

# **EXAMINATION HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS**

Academic Year 2024 - 25

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## Introduction

It is the aim of Aylesbury Grammar School 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.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the awarding bodies (or examination boards) set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations and this school is required to follow them precisely.

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 questions that have 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 Office at: exams@ags.bucks.sch.uk

## **Key Exams Staff:**

Vicci PowtonData & Information ManagerRachael WinspearData & Examinations AssistantSally SmithData & Examinations AssistantEmma BowdenData & Sixth Form Administrator

# **Malpractice**

## Malpractice means any act or practice which is in breach of the regulations.

- To maintain the integrity of qualifications, strict regulations are in place. These are set by the joint council for qualifications (JCQ)
- 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 e.g. communicating, making noises and disturbing other candidates Exchanging, obtaining, receiving, or passing on information (or attempting to) that could be examination related
  - Offences relating to the content of candidates' work.
  - Undermining the integrity of examinations/assessments.

Malpractice in the exam room will be strictly dealt with by the Invigilators and the Exams Officer. In cases of minor behaviour problems, a warning will initially be given to the candidate to stop. If the behaviour persists or there is a more serious malpractice incident such as possession of a mobile phone in the exam room, immediate action will be taken by the Exams Officer which may lead to possible disqualification of the student from the exam.

Malpractice within the classroom whilst carrying out the non-examination assessment will be dealt with by the Subject Teacher, Senior Assistant Headteacher and the Exams Officer. To avoid being subject to any malpractice investigation, it is important that you read the Information for Candidates Written Examinations 2024-25 on the next two pages.

## **Information For Candidates Written Examinations 2024-2025**

## A. Regulations - Make sure you understand the rules

- 1. Be on time for all your exams. If you are late, your work might not be accepted.
- 2. Do not become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice during the exam.
- 3. If you try to cheat, or break the rules in any way, you could be disqualified from all your exams.
- 4. You must not take into the exam room:
  - (a) notes:
  - (b) Smart Devices AirPods, Earphones/Earbuds, an iPod, a mobile phone, a MP3/4 player or similar device, a watch, smart glasses or any other smart device.

Remember: Possession of unauthorised material is breaking the rules, even if you do not intend to use it, and you will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification.

- 5. If you have a watch, the invigilator will ask you to hand it to them.
- 6. Do not use correcting pens, fluid or tape, erasable pens, highlighters or gel pens in your answers.
- 7. Do not talk to or try to communicate with, or disturb other candidates once you have entered the exam room.
- 8. You must not write inappropriate, obscene or offensive material.
- 9. If you leave the exam room unaccompanied by an invigilator before the exam has finished, you will not be allowed to return.
- 10. Do not borrow anything from another candidate during the exam.

#### B. Information – Make sure you attend your exams and bring what you need

- 1. Know the dates and times of all your exams. Arrive at least ten minutes before the start of each exam.
- 2. If you arrive late for an exam, report to the invigilator running the exam.
- 3. If you arrive more than one hour after the published starting time for the exam, you may not be allowed to take it.
- 4. Only take into the exam room the pens, pencils, erasers and any other equipment which you need for the exam.
- 5. You must write clearly and in black ink. Coloured pencils or inks may only be used for diagrams, maps, charts, etc. unless the instructions printed on the front of the question paper state otherwise.

#### C. Calculators, dictionaries and computer spell-checkers

- 1. You may use a calculator unless you are told otherwise.
- 2. If you use a calculator:
  - (a) make sure it works properly; check that the batteries are working properly;
  - (b) clear anything stored in it;
  - (c) remove any parts such as cases, lids or covers which have printed instructions or formulae;
  - (d) do not bring into the exam room any operating instructions or prepared programs.
- 3. Do not use a dictionary or computer spell checker unless you are told otherwise.

