



Exam Guide for Students, Parents and Carers

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Introduction

It is the aim of Blue Coat Academy to make the examination experience as stress-free and successful as possible for all candidates.

Hopefully, this booklet will prove informative and helpful for you and your parents. Please read it carefully and show it to your parents so that they are also aware of the examination regulations and the procedures to follow in the event of any problems occurring.

The awarding bodies (or examination boards) set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations, coursework and controlled assessments. Blue Coat Academy is required to follow them precisely. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) produces several information notices which students are required to have made available to them in advance of exams. These are printed on the following pages.

Some of the questions you may have are answered at the back of this booklet. **If there is anything you do not understand or any question that has not been addressed, PLEASE ASK.**

If you or your parents have any queries or need help or advice at any time before, during or after the examinations please contact:

The examinations officer – **Mr Willetts** (in the Exams office)

The school telephone number is : 01922 720558

Remember - we are here to help

GOOD LUCK!



Before the Examinations

Timetables

- You will receive an individual timetable showing your own specific examinations with details of date, time and duration of exam, venue and seat number as well as your date of birth: check it carefully. If you think something is wrong, see Mr Willetts Exam's Officer, in the Exams Office T1 immediately. The personal details you see here will appear on any certificates you achieve so it is important to check it now e.g. spelling of your name, date of birth etc. If mistakes are noticed after the certificates are printed you will have to pay the exam board charge of £45 to correct them.
- Some candidates have clashes where two subjects are timetabled at the same time. Your Exams Officer will make arrangements for clashes to be dealt with before the actual date of the exam. You must check your individual timetable and see Mr Willetts if you are unsure what to do. If you think there is a clash on your timetable that has not been resolved, please see Mr Willetts immediately.
- Please pay particular attention to the start times of your exams. Misreading your timetable is not accepted as a valid excuse for missing an exam.

EXAMINATION BOARDS

- The school uses the following Examination Boards: AQA, Edexcel, OCR, WJEC, NCFE, Skills Education Group Awards, ASDAN and Trinity.

CANDIDATE NUMBER

- Each candidate has a four-digit candidate number. This is the number you will enter on ALL examination papers. It will appear next to your name on seating plans and examination registers. **PLEASE LEARN YOUR CANDIDATE NUMBER.** It will not change throughout your time at this school.

UCI

- In addition to a candidate number, each candidate must have a Unique Candidate Identifier (12 numbers and 1 letter) which is shown on the top of statements of entry. This number will usually begin with the Centre Number (20839) unless you have transferred from another school that has already issued your UCI. It is used for administration purposes, and it is not necessary for you to remember it.

ULN

- All candidates are required to also have a Unique Learner Number (ULN). These are issued by the Learner Records Service to students aged 13 and above and will be transferred with you if you change schools or move on to further education, so that all of your exam results are trackable.

CONTACT NUMBER

- Please check that school has at least one up-to-date contact number for you.



EQUIPMENT

- Make sure you have all the correct equipment before your examinations e.g. BLACK pens only, pencils and Math's equipment. Equipment will be available in the exam room; however, we advise that you bring your own to each exam.

DURING THE EXAMINATIONS

A copy of the "Warning to Candidates", and other information to candidates issued by JCQ, is printed in this booklet. All candidates must read these carefully and be aware that breaking any of the examination rules or regulations could lead to disqualification from all subjects. The school must report any breach of regulations could lead to disqualification from all subjects. The decision on penalties given. Information for candidates on coursework and controlled assessments regulations are also printed in this booklet. All notices are also available on our school website <https://www.bluecoatacademy.org/>

ATTENDANCE AT EXAMINATIONS

- Candidates are responsible for checking their own timetable and arriving at school on the correct day and time, properly dressed and equipped. Candidates must arrive 15 minutes prior to the start time of their examination. Please wait on the playground until you are invited to enter the exam room by a member of SLT, the examinations officer or the invigilator.
- Candidates who arrive late but within 30 minutes of the start of an examination may still be admitted. Late arrivals must be reported to the exam board and they may refuse to mark the exam paper. If special consideration applies then you must speak to the Examinations Officer (see ABSENCE FROM EXAMINATIONS).

