



Examinations and Assessments

Guidelines for Students and Parents/Carers 2020-2021

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1 Introduction and Information

It is important that all students have the best possible conditions and preparation to help them achieve the best examination results they can. This document gives guidance and advice and outlines the national examination rules and regulations. It is intended to help students, parents and carers understand the exams process and what you have to do, where the school can help and what the rules are. There may be occasions when exam instructions change, students will be informed of these and any updates to this document will be available on the school website.

Students should ensure they read the information found in the Appendices of this document.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publishes instructions for how exams should be undertaken in schools and colleges. The Sponne Senior Leadership Team, teaching and support staff, exams manager and invigilators work together to ensure that the school follows these instructions.

The full set of national rules and regulations can be found on: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office>

This guidance booklet will be updated each year and issued to students. If you have any questions about the examination processes please contact the Examinations Manager on the main school number 01327 350284. If you have any questions about a particular subject please contact the relevant subject teacher.

2. Examination Entries

Every student who is being taught a subject will be entered by the school for the most appropriate level of exam. The school pays for the registration and initial entry for exams. Normally subsequent entries for the same exam (re-sits) will be paid for by the student. The school works with 5 Examination Boards - Pearson Edexcel, AQA, OCR and WJEC. Each of these boards has a website which provides further information about their courses and examinations.

All students will receive a statement of entry before their first exam date. This must be checked by students and parents to confirm that **all entries have been made and are correct.** Subject teachers will also make their own checks.

3. Candidate Examination Number

Each student from Year 9 upwards will be given a unique 4 digit candidate number that will stay with them throughout all examinations and when submitting coursework at Sponne School. This number will need to be written on all examination and coursework papers.

4. Exam dates and timetable

The GCSE and GCE Exam periods are published on the school calendar on the website. The dates for GCSE and GCE exams are fixed by the Exam Boards but can change up to the time that students start study leave. Parents are reminded that they require the permission of the school to take students out of school and no time out will be authorised during the exam season. In addition, the JCQ specifies a date for a national contingency day. All students must be available up until and including this date, which in 2021 is **yet to be confirmed by JCQ**. Details of study leave and revision sessions are provided by the teachers. There can be late changes to exam timetables. Students will be advised of this via a revised exam timetable/information given to each student and Exam Notice Boards.

All students will be issued with an **exam timetable** at least 2 weeks before their first scheduled exam. The exam timetable information will give the details of the exam, date, venue, time and length of exam. **This is very important.** If you think there are any mistakes (e.g. name, spelling, date of birth, exams) you must inform the exams manager **immediately.** Check each examination unit, subject, level and date/start time carefully.

The length of exams can vary and some may not finish until after school. Students and parents should be aware of this and make appropriate arrangements for getting home. **Students will not be allowed out of an exam early.**

If a candidate is timetabled to sit more than one exam at the same time this is known as a **clash**. If you notice a clash on your timetable you must notify the Exams Manager immediately. Special arrangements are made in these circumstances that involve the student being kept in isolation until the exams that clash have been completed.

Students who have been assessed as requiring particular access arrangements will be given information about the arrangements prior to the exam.

5. Non-examined assessments

Subject teachers organise the non-examined assessments and the school will set deadlines in line with exam board requirements. If the work is not submitted by the deadlines set it is possible that marks will not be given and the overall subject grade will suffer. Dates for non-examined assessments are **not** included in the exam timetable; this information will be provided by the subject teachers and if you have any questions these should be directed to teachers. Information can be found at the end of this document about what you must and must not do when completing non-examined assessments; this includes guidance about the use of the Internet.

In the Appendix you will also find the school's 'Internal Appeals Policy and Procedure' for non-examined assessments. This document explains how an appeal can be made regarding the assessment process.

6. Other examinations

The school runs internal tests and mock GCSE and mock GCE exams. The timing of the mocks is published on the website and information will also be given directly to students. The mock exams are generally conducted under exam conditions and students are expected to take account of the rules as outlined in this booklet. Mock exams are an important opportunity to practice the revision and preparation for exams, as well sitting them under these conditions.

7. Exam Day

Students are required to be at the correct venue 15 minutes before the published start time of the exam. If you are ill on the day of the exam and do not think you can sit the exam you must call the Exams Manager as soon as possible. A student will need to present a doctor's certificate or note or give other evidence of a satisfactory medical reason for the school to make a special consideration application to the Exam Board. Exam Boards use the information sent to them to make a decision on any allowance that may be made. The allowance in terms of marks will only ever be a small percentage, the maximum being 5% and this is only given in very extreme cases.

In most examinations you will be seated in candidate number order within each subject. When you enter the examination room you must always ensure that you sit at the correct desk.

If a student does not attend at the start of an exam the school will try to contact the parents and the student. There is a short time when the student can still enter the exam room to take the exam. The Exams Manager will advise on the details when this situation arises.