### D. Instructions during the exam

- 1. Always listen to the invigilator. Always follow their instructions.
- 2. Tell the invigilator at once if:
  - (a) you think you have not been given the right question paper or all of the materials listed on the front of the paper;
  - (b) the question paper is incomplete or badly printed.
- 3. Read carefully and follow the instructions printed on the question paper and/or on the answer booklet.
- 4. Do not start writing anything until the invigilator tells you to fill in all the details required on the front of the question paper and or the answer booklet. Do not open the question paper until you are told that the exam has begun.
- 5. Remember to write your answers within the designated sections of the answer booklet.
- 6. Do your rough work on the proper exam stationery. Cross it through and hand it in with your answers. Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use, including those used for rough work.

#### E. Advice and assistance

- 1. If on the day of the exam you feel that your work may be affected by ill health or any other reason, tell the invigilator.
- 2. Put up your hand during the exam if:
  - (a) you have a problem and are not sure about what you should do;
  - (b) you do not feel well;
  - (c) you need more paper.
- 3. You must not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions.

#### F. At the end of the exam

- 1. If you have used more than one answer booklet and/or any supplementary answer sheets, place them in the correct order. Place any loose additional answer sheets inside your answer booklet. Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use. For CCEA examinations, any loose additional answer sheets should be placed behind your script.
- 2. Do not leave the exam room until told to do so by the invigilator.
- 3. Do not take any stationery from the exam room. This includes the question paper, answer booklets used or unused, rough work or any other materials provided for the exam.

# **General Information**

- All students sit their exams in the Foundation Hall, Gym, or designated classrooms, students with access arrangements are normally in a separate room.
- You must be in full school uniform and properly dressed.
- You must also be clean shaven unless you have been given special dispensation by the Head of Year.
- You will be provided with a personalised timetable on the student portal. Please check it carefully
  and notify any errors to exams@ags.bucks.sch.uk as quickly as possible.
- You may find it useful to highlight exams held at different sessions (am / pm) in different colours.
- You are responsible for organising how you are going to get home if you have an exam which finishes after 3:35 pm.
- Invigilators are there to help if you need extra paper/need clarification/feel unwell, put up your hand
- Whatever the venue, public exam rules apply to everybody in the room for both internal and public examinations.
- These rules are set by the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ), who administer external examinations, and are displayed outside of the exam venues throughout the whole of the external exam sessions.
- The JCQ Information for Candidates poster and a copy of the JCQ rules are also published on the website under Parents – Exams – Exam Information. Please read them all carefully.

# **Punctuality**

- MORNING EXAMS Candidates must be lined up outside the correct venue at least 15 mins before the start of the exam.
- Most morning exams start at 09:00 regardless of venue.
- For internal exams, those with Access Arrangements in alternate venues may start at 08:45 be sure to check your individual start times.
- AFTERNOON EXAMS Candidates must be lined up outside the correct venue before 1:15.
- All afternoon exams start by 1:30 (unless you have been told otherwise).
- When staff arrive to call candidates into the exam room everybody must be silent. Disobeying this
  instruction can cause delays and mistakes.
- Candidates are reminded that disobeying the instructions of invigilators can result in sanctions being applied.

#### **Lateness**

- It is vital you are fully familiar with the dates and times of your exams.
- Arriving late for an exam is discourteous to the exam invigilators and causes problems at the start of the exam which is disruptive to the other candidates taking the exam.
- If you know you are going to be late for any reason e.g. the bus is delayed, you should telephone the School Office immediately on 01296 484545.
- Ensure all relevant contact numbers or details we have for you are up to date.

If you arrive after 10:00 or 2:30 the exam boards may decide not to accept your paper

# **Timing Of Exams**

- Exams normally start at 9.00 am in the morning and 1.30 pm in the afternoon.
- It is not possible to start any afternoon exams before 1.00 pm and, as exams do vary in length, you may not be able to return home on the school bus because your exam has not ended until after 3.35 pm. If your exam ends at 3:30 it can take 10 mins or more to collect papers etc. and as we are not allowed to release any candidates until this is done, be aware you may not be on time for buses.
- This is particularly relevant to students who have extra time in exams. You will need to make your own arrangements to get home if an exam ends after 3.35pm.