- Full School Uniform must be worn by all students attending school for examinations.
- All items of equipment, pens, pencils, mathematical instruments, etc. should be visible to the invigilators at all times. You must either use a transparent pencil case or clear plastic bag.
- Pens – you **MUST** use a black pen. No correction pens are allowed.
- For Mathematics and Science exams, students should make sure their calculators conform to the examination regulations. If in doubt, check with your teacher. Remove any covers or instructions and make sure batteries are new.
- Please make sure that any watch alarms are turned off. **WRIST WATCHES AND SMART WATCHES ARE NOT ALLOWED.**
- Do not attempt to communicate with, copy from, or distract other candidates.
- Examination regulations are very strict regarding items that may be taken into the examination room (see FAQs at the end of this booklet). If you break these rules, it is likely that you will be disqualified from the examination.
- **Mobile phones need to be handed in to an invigilator at the beginning of the exam.** If a mobile phone (or any other type of electronic communication or storage device) is found in your possession during an examination (even if it is turned off) it will be taken from you and a report made to the appropriate exam board. No exceptions can be made. **Smart and wrist watches should also be handed to the invigilator for safe keeping BEFORE the start of an exam.**
- No food is allowed in the examination rooms. You may bring a bottle of water, but this must have the label removed.
- Please do not write on examination desks. This is regarded as vandalism and you will be charged for any damage caused.
- Do not draw, graffiti or write offensive comments on examination papers – if you do the examination board may refuse to mark your paper.
- Listen carefully to instructions and notices read out by the invigilators – there may be amendments to the exam paper that you need to know about.

- Check you have the correct question paper- check the subject, paper and tier of entry. **It is your responsibility to make sure you have been given the correct exam paper. If in doubt, ASK.**
- **Read all instructions carefully** and number your answers clearly.
- It is school policy that candidates remain in the examination room for the duration of the exam. You will not be allowed to leave an examination room early. If you have finished the paper use any time remaining to check over your answers, check that you have answered all the required questions and that you have completed your details correctly.
- At the end of the examination all work must be handed in – remember to cross out any rough work. If you have used more than one answer booklet or loose sheets of paper, make sure that you have written all your details on every sheet/answer booklet.
- Invigilators will collect your exam papers before you leave the room. Absolute silence must be maintained during this time. Remember you are still under examination conditions until you have left the room.
- Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper must NOT be taken from the exam room.
- Remain seated in silence until told to leave the examination room. Please leave the room in silence and show consideration for other candidates who may still be working.
- If the **fire alarm** sounds during an examination the examination invigilators will tell you what to do. Don't panic. If you have to evacuate the room you will be asked to leave **in silence** and in the order in which you are sitting. You will be escorted to a designated assembly point. Leave everything on your desk. **You must not attempt to communicate with anyone** during the evacuation. When you return to the exam room do not start writing until the invigilator tells you to. You will be allowed the full working time for the examination and a report will be sent to the awarding body detailing the incident.

INVIGILATORS

- The school employs external invigilators to conduct the examinations. They have responsibility to the exam boards and must adhere strictly to exam board regulations. Students are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards all invigilators and follow their instructions at all times.

- Invigilators are in the examination rooms to supervise the conduct of the examination. They will distribute and collect the examination papers, tell candidates when to start and finish the examination, hand out extra writing paper if required and deal with any problems that occur during the examination, for example if a candidate is feeling ill.
- **Please note that invigilators cannot discuss the examination paper with you or explain the questions.**
- Students who are disruptive or behave in an unacceptable manner will be removed from the examination room by the Exams Officer or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

ABSENCE FROM EXAMINATIONS

- If you experience difficulties during the examination period (e.g. illness, injury, personal problems), please inform school at the earliest possible point so we can help or advise you.
- Only in 'exceptional circumstances' are candidates allowed special consideration for absence from any part of an examination. It is essential that medical or other appropriate evidence is obtained on the day by the candidate/parent/carer and given to the Examination Officer without delay in all cases where an application is to be made for special consideration.
- For the award of a grade by special consideration, where a student misses part of an examination through illness or personal misfortune, a minimum of 25% of the course assessment (including coursework) must have been completed.
- Parents and candidates are reminded that it is school policy to request payment of entry fees (approximately £30.00 per subject) should a candidate fail to attend an examination without good reason and without informing the school.
- **Please not that misreading the timetable will not be acceptable as a satisfactory explanation of absence.**



AFTER THE EXAMINATIONS

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS



NOVEMBER RESULTS

- Results will be issued the Thursday during the 2nd week in January.

SUMMER RESULTS

- A/AS level results will be issues on the Thursday of the 3rd week in August.
- GCSE results will be issues on the Thursday of the 4th week in August.
- If you wish any other person (including family members) to collect your results on your behalf, you must give your written authorization to the school **BEFORE** results day.
- No results will be given out on the telephone.