If you think you will be late for an exam, you should telephone the school immediately and contact the Exams Manager. You may still be allowed to enter the exam room to take the exam but the regulations are very strict and if you arrive more than an half an hour after the start of the exam you may not be admitted. If the exam has finished, late candidates will not be allowed to sit the paper under any circumstances. Exams cannot be scheduled for another time or date.

8. Materials and Equipment

Candidates **must** bring their own relevant equipment to the exams.

Equipment needed:

- 3 x Black biro (blue biro and any kind of gel pens are not permitted)
- 3 x Pencils, rubber, ruler, sharpener
- coloured pencils (for DT subjects)
- highlighter pens
- Calculator, protractor and compass

All items should be brought in a transparent pencil case or bag. Non-transparent pencil cases or bags will not be permitted in the exam room.

Calculators may be used for maths and some other examinations. Subject teachers will tell you if they are allowed or not for specific papers. If you are going to buy a calculator ask your Maths teacher for advice.

Your calculator should be no larger than the regular handheld size and no printed instructions or cases or lids are allowed. Calculators must be either battery or solar powered. Candidates are responsible for ensuring that their calculator is cleared of anything stored on it before entering the examination room. You are not allowed to use a mobile phone as a calculator and must not borrow a calculator from another candidate during an examination for any reason. Please note that Exam Boards make no allowances for calculator failures.

If you have a graphical calculator – it must be in exam mode for the duration of the exam, and the student is responsible for ensuring this is the case.

9. Exam Room – Rules and Regulations

The Exam Boards issue a ‘Notice to Candidates’ and a ‘Warning to Candidates’ poster which are included in the Appendices at the end of this document and are also on the school website. These **must** be read carefully.

The Exam Boards take the integrity of exams very seriously and it is important that all candidates heed the instructions. They are intended to ensure exams are fair for all students. All schools are inspected in terms of their examinations management and administration.

‘Malpractice’ is the term that Exam Boards use for cheating. The Exam Manager will report any infringements to the Exam Boards and they will decide on the action to be taken. If you are caught cheating in any way in any examination you **WILL** be reported to the examination board.

The rules and guidance should be followed:

- No bags, books or notes are allowed at your examination desk.
- No notes of any kind in pockets – even if unrelated to the exam.

- Bags should be left in lockers or when the exams are in the Sports Hall the changing rooms should be used for bags.
- **No wristwatches of any kind are permitted to be worn.**
- You are advised not to bring valuables with you when you are coming into school for an examination. The school can take no responsibility for bags or valuables left in bags.
- Tippex or correction pens are not allowed.
- Lucky mascots, food or chewing gum are not permitted in the exam rooms.
- You can take water in a clear bottle with the label removed – you will not be able to leave the room to fill it up or ask invigilators to do this for you.

Mobile phones or products with an electronic communication/storage device or digital facility

- Mobile phones, iPods, MP3/4 players, iWatches/Smart watches (or any other devices that can store data) should not be brought into the exam room. They should be turned off completely (including alarms) and left in lockers or if in bags stored at the front of the exam room or in changing rooms during the exam. Invigilators will ask for phones, smart watches and wristwatches to be handed in at the beginning of the exam and these will be locked away during the exam. The invigilators will give you a numbered card which will be exchanged for the phone/watch at the end of the exam.
- **It is a very serious offence to be found with a mobile phone, iPod, iWatch, smart watch or MP3/4 Player (music player) or products with an electronic storage facility during an exam.** It is considered as cheating. If this rule is breached you could be disqualified from that paper, or from all exams in the series (even those already taken).
- You must be silent at all times when you are in the examination room; this includes when you enter and when you are leaving. **Do not let others ruin your chances of success by being distracted and do not risk your friends' exams by trying to distract them.**
- Candidates who try to make eye contact with other candidates, or communicate with other candidates inside the venue, or who create a disturbance in the exam room may be asked to leave and the circumstances will be reported to the Exam Board. This may result in the candidate not receiving a grade for the whole exam.
- Absolute silence must be maintained while papers are being collected. Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper must not be taken from the examination room.
- Each exam paper will also give specific instructions about completing the exam paper. These instructions will be read out at the beginning of each exam.
- If you need assistance during the exam put your hand up and wait for an invigilator to come to you.
- You can ask to go to the toilet and an invigilator will escort you. You will be asked to remove your blazer before you enter the toilet.
- Do not write on exam desks – this is regarded as vandalism. Invigilators check the exam desks at the end of every exam. If your desk has been written on, you will be asked to clean it and may be invoiced for any damage.
- Never use ordinary lined paper – rough work must be in answer booklets provided. You should always cross through anything that you do not wish to be marked.

- Highlighter pens must not be used in answers or in answer booklets but you are allowed to highlight parts of printed questions if you want to.
- Bad behaviour or disruptive behaviour will not be tolerated. The Head Teacher and the Exams Manager have the power and responsibility to remove disruptive candidates.
- Apart from 6th form students all candidates **must** wear normal uniform. Students not dressed properly will not be permitted to sit the exams and will be charged for the entry.
- Students missing an exam without a valid reason, and in case of illness, a medical certificate, will be charged the entry fee for the exam.
- Items of jewellery such as bracelets or bangles should not be worn as they may make a noise on the desk which could disturb other students.