Under no circumstances will candidates be allowed to leave an exam before it is scheduled to end

# **Seating Arrangements**

- Candidates for external exams are usually seated in candidate number order.
- If you joined the school in Y12 you will be given a new number for exams in this school.
- Once inside the room you are subject to Examination Regulations.
- Each desk will have a card with the name and number of the candidate. These will be in numerical, not alphabetical order.

YOU MUST FIND YOUR SEAT IN SILENCE. If there is a problem immediately notify an invigilator - do not talk to or ask help from another candidate

# **Equipment**

- Candidates are responsible for bringing all the equipment they need to each exam. This includes
  calculators, batteries and ink cartridges. Check with staff if unsure.
- Use a **transparent** pencil case/plastic bag. No tins are permitted.
- Candidates cannot share equipment during an exam.
- Items such as keys, glasses cases must be left outside the exam room or handed to an invigilator for the duration of the exam.

# Candidates may only take necessary equipment into the exam room.

#### You will need to have:

- BLACK INK pens (at least 2).
- Pencils (sharpened).
- Sharpener.
- Eraser.
- Ruler (must be transparent).
- Maths equipment (transparent) protractor, compass etc. (Check with your teacher what you need).
- Calculator IMPORTANT check batteries are working and have a spare set. No lids please.
- Any pencil cases taken into the exam room must be see-through.

You must not use correction pens, correction fluid, gel pens or highlighter pens on your answer sheets Please do not doodle on the exam paper/answer booklet. Examiners can and do disallow defaced papers.

YOU MAY ONLY WRITE IN BLACK INK ON YOUR EXAM PAPERS

## **Use Of Calculators**

For question papers where the use of calculators is allowed **you are responsible for making sure your calculator meets the regulations:** 

#### **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 formulas

# The candidate is responsible for the following:

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

#### **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 formulas;
  - text
- Please remember to clear anything stored in the memory
- Where a calculator is permitted for part of an exam, it is normally acceptable to place calculators on the floor under the desk in sight of the invigilator(s) for the non-calculator portion of the exam.

# **Prohibited Items**

- The following potential technological/web enabled sources of information are not permitted in the exam room. These should ideally be left at home or stored in school bags.
  - o iPods
  - o watches
  - o mobile phones
  - o MP3/4 players or similar device
  - o AirPods or their equivalent
- You will be asked at the beginning of the exam if you still have these on your person. You must hand
  them in if this is the case. They will be placed in a numbered zipped pouch and you will be given the
  corresponding numbered card which you will have to hand in to reclaim your phone etc.

Anybody taking a mobile phone, ipod, airpods, or MP3/4 player, watch etc into an exam room – even if switched off – and not handing it to an invigilator, is likely to be disqualified – Candidates can be disqualified from future exams if the exam boards think the offence is serious enough.

## Food/Drink

- You may bring a drink STILL WATER ONLY into the examination room but it should be in a small clear plastic bottle (max. 75cl) with the label removed and preferably with a sports top. Metal bottles are not allowed.
- No food substances/sweets/chewing gum are permitted in the exam room (Students who have a medical need e.g.diabetes should email exams@ags.bucks.sch.uk before exams begin).

