available to collect from end of November/early December

APPENDIX 1

JCQ Information for candidates - coursework

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

Information for candidates - Coursework 2025-2026

Follow this link for JCQ's Information for candidates - coursework:

[IFC-Coursework Assessments 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)



APPENDIX 2

JCQ Information for candidates – non-examination assessments

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

Information for candidates – non-examination assessments 2025-2026

Follow this link for JCQ's Information for candidates – non-examination assessments:

[IFC-NE Assessments 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)



APPENDIX 3

JCQ Information for candidates – written exams

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

Information for candidates – written exams 2025-2026

Follow this link for JCQ's Information for candidates – written exams:

[IFC-Written Examinations 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)



APPENDIX 4

JCQ Information for candidates – social media

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

[JCQ Social Media Infographic v4](#)

The infographic is titled "Information for candidates Using social media and examinations/assessments". It features a dark purple header with the JCQ logo. The main content is on a light purple background. On the left, there is a text block with a list of points and a photo of hands holding a smartphone. On the right, there is a large graphic of a smartphone screen displaying three sections of text: "Things to do on social media:", "Things not to do on social media:", and "If you do any of the above activities, you may:". A large exclamation mark icon is placed over the screen. To the right of the screen, a yellow circle contains a URL and a call to action. The JCQ logo is also present in the top left corner of the infographic.

Information for candidates
Using social media and examinations/assessments

While we like to share our experiences online, when it comes to exams and other assessments, we have to be careful.

- Sharing ideas online can be helpful when you're studying or revising
- However, sharing certain information (see information on the right) can break the rules and could affect your results
- If you're not sure what you can and can't discuss online, check with your teacher
- If you receive exam content on social media, you must tell your teacher
- Don't be caught out by scammers selling fake exam papers

Things to do on social media:

- Have fun
- Be responsible
- Report any exam or assessment content you see to your teacher

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

If you do any of the above activities, you may:

- ! Receive a written warning
- ! Lose marks
- ! Be disqualified from a part of or all of your qualifications
- ! Be banned from taking exams and assessments for a number of years

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the JCQ rules:
jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents



APPENDIX 5

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."*



AQA

City & Guilds

CCEA

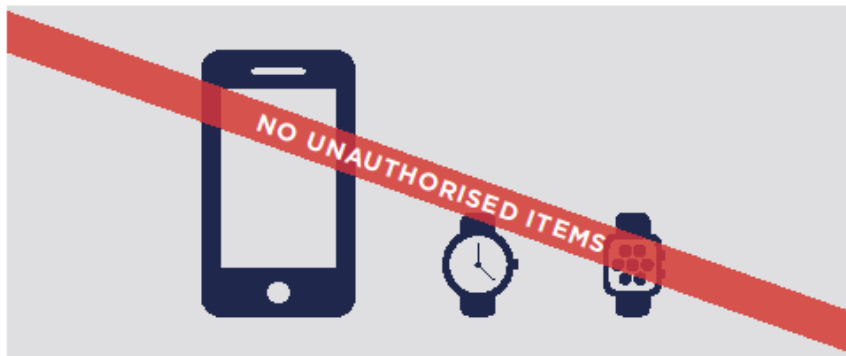
OCR

Pearson

WJEC

NO MOBILE PHONES NO WATCHES

NO POTENTIAL TECHNOLOGICAL/WEB
ENABLED SOURCES OF INFORMATION



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.

This poster must be displayed in a prominent place outside each examination room.



APPENDIX 6

JCQ *Warning to candidates* poster

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

Warning to candidates



 AQA	 City & Guilds	 CCEA	 OCR	 Pearson	 WJEC
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1

You **must** be on time for all your examinations.

2

Possession of a mobile phone or other unauthorised material **is not allowed** even if you do not intend to use it. You will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification from the exam/qualification.

3

You **must not** talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once you have entered the examination room.

4

You **must** follow the instructions of the invigilator.

5

You **must not** sit an examination in the name of another candidate.

6

You **must not** become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice in any part of the examination.

7

If you are confused about anything, only speak to an invigilator.

The *Warning to candidates* must be displayed in a prominent place outside each examination room. This may be a hard copy A3 paper version or an image of the poster projected onto a wall or screen for all candidates to see.



APPENDIX 7

JCQ AI poster for students

Follow this link for JCQ information for candidates regarding AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments)

[JCQ_AI_infographic_v3](#)