CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK
2025/26

Contents

Introduction

Brighton Hill Community School is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the examination and assessment process in place in the centre and are made aware of the required JCQ/awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

Purpose of this handbook

- To support/complement candidate briefings/assemblies.

- To inform candidates about malpractice in examinations/assessments.

- To inform candidates about the use of their personal data and copyright.

- To ensure candidates are provided with all relevant information about their exams and assessments in advance of any exams/assessments being taken.

- To ensure copies of relevant JCQ information for candidates' documents and exam room posters are provided in advance of any exams/assessments being taken.

- To answer questions candidates may have.

- To inform candidates of/signpost candidates (and where relevant parents/carers) to any exams-related policies/procedures they need to be made aware of.

Malpractice

- To maintain the integrity of qualifications, strict Regulations are in place. Malpractice means any act or practice which is in breach of the Regulations.

- 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
    - Exchanging, obtaining, receiving, or passing on information which could be examination related (or the attempt to)
    - Offences relating to the content of candidates' work
    - Undermining the integrity of examinations/assessments

- Indicative sanctions against candidates can be found (Appendix 6, Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures (https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/)

Things not to do on social media:
- Buy/ask for/share exam or assessment content
- Pass on rumours of what's in exams or assessments
- Share your work
- Work with others so that your assessment is not your own independent work

Research and using references

- Where computer-generated content has been used (such as an AI Chatbot), your reference **must** show the name of the AI tool used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2026.

- o You should also reference the sources used by the AI tool in generating the content.
- o You **must** retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how you used it. This **must** be submitted with your work for final assessment so that your teacher can review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used.
- o **If you copy the words, ideas or outputs of others and do not show your sources in references and a bibliography, this will be considered as cheating**.

Plagiarism

- o Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts, ideas or outputs and trying to pass them off as your own. It could also include AI-produced material. **Plagiarism is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously**…

Refer to your Brighton Hill Community School's **Malpractice Policy** (Exams), which can be found on the school website: (www.brightonhill.org)

Personal data

- Any person involved in completing examinations/assessments where malpractice is suspected, or alleged, personal data about them will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved. Personal data about them may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies.
- The centre will provide relevant personal data including name, date of birth, gender to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications.

- Materials which are submitted by candidates for assessment may include any form of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programs and data ("Student Materials").

- Awarding bodies may use the Student Materials to evaluate candidates' performance in the relevant assessment. They may also use the Student Materials for other purposes as outlined in their privacy policies and in accordance with their terms. Candidates should be directed to the relevant awarding body's privacy notice if they require further information about how their Student Materials may be used by the awarding body.

  - o Information for candidates - Privacy notice
  - o Candidate privacy policy
  - o Privacy Policy | Eduqas
  - o https://www.aqa.org.uk/privacy-notice/student-privacy-notice

Copyright

- The copyright of all examination and assessment papers, including mark schemes and model answers belong to the awarding body who created them.

- Candidates may access Student Materials (including examination scripts) through the access to scripts arrangements set out in paragraph 5.13 in the JCQ General Regulations 2025-26 document (General Regulations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications).

Coursework assessments/non-examination assessments

The following documents can be found on the school website:
- JCQ information for candidates - coursework, non-examination assessments, social media (Coursework - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications).

- The use of AI – please refer to JCQ AI poster for students and JCQ AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications.

- Candidates will be informed when assessments will take place by their class teacher. Their teacher will also inform them of any relevant deadlines which must be met and how their work will be marked / assessed.

- Class teachers will inform candidates of their centre assessed marks. Centre assessed marks can be appealed via the BHCS Internal Appeal Procedure.

Written timetabled exams

- Candidates will be sent their timetables for written examinations to their school email address. This email will also be sent to the email address of the primary contacts the school hold on record for the candidate.

- It is the candidate's responsibility to check that their personal information (full name, date of birth etc.) and the examinations / tiers they are entered for are correct. If any information is incorrect, the candidate must inform the exams officer (Mrs Harding).

- Candidate exam timetables inform the candidates of the date, time, location and seat in the exam room they have been allocated.

- The JCQ information for candidates' documents – written examinations, social media (available on the school website – www.brightonhill.org)

- Exam room posters – Warning to candidates, Unauthorised items (available on the school website – www.brightonhill.org).

Contingency session - Summer 2026

JCQ have designated **Wednesday 24 June 2026** as the contingency sessions for examinations. Candidates must remain available until those dates should examinations need to be rescheduled.

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

Timetable clashes are where a candidate is entered to take two or more exams at the same time on the same day.
- If this occurs, the candidate will sit one paper, followed immediately, after a short, supervised break, by the next paper(s) in the same session. The candidate will remain under formal examination conditions at all times in the exam room.