# **Exam Room Conditions**

- Bags are not permitted in the exam rooms. Candidates must ensure they have the appropriate
  equipment in a clear pencil case, wallet or small bag. Mobile phones MUST be switched off (not left on
  silent) and left in candidates bags along with all other electronic devices and watches of any kind smart or not! Candidates must have empty pockets. We reserve the right to spot check for prohibited
  items and may request students to empty pockets as appropriate.
- Unauthorised items cannot be in a candidates possession in the exam halls even if switched off and they have no intention of using them. IT IS AGAINST THE REGULATIONS AND THE CENTRE IS COMMITTING MALPRACTICE IF WE FAIL TO REPORT AN INCIDENT. Any incident of this nature WILL be reported without hesitation.
- Candidates will be under formal exam conditions from the moment they enter the exam room until they are given permission to leave by the invigilator and have left. This means that they must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once they have entered the room.
- Candidates should find their seat quickly and quietly. There will be photo candidate cards placed on the desks to help students find the correct seat. Invigilators will help candidates if they can't find their seat. They must not ask another candidate.
- Candidates must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times.
- The exam paper will have been placed on the desks before candidates enter the room. Candidates
  must not attempt to look inside and read anything. This is malpractice.
- Candidates must not write anything on the front of the paper until they are advised to do so by the invigilator.
- At the front of the room, there will be a display showing the centre number, name/code of the
  exam, day, date and time. Candidates will need this information when they are asked to fill in the front
  of their exam paper.
- When filling in the details on the front of their exam paper, candidates MUST use their legal name and NOT their preferred name. If a signature is required, candidates must also enter this, it is very important.
- When the exam starts, the invigilator will display the start and finish times of the exam.
- If a candidate needs to leave the room because they are feeling unwell, they must put their hand up and an invigilator will assist them. Candidates are not allowed to leave the room on their own.
- Candidates make sure that they put their Name, Centre number, candidate number and question number on any additional sheets of paper used.

# **Summary Of Exam Day Information**

#### **REMEMBER PLEASE DO NOT:**

- be late the exam board may refuse to mark your paper and you could risk receiving zero marks
- bring your mobile phone, watch, ipod, airpods, mp3/4 player etc into the exam hall the exam board will see this as malpractice and will not mark the effected paper
- use tippex, corrector pens, gel pens, or highlighter pens on your answer sheet
- if you have to answer questions in spaces on the combined question paper/answer booklet, do not use highlighter pens on the answer part of the paper.
- ask to borrow equipment from other candidates please raise your hand and ask an invigilator for assistance
- attempt to communicate with candidates in any way once inside the exam venue, this is seen as malpractice and the school are duty bound to report this to the exam board
- bring any food/sweets/chewing gum into the exam hall (unless by prior arrangement with The Examinations Team.
- bring coke, orange squash etc into the exam hall only **still water** in a clear plastic sports top bottle without labels is permitted.
- doodle on your exam question paper or candidate name card.

## **Exam Clashes**

When you have two or more examinations that are timetabled at the same time on the same day; this is referred to as an 'examination clash'. The Exams Office will have worked out in advance the order in which you will need to sit the examinations and will notify you. If you think there is a clash on your timetable that has not been resolved, please see The Exams Office immediately.

If you have 3 hours or less of exams in one session, your exams will be consecutive with a short break (10-15 mins) between them. You will remain in the exam venue and exam conditions should still be followed during this time. You cannot revise for the next exam

If you have two or more exams timetabled at the same time, totalling **more than** 3 hours, normally you will have one or more of the exams transferred to a different session. You will need to be kept isolated, between exams, from other students taking these exams, so the security of the exams is maintained and information cannot be passed between students on the content of the exam papers.

# There will be a designated room for every centre supervision. You will be collected from your exam venue and taken to a room where you CAN:

- Read.
- Revise (using paper based materials only).
- Talk to other students in the designated room (quietly).
- Eat or drink.
- Move around the supervised area.
- Visit the toilet (supervised).

## **During centre supervision, students MAY NOT:**

- Leave the designated room or area (except to visit the toilet under supervision).
- Use or have in their possession any unauthorised items a mobile phone, ipod or MP3/4, watch, computer, laptop, etc
- Go to the school canteen (you must bring a packed lunch and drink with you).
- Talk to anybody outside the designated supervision area.
- Talk to any other students, apart from those sharing the centre supervision, on the way to or before they enter their next exam venue.

## At the end of the centre supervision:

- You will be taken to your next exam venue and you will have to wait inside the venue hall with the invigilators.
- You will not line up with the other candidates outside the hall as you **must not** speak with any students before you take your exam.

## **Overnight Supervision:**

- If you have three or more lengthy exams on the same day totalling **more than** 6 hours at GCE / 5.5 hours at GCSE (including any extra time) you may need to have a supervised overnight break.
- This rarely happens, but if it is necessary then your parents/guardians will have been contacted in advance and asked if they will ensure that for that night only they will guarantee in writing that you will not contact any person who may have seen the exam paper, use the telephone (mobile or landline), internet or go outside your home unescorted.
- You will have to be collected from school by your parents/guardians and they will have to bring you
  into school the next morning and 'hand you over' to Exams Office staff.

