

# HORSFORTH SCHOOL



# EXAMINATIONS BOOKLET

## INTRODUCTION

Public examinations can be a stressful time for students, parents and carers and it is important that all those involved are as well informed as possible. Well informed students will realise that exam rules and regulations are designed to ensure fairness and minimise disturbance and it is in the interest of all that the examinations run smoothly.

Horsforth School will make every effort to ensure that candidates receive the best possible preparation for their examinations, that the administrative arrangements run smoothly and that the examinations are conducted in a way that will cause as little stress as possible and help students to achieve their best.

This booklet is intended to tell you about examination procedures, to answer some of the most frequently asked questions, to help guide and support students and parents/carers through the examination process.

**If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact Miss Ilona Robertson, the Examinations Officer: Telephone No: 0113 226 5454 / 0113 226 5292 or email [roberti04@horsforthschool.org](mailto:roberti04@horsforthschool.org)**

On examination days if you have any questions it is best to leave a message with the Student Reception staff, stating the nature of your query, since the main priority will be the starting of the examination sessions. Reception staff will process your call as soon as possible.

**Please be aware that any misconduct or breach of the rules and regulations relating to exams can result in disqualification from the examination.**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What equipment should students bring to the examinations?**

- Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they bring everything they need to the examination.
- Candidates should bring **pencils, black pens, an eraser, a ruler, a pencil sharpener, a set of compasses and a protractor** in a **transparent pencil case or plastic bag**. A complete exam pack may be purchased from our Resources Department.
- **Calculators** are also needed for some Science and Maths examinations. Suitable calculators can also be purchased from Resources for £6.00.
- **Unless told otherwise by the invigilators, candidates should complete exam papers in black ink.**
- Coloured pencils or inks may only be used for diagrams maps and charts.
- Candidates may not borrow anything from another candidate during the examination.

- Some subject papers require the use of dictionaries or set texts, and candidates will be advised by their subject teachers what they will need for each exam.
- Candidates should not use highlighters or gel pens on their answer sheets. This is because many exams are now digitally scanned and marked online and these kind of pens are not always visible after scanning.
- The use of tippex or correction pens is not permitted. Candidates should cross through work they do not wish to be marked.

### **What shouldn't candidates bring with them?**

- **Mobile phones, iPods, MP3/ MP4 players and other electronic gadgets** are banned from examination rooms and should not be brought into the examination room under any circumstances. The Examination Boards treat mere possession of these items as an infringement.
- It is better to leave these items at home on examination days. If this is not possible, they **must** be handed to an invigilator before the start of the examination. Students will be asked to check the device is switched off and then to put it in an envelope. Should a phone ring during an examination, the candidate will be disqualified.
- Notes, papers and text books etc. are only allowed in certain examinations. Candidates will be informed by the subject teachers in advance should these be required.
- Candidates should not bring lucky mascots etc. into the examination room.
- Candidates should not have anything written on their hands, e.g. a telephone number, as this may be construed as cheating.
- No food items or chewing gum are allowed.

### **What are the rules about the use of calculators?**

Some Maths exams specifically prohibit the use of calculators.

Some kinds of calculator are forbidden. If in doubt, ask a member of the Maths department or the invigilation staff before taking it into the examination. All programmable calculators must be cleared of programmes.

### **May students bring a drink in to the exam room?**

Students may bring a small clear bottle of water into the examination room. Any labels must be removed from the bottle. No fizzy drinks, cans or pouches will be allowed due to a risk of disturbing other candidates. Drinking too much may not be advisable as candidates may not be allowed to use toilet facilities during short examinations due to issues of supervision.

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

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for examinations as Head of Centre and the school's Examinations Officer is responsible for all aspects of the administration of examinations and for the supervision of students during examinations. There is a team of external adult invigilators who will be present during the examinations at all times and who are supervised by the Examinations Officer.

The Awarding Bodies (Examination Boards) set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations. The school cannot deviate from these criteria. A copy of the general rules and regulations relating to examinations can be found on the website.

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

It is school policy to enter every student who is being taught a subject for the most appropriate level of examination. Only exceptionally and after consultation with parents/carers will students be withdrawn from entry.