Where you will take your exams

Exams take place in the Sports Hall and LP, as well as in smaller rooms around the school.

What time your exams will start and finish

GCSE exams start at 9am and 1pm/1.30pm depending on the length of the examination.

- Exams can end after the end of the school day, especially if you are entitled to extra time for the exam. You will be able to identify these exams when you receive your timetable.

Supervision during your exams

Exams are supervised by a team of invigilators.

- Invigilators must follow strict rules and regulations when conducting exams as directed by JCQ awarding bodies.

Exam room conditions

- Candidates line up in the quad in seat plan order and are invited into the exam room by a member of SLT, exams officer or lead invigilator.
    - If you are timetabled to sit your exam in a smaller room, wait quietly outside the room until the invigilator invites you in.
    - Do not enter the exam room until you are invited to do so.

- Candidates are under formal exam conditions from the moment they enter the exam room until they are given permission to leave by the invigilator:
    - You must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates whilst you are in the exam room.
    - You must follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times.
    - You must not sit an exam in the name of another candidate.
    - You must not become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice in any part of the exam.

- The following information is displayed in the exam room - centre number, subject title, paper number, the actual starting and finishing times, and date, of each exam.

- Complete the front of your answer books (first name and surname that matches your exam entry information, candidate number, etc.). You must only do this when the invigilator's announcement instructs you to.

- Candidates must not open the question paper until the exam begins, additional exam board paper can be provided on request, this cannot be used for rough work only and will be submitted with the paper.

- Candidates must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once they have entered the examination room. If they do, this constitutes malpractice and must be reported to the relevant awarding body.

- Candidates must not open the question paper until the examination begins. If they do, this constitutes malpractice and must be reported to the relevant awarding body.

Where you will sit in the exam room

In accordance with the seating plan and your individual timetable.

How your identity is confirmed in the exam room

Candidate cards which display the candidate's name, photo and candidate number are placed on the candidate's desk.

What equipment you need to bring to your exams

You must bring with you all equipment you need for the exam you are sitting. If you are using a pencil case to carry that equipment, it must be in a clear pencil case.
- Please refer to the JCQ information regarding authorised equipment that should be brought by the into an examination.

Exam Room Posters - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications

Using calculators

You must be aware of JCQ awarding body instructions regarding the use of calculators in your exams. This information can be found in the 'Exams & Results' section of the school website (www.brightonhill.org).

What you must not bring into the exam room

Only materials listed on the exam paper are allowed in the exam room. Mobile phones, watches, Airpods, earphones or ear buds, smart devices, notes, books or iPods are **not** allowed in the exam room. Please refer to the unauthorised materials poster Exam Room Posters - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications.

Food and drink in exam rooms

Food and drink are prohibited in the exam room with the exception of water in a clear, see-through bottle. (Certain food is accepted under exceptional, approved, medical circumstances).

What you should wear for your exams

You must wear your school uniform.

Where your personal belongings will be stored during your exam

Bags are stored at the back of the sports hall, or in the corner of the classroom, away from candidates. All mobile phones must be switched off and any electronic devices, including mobile phones, must be stored within your bag.

What to do if you arrive late for your exam

The candidate late arrival policy is instigated.

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

If you are unwell on the day of your exam and are unable to attend the examination, you must call to let the school know prior to the start of the exam. The absence will then be recorded against the exam for the date and time.

What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from your exam

The candidate absence policy is instigated.

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

Candidates follow the school emergency evacuation process.

Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

Candidates in receipt of access arrangement are notified of their arrangement and receive these arrangements during assessments and examinations.

Results

Results are collected during results day. Any uncollected results are sent to the candidate's primary address held on the school system.

Post-results services

Post results information can be found on the JCQ website and the school website.

Certificates

GCSE certificates are presented to students an awards evening. Any uncollected certificates remain the property of the school and are retained for the period of one year from receipt of delivery.

- Replacement certificates can be ordered from Awarding Body websites for approximately £50 per certificate.
- All certificates must be collected and signed for by the candidate. Written consent can be given by the candidate for a nominated person to collected on their behalf.

Internal appeals procedure

The internal appeals procedure can be found on the school website.

Complaints policy

The complaints policy can be found on the school website (www.brightonhill.org.uk).

JCQ Information for candidates - coursework

You **must** read this information if you are undertaking qualifications that contain elements of coursework assessment.

Information for candidates - Coursework 2025-2026 http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents

This information can also be found on the school website.

JCQ Information for candidates – non-examination assessments

You **must** read this information if you are undertaking qualifications that contain components of non-examination assessment.

