

HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL



EXAMS BOOKLET 2023-24

A GUIDE FOR ALL STUDENTS

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Introduction

Exams are very important times in your life. The exams that you will be taking this academic year will influence what you do in the future, so it is very important that they run as smoothly as possible. This booklet has been produced to help you organise and prepare yourself for your examinations.

Hitchin Girls' School is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the exam and assessment process in place in the school and are made aware of the required JCQ/awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

This booklet contains guidance and information from the school and JCQ. **It is your responsibility to read and understand this information.** If there is anything you do not understand please ask a teacher, or one of the Exams' office staff for help.

Purpose of this handbook

- To complement the Exam briefing information given in assemblies
- To ensure candidates are provided with all relevant information about their exams and assessments in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To inform candidates about malpractice in examinations/assessments
- To inform candidates about the use of their personal data and copyright
- 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
- To inform candidates of any exams-related documents that they need to be made aware of

Written timetabled exams

Statement of Entry

- At the end of January/beginning of February you will receive a statement of entry showing all the exams you are entered for. It is your responsibility to check this very carefully and inform the exams office staff of any missing exams, or amendments to tiers in science and maths
- If there are ANY mistakes (e.g. name, date of birth, exam entry, wrong tier, etc.) you **MUST** inform the exams office staff immediately
- Mistakes that are not spotted at this stage could mean that you may not be entered for all your exams or that your certificate is incorrectly printed later

Exam Timetable

- Your exam timetable will be issued to you during the latter part of the spring term. Please check your individual timetable very carefully
- Check each exam date carefully and check to see if the exam is in the morning or the afternoon. If there is an exam on the list that you were not expecting to take (e.g. if you know that you have already dropped or been withdrawn from a subject) you **MUST** tell the exams office staff immediately
- Make sure you know which room and seat you need to go to for each exam
- Extra time will not be permitted if you have simply misread your timetable

Contingency day - Summer 2024

- The Exam Contingency Days are on June 6/13/26 2024
- These dates have been set by JCQ as contingency days should sustained national or local disruption arise during the Summer 2024 examination series
- All students must ensure they are available on these days in case any exams need to be rearranged. Please do not book a holiday until after the 26 June 2024

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

- If you have a clash with two exams being held at the same day and same time you will be contacted and informed of the arrangements for your supervision between exams. If in doubt please go and speak to the Exams Officer
- If you are sitting exams at other schools you **MUST** check that you do not have a clash. Please inform the Exams Officer immediately if you do

Where you will take your exams

- Most exams will take place in the Main Hall or Gym but not all of them. Please check your individual timetable to make sure you know where you are supposed to be
- Do not enter an exam room until instructed to do so by the invigilator or a member of staff
- Make sure that you are sat in the correct seat in the correct room to avoid you being marked as absent or sitting the wrong exam paper

What time your exams will start and finish

- Morning exams start at 09.00 and afternoon exams start at 13.30. You are required to be ready for your exams 15 mins before these times
- You will not be allowed to leave before the scheduled finish time, even if you have finished your exam

Supervision during your exams

- Exams are supervised by a team of invigilators
- The invigilators are there to ensure the smooth running of the Exams
- The invigilators must follow the strict rules and regulations as directed by JCQ and awarding bodies

Exam room conditions

- You will be told where to gather before your exams – please arrive at least 15 mins prior to the published start time of each exam
- A member of staff will register you and escort you to the exam room
- You are under 'formal exam conditions' from the moment you line up outside the exam room – this means you must line up in silence
- Once inside the exam room 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
- If you need assistance, put your hand up clearly and wait for an invigilator to attend to you.
- Please do not write on exam desks, it is regarded as vandalism and you may have to pay for any damage
- The invigilators will collect your papers before you leave the room. **ABSOLUTE SILENCE MUST BE MAINTAINED DURING THIS TIME**
- Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper **MUST NOT** be taken from the exam room
- You will be dismissed row by row **IN SILENCE**
- Please do not congregate outside the exam room to chat to your friends – there may well be other exams still in progress around you