POST RESULTS

- If you need post-results advice, teaching staff will be available on results day.
- If you need to re-sit English or Math's in November you should contact the Exams Officer.
- If you require any exam scripts to be returned or have marking reviewed, you should discuss this with your teacher, complete the consent forms and bring the appropriate fee to Mr Willetts by the 15th September.

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES

- A Presentation Evening will take place in November when it is hoped that you will be able to attend to receive your certificates. Invitations to students and their parents will be sent out with full details nearer the time.
- Students who are unable to attend Presentation Evening will be able to collect their certificates from the Exams Officer after Presentation Evening. Certificates will not be given to anyone other than the candidates without the candidate's authorization.

- Blue Coat CofE Academy is only obliged to keep certificates for a period of one year after issue. If candidates do not collect their certificates within this time (or if they lose their certificates) they can only be replaced by direct applications to the appropriate examination boards. This will require proof of identify (such as a birth certificate) and a substantial fee per examination board (around £45). You are therefore urged to collect your certificates at the Presentation Evening or as soon as possible.
- Information on how to get replacement certificates from exam boards can be found on the exam board websites.
- Blue Coat CofE Academy will NOT post certificates to you; this is to avoid the substantial replacement charges which would be made to you by the exam boards for replacement certificates, if the originals were lost or damaged during transit in the postal system.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What do I do if there's a clash on my timetable?

- The Exams Officer will re-schedule papers internally (on the same day) where there is a clash of subjects. Candidates will normally sit one paper then may have a short-supervised breaking during which they must not have any communication with other candidates. They will then sit the second subject paper. Correct times will be on your individual candidate timetable. It may be necessary for you to bring a packed lunch if you have exams in the morning and afternoon as you will have to remain in isolation until both examinations are completed. If in doubt, contact the school's Examinations Officer.

Q. What do I do if I think I have the wrong exam paper?

- Invigilators will ask you to check before the exam starts; if you think something is wrong put your hand up and **tell the invigilator immediately.**

Q. What do I do if I forget my candidate number?

- Candidate numbers are printed on your exam TIMETABLE (always bring your timetable with you to exams and you will have all the information you need to sit the exam. A copy of the overall seating plans will also be displayed each day in Ms Pardoe's office window, which shows candidate numbers. If you are still unsure, speak to an invigilator who will have access to this information.

Q. What do I do if I forget the school Centre number?

- The Centre numbers is 20839. This number will be on display in the examination room

Q. What do I do if I have an accident or I am ill before the exam?

- Inform the school at the earliest possible point so we can help and advise you. In the case of an accident that means you are unable to write, it may be possible to provide you with a scribe to write your answers, but we will need as much prior notice as possible. You may need to obtain medical evidence (from your GP or hospital) if you wish the school to make an appeal or Special Consideration on your behalf (see below)

Q. What is an Appeal for Special Consideration?

- Special Consideration is an adjustment to the marks or grades of a candidate who is eligible for consideration. Parents and Carers should be aware that an adjustment is likely to be small and no feedback is provided. Candidates will only be eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and covered the whole course but

performance in the examination or in the production of course work is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. Examples of such circumstances may be illness, accident or injury, bereavements, domestic crisis. The Examinations Officer must be informed immediately, so that the necessary paperwork can be completed (within 7 days of each subject); in some circumstances, the candidate will be required to provide evidence to support such an application.

Q. What do I do if I feel ill during the exam?

- Put your hand up and an invigilator will assist you. You should inform an invigilator before or during an exam and state whether you feel this may have affected your performance.

Q. If I'm late can I still sit the exam?

- Provided you are not more than 1 hour late (or less for a shorter exam) it MAY still be possible for you to sit the examination. You should get to school as quickly as possible and report to Reception. A member of staff will escort you to the exam room. You **MUST NOT ENTER** an examination room without permission after the examination has begun. You should be also aware that if you start the exam more than 30 minutes after the published starting time, the school must inform the exam board and it is possible that the board may decide to not accept your work. Please ensure that you allow enough time to get to school so that if you are delayed (e.g. though transport problems) you will still arrive on time. You cannot sit the exam once the normal end time of the exam has been reached.

Q. If I miss the examination can I take it on another day?

- No. Timetables are regulated by the exam boards and you must attend on the given date and time. There are no exceptions. Misreading the timetable is not an acceptable excuse for missing the exam.