Information for candidates – non-examination assessments 2024-2025 http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents

JCQ Information for candidates – social media

You **must** read this information to help you stay within examination/assessment regulations when using social media.

Information for candidates – social media 2024   http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents

JCQ Information for candidates - AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments)

You **must** read this information to help you stay within examination/assessment regulations when using artificial intelligence. This information explains: What is AI? What is an AI tool? When can I use AI? When can I not use an AI tool? If I'm allowed to use AI, how is this breaking the rules? How to make sure you don't misuse AI.

Information for candidates
AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments)

What is AI?

AI stands for artificial intelligence and can be used to create text, images, videos, music and artwork based on instructions given to an AI tool.

What is an AI tool?

AI tools are applications, such as ChatGPT, Snapchat My AI, Google and Google translate. There are many more!*

*The list of certain suppliers of AI-related products is for information purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement by JCQ and awarding bodies. It is each centre's responsibility to investigate and verify any suppliers they use, including any terms and conditions which govern the sale or use of the supplier's products. The list provided is not exhaustive.

When can I use AI?

- Your teachers may use it in class when teaching the course, but remember teaching in the classroom is not an exam!
- There are some assessments where you can use AI – your teachers will tell you if you can or cannot use an AI tool.
- Remember, the rules are different for different assessments and subjects, so always check with your teachers first!
- When an AI tool is allowed, **you must acknowledge**** the AI tools and the material produced by the AI tool that you have used in your work. If you do not acknowledge AI use, it will be **considered as cheating**.

When can I not use an AI tool?

- AI tools cannot be used in an exam or any other assessment where exam rules apply.
- This is what exam boards call **AI misuse and is a form of cheating**.

**Acknowledgment – When producing a piece of work, if you use the same wording as a published source, you must place quotation marks around the passage and state where it came from. This is known as referencing. You must make sure that you give detailed references for everything in your work which is not in your own words, for example, *ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2025.*

IF YOU USE AN AI TOOL, YOU CANNOT GET MARKS FOR WHAT THE AI TOOL HAS PRODUCED, AS IT IS NOT YOUR OWN WORK

If I'm allowed to use AI, how is this breaking the rules?

- AI misuse is when you use an AI tool in an exam or assessment where you are not allowed to; and/or
- Where you use an AI tool to create work and then say it's your own.

How to make sure you don't misuse AI

DECLARE

- Remember to sign your declaration form when handing in your work for final assessment.
- Your signature on the declaration form tells your teacher and the exam board that you are saying all the work you're handing in is your own.
- If you have used an AI tool, **you must declare***** that you have used it before signing the declaration form!

***Declare – this means that when you submit your work for marking, the awarding body will normally require you to sign an authentication statement confirming that you have read and followed the regulations.

ACKNOWLEDGE

If you are allowed to use an AI tool in your assessment (remember to check!), you must do the following:

- reference the AI tool you have used
- give the date of when the AI tool generated the content
- give details of how you used it.
- save screenshots of what you have asked or instructed the AI tool to do and what answer the AI gave you, and include this with the work submitted.

| LAST CHECKS | Know the rules | Check with your teachers | ACKNOWLEDGE and DECLARE |

EFFECTIVE FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2025

JCQ *Unauthorised items* poster

This poster will be displayed outside each exam room. You **mus**t note that *"Possession of unauthorised items, such as a mobile phone or any watch, is a serious offence and could result in* **DISQUALIFICATION** *from your examination and your overall qualification."*

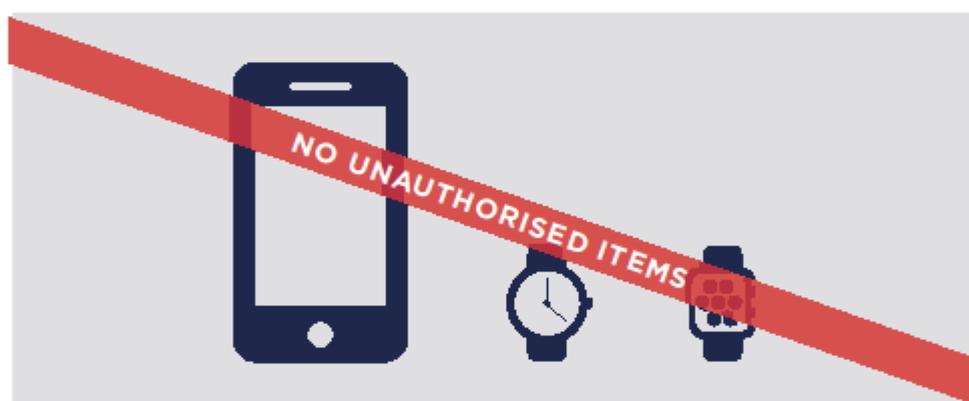*Unauthorised items* poster http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/exam-room-posters

JCQ *Warning to candidates* poster

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

Warning to candidates poster http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/exam-room-posters

Warning to candidates

AQA	City & Guilds	CCEA	NCFE	OCR	Pearson	WJEC

1
You **must** be on time for all your examinations.

2
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 examination or qualification.