Where you will sit in the exam room

- Before each exam we will share a seating plan on Google classroom – this will show which seat number you will be in (examples A1, B3, H5)
- Your seat number is also shown on your individual exam timetable
- In the main exam rooms seats are lettered and numbered so you can easily find the correct seat
- **Please check your seat number before each exam**
- If you are unsure a member of the exams team will be available to help you locate your exam desk

How your identity is confirmed in the exam room

- Your teacher or head of year will mark you as present as you enter the exam room
- At every exam your allocated desk will have a slip of paper giving your forename, surname, candidate number, and the paper reference for the exam you are sitting
- Please use this slip of paper to check you are sat at the correct desk and are sitting the correct paper
- This same information will be required to complete the front of your answer booklet
- Candidate number - You have been allocated a 4 digit number that refers only to you. You can find this on your exam timetable, or on the seating plan that will be shared on Google classroom
- When completing the information on each answer paper, you **MUST** use your legal names, not those you like to go by

What equipment you need to bring to your exams

- You should bring **BLACK** pens, pencil, rubber, calculator and any other equipment needed for your exams. Do **NOT** rely upon the school to provide these for
- Only clear pencil cases (or a clear plastic bag) are allowed on your desk
- You are not allowed to use gel pens, correcting fluid or erasable pens
- Water only is allowed to be drunk in the exam room, clear bottles. Please bear in mind that if spilt they can spoil your exam papers. There should be no label, logos or writing on the bottle

Using calculators

Calculators are treated as standard equipment and may be used by candidates **unless stated otherwise on the front of the exam paper**

Calculators must be:

- of a size suitable for use on the desk
- either battery or solar powered
- free of lids, cases and covers which have printed instructions or formulae

Calculators must not:

- be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities:
 - language translators
 - symbolic algebra manipulation
 - symbolic differentiation or integration
 - communication with other machines or the internet
- be borrowed from another candidate during an examination for any reason

- have retrievable information stored in them. This includes:
 - databanks
 - dictionaries
 - mathematical formulae
 - text

The candidate is responsible for the following:

- the calculator's power supply
- the calculator's working condition
- clearing anything stored in the calculator

What you should not bring into the exam room

- Bags and coats should be left in your school locker. Bags and coats are not allowed inside the exam room
- Wrist Watches and Smart Watches are not permitted in the exam room – a clock will clearly display the time at the front of the exam room
- Mobile phones – Students must not have mobile phones in their possession (either on or off). They are to be left, **TURNE**D OFF, in a bag or locker, outside of the exam room
- No food (including chewing gum or sweets) is allowed in the exam hall (if you have a special requirement – please see the Exams Officer prior to the start of the summer exams starting). Make sure you eat a good breakfast or lunch before your exams – it will help you concentrate

If any of the items above are found on you during an exam they will be classed as unauthorised material and reported to the exam board.

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
- You need to know 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; or**
 - **not telling exam boards or your school/college about exam information being shared**

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

Malpractice can lead to anything from the individual assessment being discounted to disqualification from the whole award. In severe cases, you could be disqualified from taking any exams for **UP TO 5 YEARS.**

What you should wear for your exams

Normal school uniform should be worn for all exams. If you are in the 6th form please follow the 6th form dress code.

What to do if you arrive late for your exam

- Aim to arrive at your lining up point at least 15 minutes prior to an exam **AT THE LATEST**. If you arrive late, report to the main reception as soon as you arrive and you will be escorted to your exam

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

- If you are ill and are unable to attend an exam it is vital you phone the school first thing in the morning (01462 621300) to inform us
- Please inform us of the reason for non-attendance. In some circumstances we may be able to contact the Examinations Board to ask for special consideration
- If you are feeling unwell, but still able to travel, please come in to school and we can assess the situation then
- If in doubt – **PHONE THE SCHOOL**
- If you feel ill during the examination please bring this to the attention of the invigilator as soon as you can

What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from your exam

- If you do not attend an exam without a valid reason, you will be charged for that exam