Q. Do I have to wear school uniform?

- Yes. Normal school regulations apply to uniform, hair, jewellery, make-up etc.

Q. What equipment should I bring for my exams?

- For most exams you should bring at least 2 pens (BLACK INK ONLY)
- 2x **HB** pencils
- For Mathematics, pencils **MUST** be used for diagrammatic work.
- For some exams you will need a calculator (Maths/Science), a 30cm ruler (marked with cm and mm), pencil sharpener and rubber, compass, protractor, coloured pencil crayons (NOT gel pens), set texts (e.g. English Literature)
- **YOU are responsible for providing your own equipment for examinations.** You must

not attempt to borrow equipment from another candidate during an exam.

Q. What items are not allowed into the examination room?

- Only material that is listed on question papers is permitted in the examination room. Students who are found to have any unauthorized material, will be reported to the appropriate examinations board. Using unauthorized materials in an exam, will almost certainly result in disqualification from the paper or subject concerned.
- Bags and coats and any other items not permitted under examination regulations, must be left in the care of the invigilators at the front/back of the room. Do not bring any valuables into the school with you when you attend an examination.
- No food is allowed in the exam room. **You may bring a bottle of water into the room however it must not have any labels or writing on it.**

Q. Why can't I have my mobile phone in my possession during the exam?

- Being in possession of a mobile phone (or any electronic communication device e.g. iPod, headphones, smart watch) may be regarded as cheating and is subject to severe penalty from the awarding bodies:

The MINIMUM penalties are as follows:

Device found on you and is turned **ON** – **disqualification from the entire subject award.**

Device found on you and turned **OFF** – **disqualification from the subject paper you are sitting at the time.**

Phone rings during the exam **wherever it is in the room** the exam board must be notified and you may be **disqualified from all paper in the subject (including any already taken).**

- If there is an emergency that requires you to bring a mobile telephone to school, you must still switch it off and leave it in a named envelope with one of the invigilators on entering the examination room. You are responsible for collecting it at the end of the examination.

Q. How do I know how long the exam is?

- The length of the examination is shown in minutes on your individual timetable under the heading duration. Invigilators will tell you when to start and finish the exam. They will write the finish time of the exam on a board at the front/side of the exam room. There will be a clock in all the examination rooms.

Q. Can I leave the exam early?

- No, it is school policy that all candidates will remain in the room until the examination time has been completed.

Q. What do I do if the fire alarm goes off?

- You should stop and await instructions from the invigilator. If you have to evacuate the room leave everything on your desk and leave the room in silence. You must not attempt to communicate with other candidates during the evacuation.

Q. Can I go to the toilet during the exam?

- Only if absolutely necessary. You will be escorted by an invigilator and will not be allowed extra time; you should **make sure you visit the toilet before your exam** in order to avoid this during the exam.

Q. If I have more than one exam on a day can I get lunch at school?

- Students who have examinations in both morning and afternoon sessions may obtain lunch from the dining hall in the usual way or bring a packed lunch. If you are a clash candidate and are having a supervised lunch either bring a packed lunch as normal or you will be escorted to the dining hall.

Q. Why do I need to check the details in my timetable?

- The details on your timetable will be used when certificates are printed; if the name or date of birth on your certificates does not match your birth certificate it could cause you problems, if you are asked to show your certificates to a potential employer or for college/university at some time in the future. You should also check that the subjects and tiers of entry you are entered for are correct and that no subject are missing.

Q. I am entitled to extra time – how will this affect the way I take my exams?

- Some students receive an allowance of 25% extra time. Where possible such candidates will be seated together to minimize disturbance from other candidates who finish early. The invigilators will include the additional time when they display the finishing time of your exam on the board.

Q. What do I do if I don't get the grades I need?

- Teaching staff will be available to advise you on results day. If you feel strongly that it is necessary to make an enquiry about your result you should first consult your subject teacher to obtain their advice regarding the possibility of requesting a re-

mark. You should be aware that your mark could go down, go up, or stay the same. Re-mark requests must be submitted to the Examinations Officer by 9th September, You must complete a Candidate consent forms and return it with the correct payment to cover the cost.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT YOUR CERTIFICATES

It is strongly recommended that you take good care of your certificates.

If you misplace any certificates, replacements may be difficult and expensive to obtain from the Examination boards, and will require proof of identify.

Replacements are not original certificates but merely a record of achievement and some universities and prospective employers may require sight of the originals.

I draw your attention to the notes on the reverse of your certificates.

If there are any errors on your certificates, contact the Exams Officer immediately.