## **Absence From Examinations**

If you experience difficulties during the examination period (e.g. illness, injury or personal problems) please inform the school at the earliest opportunity.

Only in 'exceptional circumstances' are candidates allowed special consideration for absence from any part of an examination. It is essential that medical evidence is obtained on the day by the candidate/parent and given to the Examination Office without delay.

It is not possible to reschedule GCSE or GCE examinations during the examination series. This school does not recommend retaking GCSE examinations as Year 12 students are usually heavily involved in working for their A Levels. Having to revise and work towards a GCSE at the same time may be detrimental to their work.

## Please note that misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.

If you have any questions or queries about your timetable, contact the Exams Office as soon as possible, do not leave it until the day of the exam as this may cause unnecessary delays and or mistakes.

# **GCE/GCSE Examination Entries (For Subjects Not Studied In School)**

Each year requests are received from students who wish to take a GCE or GCSE examination in a subject that is not studied at school (e.g. Russian, Chinese, etc). We are happy to discuss these requests on an individual basis. Please email exams@ags.bucks.sch.uk in the first instance.

# **Special Consideration For External Examinations**

Every year we receive a number of requests for Special Consideration from parents of students taking public examinations.

In the case of illness, the school will support requests for sudden and serious conditions that **apply on the** day of the examination only.

- If you are suffering from such ongoing conditions as hay fever, glandular fever, anorexia, depression etc., you need to supply a letter from your doctor relating the symptoms and the effects of any medication to the date of the actual examination.
  - e.g. 'On Thursday 14 June, Zak was badly affected by symptoms of his hay fever causing sore eyes, difficulty in breathing and lack of concentration.'

This can then be sent to the Examination Board with an online submission requesting Special Consideration for Zak's examination on Thursday 14 June.

- If you are affected for more than one day the doctor's note should still relate the symptoms and the effects of any medication to the date(s) of the examinations affected.
  - e.g. 'Zak has suffered from severe hay fever during the week commencing Monday 11 June. This has caused him to have sore eyes, difficulty in breathing and difficulty sleeping at night. This will have affected his concentration'.
- We cannot accept a letter from a doctor which covers the whole examination series.
  - e.g. 'Zak is suffering from hay fever and this is affecting his examinations.'

Any medical condition that might flare up can only be considered with a letter from a doctor relating to the specific date(s).

All letters must be received by the school within 5 days of the examination so it can be submitted to the Examination Board within their deadline of 7 days from the date of the examination.

It is strongly recommended that medical advice regarding the control of symptoms for such illnesses as hay fever, glandular fever etc. is sought well in advance of the examination session.

In the case of sudden or unforeseen family circumstances, such as bereavement during the examination period, special consideration may be applied for.

In all cases, the Examinations Office must be informed on the day or days of the paper affected. **Late notification cannot be supported.** 

## **Notification Of Exam Results**

You can access your results via Student Portal from 8am on results day on the following days:

#### **NOVEMBER SERIES**

**GCSE RESULTS DAY: 9th January 2025** 

#### **SUMMER SERIES**

GCE RESULTS DAY: 14th August 2025 GCSE RESULTS DAY: 21st August 2025

The school will also be open on results day between 09:00 - 11:00 so you can collect a paper copy of your Statement of Results and your component breakdown.

If you are unable to attend on results day to collect, you must give your nominated person permission to collect your results. Please email <a href="mailto:exams@ags.bucks.sch.uk">exams@ags.bucks.sch.uk</a> with your permission - remember to include your candidate number. Without a signed letter from you, we will not release results to any third party or your parents/ or relatives). We do not give out results of exams over the telephone or by email

# **Review Of Marking And Access To Script Requests**

If after receiving your results you wish to have a review of marking or request your script back you must see the Examinations Officer as soon as possible (within 5 days if your university place is dependent).