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

- In the unlikely event of an emergency in the Exam room the invigilators will assess the situation and where required pause the exam and follow our emergency evacuation procedure
- Please remain in your seat and wait to be given instructions by the invigilator
- The exam will be resumed as soon as possible and the relevant exam board will be informed of the situation

Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

Access arrangements are pre-agreed and approved by the exam board. They 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. Examples of access arrangements are Laptop, Extra time, Smaller Room,

- Access Arrangements are agreed and arranged by the Schools' Special Needs Co-ordinator
- Practical details for the Access Arrangements will be confirmed with candidates, around the time the exam timetables are sent out
- Individual candidate timetables will indicate where Access Arrangement candidates are if they are in a different room from the rest of the cohort

Results

- Results from the Summer Exams 2024 exams are available as follows:

GCE (A'Level) – Thursday 15 August

GCSE – Thursday 22 August

- Details for the collection of results will be confirmed closer to the time
- Members of staff will be available immediately after the publication of results to help students
- Under no circumstances will results handed over to anyone other than the student (including parents/guardians) without the exams office staff having prior written consent

Post-results services

Following the issue of results, awarding bodies make post-results services available. If teaching staff at Hitchin Girls' School, or a candidate have a concern that a result may not be accurate, post-results services may be considered

The JCQ post-results services usually available are:

- Reviews of Results (RoRs):
 - Service 1 (Clerical re-check) - This is the only service that can be requested for objective tests (multiple choice tests)
 - Service 2 (Review of marking)
 - Priority Service 2 (Review of marking) - This service is only available for externally assessed components of A-level's where the results are needed for a further education application
- Access to Scripts (ATS):
 - Copies of scripts to support reviews of marking
- In the first instance you need to speak with the Exams Office staff to voice your concerns as soon as possible. They will be able to offer you advice on the way forward. If we feel that you have achieved the grade we expected you to, it would not be something that the school would pursue or pay for. If you are unhappy with the decision, you are able to pursue an enquiry yourself through the school
- If you wish to make an enquiry yourself, we must have your written consent before anything can be submitted to the Examination Board. You will need to complete the Candidate Consent Form obtainable from the Exams Office. This must be returned to the Exams Office by the deadline specified on the form along with the respective payment. No enquiries will be made without the completed form and payment being received
- Should the school feel that your result warrants an enquiry, we will pay for it, however, we still need your written permission and you will be asked to complete the form accordingly if you wish us to proceed
- You will be provided with more detail on the process, deadline dates and possible fees at the time results are published

A WORD OF WARNING!

If you request a review of marking, there are 3 possible outcomes:

- Your original mark is lowered, so your final grade may be lower than the original grade you received
- Your original mark is confirmed as correct, and there is no change to your grade
- Your original mark is raised, so your final grade may be higher than the original grade you received

Certificates

- The School usually organises a celebration in the autumn term where you will be invited back and awarded your Exam Certificates. We only keep exam certificates for **one year** – after this time the certificates will be shredded

Personal data

- 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

Copyright

- 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

Internal appeals procedures

Certain qualifications contain components of non-examination assessment (or units of coursework) which are internally assessed (marked) by Hitchin Girls' School and internally reviewed/standardised. The marks awarded are then submitted to the awarding body for external moderation.

- If a candidate feels they have valid grounds to appeal this mark a candidate can request a review of centre marking by writing to the Exams Officer - exams@hgs.herts.sch.uk and completing the internal appeals form. No requests will be accepted after the published deadline
- Full details of the procedure and deadlines can be found in our Internal Appeals Procedure (please request this from Exams Office staff if required)

Complaints and appeals procedure

Details of Hitchin Girls' Schools complaints and appeals procedure can be requested from Exams Office staff.

Appendix 1 - JCQ Information for candidates

This link takes you to the following documents:

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

- Information for candidates -coursework
- Information for candidates - non-examination assessments
- Information for students - on screen tests
- Information for candidates- written exams
- Preparing to sit your exams
- Information for candidates - Privacy Notice
- Information for candidates - social media

Appendix 2 - JCQ Unauthorised items poster and JCQ Warning to candidates poster

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

Unauthorised items poster <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/exam-room-posters>