### **Can students take an exam at a different time?**

Dates for examinations are rigidly fixed by the Awarding Bodies and **cannot be moved under any circumstances**. Parents/carers are reminded that they should not book holidays during term time and the Exams Officer should be notified of any issues with hospital appointments, etc.

### **What information will students receive about their examination entries?**

Students will be given a “Statement of Entry” and an individual timetable prior to the examination period. An electronic version of the timetable will also be sent to the email address we have on file for each student.

The “**Statement of Entry**” shows the personal details that we have on our computer system. These must be checked carefully, as these are the details that will appear on certificates. If there are any errors or problems you must inform the Examinations Officer straight away so that any amendments can be made.

It also shows all examination entries, including those that do not have written, timetabled examinations.

On the back of the “Statement of Entry”, there will be a copy of the rules and regulations relating to examinations.

The **timetable** shows all the written, timetabled examinations the student must attend. It contains information on dates, start times, the exam rooms and seat numbers.

Please keep this somewhere safe, as it is the student’s responsibility to attend their exams on time. If students fail to take the examination without good reason, the exam fees for those exams have to be paid.

### **What is the difference between coursework and controlled assessment?**

Some subjects have an element of **coursework** included in them which has to be completed, marked, assessed and sent to the Awarding Body well before formal examination sessions take place. The school sets deadlines that allow time for this process to take place before Awarding Body deadlines. These cannot be changed. Students who do not submit work on time will not be allocated a mark for this portion of their course and their overall grade will suffer.

**Controlled assessments and non-examined assessments** have, for the most part, replaced coursework. Specific arrangements vary from subject to subject, but in general:

- They are scheduled and run like examinations.
- Students do not have a 'second chance' unless absent through illness.
- Assessments are designed by the Awarding Body.
- Assessments may initially be marked by school staff, but marks are always moderated and standardised by the Awarding Bodies. In some cases, the assessments are sent directly to external markers appointed by the Awarding Body.

The format of the assessment varies from subject to subject. Formats include:

- Online tests
- Data handling assessments
- Oral presentations
- Written activities

Precise details, dates and timings are given to students by the teachers who are preparing them for the controlled assessments.

### **When do examinations take place?**

The main period for summer examinations is from the start of May until the end of June/early July, but some oral examinations and practical examinations take place earlier.

Exam timetables will be put on the website once confirmed.

**Please ensure your son/daughter checks their daily examination commitments the previous evening and knows whether their exam is in the morning or the afternoon.**

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

The main exam location in the summer is the Sports Hall. Different rooms may be used in other examination seasons depending on the number of candidates and which rooms are available. There will be a noticeboard in the main reception area directing students to the appropriate room for that day.

### **At what time do the examination sessions begin?**

Most examinations start at 9.00 am and 13.30 pm, but some individual exams may start at different times. Please check the individual student timetable carefully. Students must be on time for their examinations. Students will need to arrive at least 10 minutes to allow them time to find their seats, etc.

For exams in the Sports Hall Candidates are asked to wait quietly outside the rear of the PE area until invited to enter (waiting inside if the weather is poor).

Students must be quiet once they have entered the examination room, must not talk or communicate with other candidates and must not leave the examination room for any reason without supervision by the Examinations Officer or an invigilator.

### **What happens at the beginning of an exam?**

Exam papers will be on the desks as students come into the room. These papers must not be opened until an invigilator announces the exam has started.

Once all candidates are present and seated, the invigilator will remind candidates that they are subject to the regulations of the Examining Bodies and any special instructions will be read out. Candidates will then be asked to complete their details on the answer papers and given permission to open their booklets and start working.

### **What happens if a student cannot find his/her place in the examination room?**

There are a number of possible reasons for this and the situation has to be investigated. Students will be asked to wait at the back for a few moments while the invigilator checks the entry and sorts out the problem with the Examinations Officer. Every effort is made to keep these problems to a minimum and they will not prejudice any student's chance of taking an examination for which he/she has been entered. Students who have been officially withdrawn from an examination will not be permitted to sit the papers.

### **When do examinations end?**

The length of examination papers varies and occasionally exams will not end until after school has finished. Students and parents should make appropriate arrangements for getting home. Candidates will not be allowed out of the examination early.