There are deadlines involved in this process and late applications will not be accepted. Non-priority requests will be dealt with by the Examinations Officer on our return to school in September, please refer to the website for the most up to date information, as examination boards will not accept requests after this date.

## **Personal Data**

The awarding bodies collect information about exam candidates, to understand what information is collected and how it is used, candidates should read the Information-for-candidates-Privacy-Notice.pdf

# **Certificates**

#### Year 11

Certificates will be given out in registration during November/December, before the school breaks for the Christmas holidays. Year 11 students who do not return to the Sixth Form, will have their certificates sent to their home address by Recorded Delivery.

#### **Year 13**

Will have their certificates posted by Recorded Delivery. These will be sent to the address we hold on the system so you must notify us if you move before you receive your certificates.

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

## Q. Why do I need to check the details on 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 subjects are missing.

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

Invigilators will ask you to check before the examination starts. If you think something is wrong, put your hand up and tell the invigilator immediately.

## Q. What if I forget my Candidate Number?

A candidate card with your photograph and candidate number will be placed on your desk.

### Q. What do I do if I forget the school Centre Number?

The Centre Number is 52103. It is clearly displayed in the examination venues.

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

The examination invigilators will tell you what to do. If you have to evacuate the examination venue, close your examination booklet, leave everything on your desk and leave the room in silence. You must not attempt to communicate with any other candidates during the evacuation.

#### Q. Can I go to the toilet during the examination?

If it is absolutely necessary. You will be escorted by an invigilator and will not be allowed any extra time for the time lost by leaving the examination room. All toilet visits will be recorded on an invigilator incident sheet and may be requested by the relevant exam board if any instance of malpractice is suspected. If you are entitled to extra time you will not be allowed to go to the toilet during the extra time.

#### Q. What do I do if I feel ill during the examination?

Put your hand up and an invigilator will assist you. You should inform an invigilator if you feel ill before or during the examination.

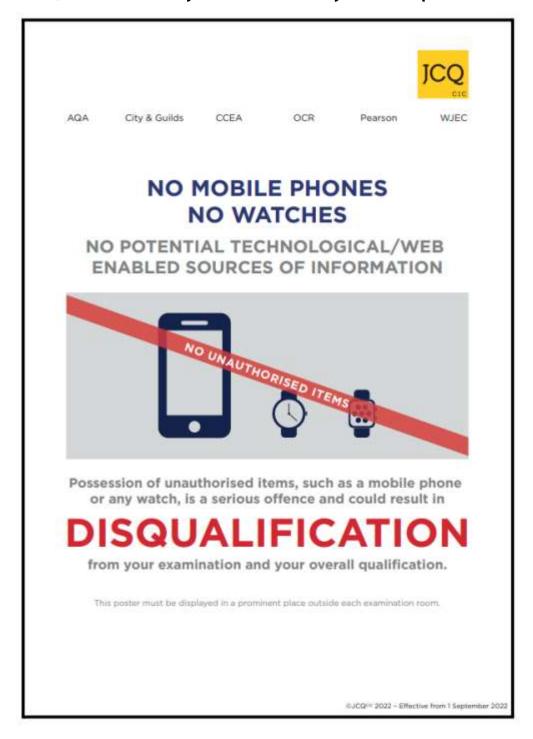
#### Q. What is an Appeal for Special Consideration?

In the case of illness, the school will support requests for sudden and serious conditions that apply on the day of the examination only. In the case of sudden or unforeseen family circumstances, such as bereavement during the examination period, special consideration may be applied for.

# **JCQ Unauthorised Items Poster**

This poster will be displayed outside each exam room. Candidates 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."



# **JCQ Warning To Candidates Poster**

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



AQA City & Guilds CCEA OCR Pearson WJEC

# Warning to Candidates

- You must be on time for all your examinations.
- 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.
- You must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once you have entered the examination room.
- You must follow the instructions of the invigilator.
- You must not sit an examination in the name of another candidate.
- You must not become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice in any part of the examination.
- 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.