10. Exam Invigilation Team

Members of staff known as invigilators will supervise students in the exam rooms and will be working to the exam boards' rules and regulations under the direct management of the school's exams manager. Once you enter the venue you must follow the instructions of the invigilators at all times. Failure to do so may mean you are removed from the exam, prevented from sitting the exam or even disqualified. Invigilators are trained and experienced in exam procedures.

If you need assistance during the exam put your hand up and wait for an invigilator to come to you. They cannot help you with your exam but they will be able to clarify information you have been given and deal with other issues and queries in line with regulations.

If there is an emergency during the exam you must listen to and follow the instructions from the invigilator. **If you are asked to leave the examination room as directed by the invigilator you must leave in silence, do not communicate with any other students at all.**

If the exam is disrupted or stopped for any reason (evacuation, candidate being sick etc.) you will be told to stop writing and the time noted. Once the exam re-starts the missed time will be added to the end. The exam board will also be asked to give all affected candidates special consideration.

11. Illness and Special Consideration

If a student is ill or experiences extreme circumstances (e.g. bereavement or family difficulties) in the weeks leading up to the exam and this affects revision it is essential that you inform the school by letter detailing the nature of the illness. The Exams Manager may be able to apply to the Exam Boards for consideration of exam papers in light of this.

If a student is unable to attend an exam due to ill health or extreme circumstances (e.g. bereavement or family difficulties) the Exams Manager must be notified as soon as possible on the day of the exam and medical certification or other proof is required if an application is to be made to the Exams Boards.

Parents and students must be aware that any adjustments in marks as a result of an application for special consideration will be small and are only at the discretion of the exam board. The exams

manager will be able to confirm if special consideration has been accepted by the exam board, but will not be able to confirm the allowance made.

If after the examination you think you have good reason for applying for special consideration you need to contact the Exams Manager as soon as possible to clarify your position.

12. Accommodation

The exams will take place in either the Main Hall or the Sports Hall. During exam times therefore the halls and a number of smaller rooms will be unavailable. We recognise that this can be inconvenient for students and teachers, but it is important that examinations and assessments are accommodated as effectively as possible. The patience and tolerance of all students is appreciated. Students are asked to take notice of 'no entry' signs and signs asking for quiet because exams are in progress. It is important that students respect the needs of others during these busy and important times

13. Results and Post Results services

Results of GCSE and GCE exams are issued in August; details of dates and times will be on the school website and sent to all relevant students. Results cannot be issued over the phone or by email. Any results not collected by 2pm on the day will be posted to the home address we hold on the system.

Candidates can nominate another person to collect results on their behalf by providing written permission, either in a signed letter or by email. The nominated person must have either a copy of the letter/email or appropriate ID with them on collection.

Following the publication of results, the awarding bodies offer post-results services. Requests for Access to Scripts (ATS) or a Review of Results (RoRs) must be made through the school; individuals will not be able to request these services directly from the examination boards. The school is charged for these services and so the costs are passed on to the student or department requesting them. If requested by a student, a cheque or cash payment must be received before the request is submitted. If a review results in a grade changing, the charge will then be refunded. The costs vary from board to board; a list of charges will be available on Results Day.

Requests must be made within a short period of time of the issuing of results, and signed consent from the student must be obtained. Forms will be made available on results day and for a few weeks afterward, from the exams office. Year 13 students continuing to university can request a priority service to ensure any changes are received by the universities in good time. If you wish to proceed with a request you must first discuss this with your teacher, and speak to the examinations office as soon as possible after the release of results. They will be able to advise you and inform you of any deadlines that must be met.

Please be aware that a RoR can result in a mark and grade falling OR rising as the result of such a review, and therefore such a request must be considered carefully.

Please see the Internal Appeals Procedure in the appendix of this document. This document explains how an appeal can be made regarding the outcome of a RoR.

14. Certificates

Certificates are sent to the school during the term following exams and can be collected from the Exams Office, usually in November. Students still at Sponne will be notified when they are available, and a notice will be published on the school website for all other ex-students. Certificates must be signed for, and therefore cannot be posted. We will store certificates for 5 years before shredding them. After 5 years, it may be possible to get copies of certificates from the exam boards for a fee, although some boards may only provide certified copies of exam results (these are considered to be valid evidence of grades for university): please see www.gov.uk/replacement-exam-certificate for advice.

Candidates can nominate another person to collect certificates on their behalf by providing written permission, either in a signed letter or by email to the examinations manager at aorrin@sponne.org.uk. The nominated person must have appropriate ID with them on collection.

Appendices:

Internal Appeals Procedure

JCQ Information for Candidates

- Written examinations
- Non Examination Assessments
- Coursework
- On screen tests
- Social Media
- Mobile Phones warning
- Other warnings to Candidates