Some students may also receive an allowance of extra time for the examinations and so their finishing times will be even later.

### **What should students do if they finish early?**

Students should use all of the available time on their examinations and spend any time left before the end of the examination checking their answers. Candidates are not permitted to leave before the duration of the examination unless there are exceptional circumstances. They must sit quietly at their desk so that they do not disturb other candidates.

### **What happens if a student has more than one examination at the same time?**

Two or more examinations with the same start time will usually follow on, one after the other, with a short supervised break in between. When this is not possible, one of the examinations may be taken at a different time on the same day. The candidate will have to remain under supervision between the two papers. If the examination is moved from morning to afternoon, or moved to morning from afternoon, the candidate will be supervised from the end of one examination, over lunchtime, until the start of the next examination. They should bring some revision or reading material and their lunch and a drink. Candidates will not be allowed access to a mobile phone during this time. Even attempting to communicate with any other candidate will invariably result in disqualification from those examinations for all the candidates involved.

In a rare case where a candidate has more than 5 hours 30 minutes at GCSE OR more than 6 hours for GCE in any one day, centres may request overnight supervision and reschedule one of the examinations for the next day. Overnight supervision is essential to avoid compromising the integrity of the examination and needs to be organised well in advance.

Please see Miss Robertson, the Examinations Officer, if you are affected by a clash and have any concerns.

### **What happens if a student is late?**

If parents are aware that their son/daughter has got the timing of the examination wrong or is at risk of missing the starting time, they should telephone the school immediately and leave a message for the Examinations Officer. Normally, candidates with a genuine reason for being late and who are brought straight to school may be admitted up until 10.00am for morning exams or 2.30pm for afternoon exams or, for exams shorter than an hour long, before the end of the exam. They will be allowed the full time allowance for the paper, as long as this is practical. Candidates who arrive more than one hour after the start of an examination or after the end of the examination may not be admitted and, even if they are allowed to sit the exam, the Exam Board may not accept their script.

### **What happens if a student does not turn up for an examination?**

If a student is too ill to attend an exam, they must contact the school as soon as possible and obtain a doctor's note. The Examinations Officer can then apply to the Exam Board for special consideration, if appropriate. The Exam Board will then determine whether the candidate will be awarded a grade for the exam that has been missed and what grade that will be.

A student who misses any examination without presenting a doctor's note or a satisfactory reason for a request for special consideration will receive a grade based only on those units of the qualification that they have completed.

### **What do I need to do if my son/daughter has problems that may affect his/her examination performance?**

Some candidates are eligible for extra time or special examination arrangements. These are normally identified by the school well in advance of the examinations and appropriate applications are made, supported by an Educational Psychologist's report or other medical evidence. The kind of arrangements permissible include extra time, the provision of a scribe or a reader and use of a dictionary.

If a problem (e.g. an illness, a bereavement or a difficult family situation) arises shortly before or during the examinations, please notify the Examinations Officer as soon as possible, so that an application for special consideration can be made. Parents should be aware that any special consideration is only granted in 'extreme' situations and that any adjustment is likely to be small and determined by the Awarding Body, not the school. No feedback is ever provided. No special consideration is ever granted if a candidate has an opportunity to re-sit the exam.

## **What should students wear for examinations?**

Examinations are a school activity and students in Years 7 to 11 inclusive must wear normal uniform. We ask for cooperation from parents and carers in ensuring candidates are correctly dressed as we wish to avoid causing stress to candidates in the examination room by pointing out when they are not in uniform. All students know the uniform rules and it is their responsibility to ensure they observe them. Students not dressed properly may not be permitted to sit examinations.

## **How are students supervised during an examination?**

Trained adult external invigilators will supervise students under the direct management of the Examinations Officer. Once candidates enter the examination room they must remain supervised and follow the invigilators' instructions at all times. The invigilators are DBS-checked and usually work in teams. They are always able to contact the Examinations Officer to resolve any complex issues or to deal with any emergencies.

## **What standards of behaviour are expected during examinations?**

All candidates are given a copy of a 'Notice to Candidates' produced by the Awarding Bodies, giving them information about the rules and regulations relating to public examinations. A copy of this notice appears on the school website.

The school and Awarding Bodies regard breaches of examination regulations very seriously. Parents/carers should impress on their son/daughter the importance of good behaviour in an examination, as any activities that may disturb or upset other candidates will not be tolerated.

**The Head of Centre and the Examinations Officer have the power to remove disruptive candidates. This action is likely to lead to the cancellation of that examination for the candidate and charging the parent / carer for the fee.**

## **How can parents/carers best help their son/daughter during the examination period?**

Examinations are inevitably a stressful time for candidates and support from both school and parents can be helpful. Students will have learnt how to make a revision plan, as well as a range of useful revision techniques during their normal lessons, and if this is followed it should not be necessary for any student to work abnormally long hours during the revision period. It is probably helpful to discuss with your son/daughter how he/she intends to organise revision and to talk through any anxieties about particular techniques or subject matter. Testing knowledge of factual material can benefit the student if such help is requested, but often all that is needed is a quiet place to work and lots of encouragement. Students should get plenty of sleep and some opportunities for relaxation.

Please remember that a lot of revision material is available electronically, through the school website and through accessing subject areas or class sites, through our subscription to SAM Learning, through specialised websites (e.g. BBC Bitesize and MYMaths) and on Awarding Body websites. (These hold specifications, past exam papers, examiners' reports and in some cases, revision guidance).

## **What happens about the return of school books and equipment at the end of the examination period?**

Students will be informed before the start of examinations about the arrangements for the return of books etc. Please ensure that all textbooks and equipment are returned promptly to school.

## **When and how are results distributed?**

GCE results arrive in school on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017 and GCSE results on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2017. Results will normally be available for collection from 9.00 am in the School Library. Students wishing for a relative or friend to collect their results **must** send a signed letter of authorisation with the collector. Prior arrangements can be made with the Examination Office to receive an email or a phone call on the afternoon of results day.

## **What can I do if results are substantially different from what is anticipated?**

It must be remembered that examinations can only measure performance on the day, and that candidates can do better or worse than anticipated for a variety of reasons. The Examination Boards offer a number of services to candidates who are unhappy with their result. These include requesting a copy of the script, having the addition of the marks checked and having a complete re-mark of one or all the scripts. All these services are chargeable. As a rough guide, re-marks cost approximately £40.00 per paper.

Details of the procedure to follow if you wish to take advantage of any of these services are available from the Examinations Officer and appear on the back of the Statement of Results. The process should be started as soon as possible after consultation with the Curriculum Leader concerned, as the deadline for requesting these services is approximately 4 weeks after results day.

If the results have serious implications for the student's future plans then advice should be sought from the Student Progress Leader, Post-16.

**If a student's university place depends on a result being re-marked the student must see the Director of Post-16 /Examinations Officer / or a member of Leadership Team on Results' Day. The deadline for applications for "priority re-marks" is 24<sup>th</sup> August 2017.**

## **How do candidates apply to re-sit?**

It is possible to re-sit units. Please discuss this initially with the Curriculum Leader in the subject. They will then pass the request on to the Examinations Officer, who will complete the necessary documentation.

The entry fees for re-sits may be payable and vary depending on the Exam Board, the level of qualification and the subject. Entries will not be made by the Examinations Officer unless the appropriate fee is received before the deadline date.

### **How should fees be paid?**

Where students are requesting a chargeable service, cheques should be made payable to Horsforth School and put in an envelope with the student's name, form and examination details clearly written on the front. These should be sent or brought to the Exams Office.

### **When do students receive certificates?**

The Awarding Bodies issue certificates well after the examinations have taken place. For summer exams, the earliest certificates can be collected is November. Students are required to collect certificates in person. A friend or family member may collect them with a note of approval from the candidate and will be asked to sign for them.

### **Can I replace a lost certificate?**

If a candidate loses their certificates it can only be replaced by direct application to the Awarding Body by the candidate. This costs around £55 per certificate, so a candidate who did exams with several different boards over several different years could end up paying a substantial amount for replacing these documents.

Application forms for replacement certificates can be found online, by typing "replacement certificate" into the search engine of the appropriate exam board ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk); [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com); [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk); [www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk) )

**Please, therefore, treat your certificates as the valuable documents they are and look after them carefully.**