3
You **must not** talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once you have entered the examination room.

4
You **must** follow the instructions of the invigilator.

5
You **must not** sit an examination in the name of another candidate.

6
You **must not** become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice in any part of the examination.

7
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.

JCQ AI poster for students

This poster is a quick guide to help you to better understand the rules for use of AI in assessments.   *AI and Assessments: A quick guide for students* poster https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/

Brighton Hill Community School
Student Declaration 2025/26

First name		Last name	
Year		**Tutor Group**	

Please sign this form and return to your tutor.

Please read the information contained in this form. This form tells you about some things that you must and must not do when you are completing your examinations and coursework.

If there is anything that you do not understand, **you must ask your tutor/teacher**.
Regulations concerning the conduct of examinations and assessments
I confirm that prior to my assessments and/or examinations taking place:

☐ I have been notified of the dates and times of my examinations/assessments **(JCQ – Information for Candidates: *https://www.brightonhill.org/news/?pid=51&nid=3&storyid=23*)**

☐ I have accessed the JCQ Information for candidates' documents **(*https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents*)** as they relate to the qualifications I am taking prior to my assessments and/or examinations taking place:
  ▪ Coursework (2025-26)
  ▪ Non-examination assessments (NEA) (2025-26)
  ▪ Social media
  ▪ Written exams (2025-26)

☐ I am aware of the content of the **JCQ Unauthorised items and Warning to candidates'** posters (***https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/exam-room-posters***)

Malpractice
To maintain the integrity of qualifications, strict regulations are in place. Malpractice means any act or practice which is in breach of the regulations.

Any person completing examinations/assessments where malpractice is suspected, or alleged, personal data about them will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved. Personal data may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies in accordance with the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures*.

Examples of what constitutes malpractice include:
▪ collusion: working collaboratively with other candidates, beyond what is permitted
▪ copying from another candidate (including the use of technology to aid the copying)
▪ allowing work to be copied, e.g. posting work on social networking sites prior to an examination/assessment
▪ disruptive behaviour in the examination room or during an assessment session (including the use of offensive language)

- exchanging, obtaining, receiving, passing on information (or the attempt to) which could be assessment related by means of talking, electronic, written or non-verbal communication
- bringing into the examination room notes in the wrong format (where notes are permitted in examinations) or inappropriately annotated texts (in open book examinations)
- the inclusion of offensive comments, obscenities or drawings; discriminatory language, remarks or drawings directed at an individual or group in scripts, controlled assessments, coursework, non-examination assessments or portfolios
- plagiarism: unacknowledged copying from or reproduction of third-party sources (including the internet and AI tools); incomplete referencing
- use of social media for the exchange and circulation of real or fake assessment material.

Personal data

The JCQ information for candidates document – (Privacy notice) Information About You and How We Use It **(https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/IFC-Coursework_Assessments_2025_FINAL.pdf)** explains how awarding bodies collect information about examination candidates and how the information is used.

- ☐ I confirm this notice has been brought to my attention
- ☐ I understand my personal data (where required by the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications) has been supplied within the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Copyright

The copyright of any work created by candidates that is submitted to an awarding body for assessment (referred to as **Assessment Materials**) belongs to the candidate. By submitting this work candidates are granting the awarding body a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use their assessment materials (referred to as **Assessment Licence**). If a candidate wishes to terminate the awarding body's rights for anything other than assessing his/her work, the awarding body must be notified by the centre, and it is at the discretion of the awarding body whether to terminate such rights.

Preparing your work — good practice

- If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your teacher, you must tell your teacher who will then record the nature of the assistance given to you.

- If you worked as part of a group on an assignment, for example undertaking field research, you must each write up your own account of the assignment. Even if the data you have is the same, you must describe in your own words how that data was obtained, and you must independently draw your own conclusions from the data.

- You must meet the deadlines that your teacher gives you.

- Remember your teachers are there to guide you. Although they cannot give you direct assistance, they can help you to sort out any problems before it is too late.

- Take care of your work and keep it safe. Do not leave it lying around where your classmates can find it or share it with anyone, including posting it on social media.

- Do not be tempted to use pre-prepared online solutions – this is cheating. Electronic tools used by awarding bodies can detect this sort of copying.

- You must not write inappropriate, offensive, or obscene material on any assessment work or exam papers.
- The work which you submit for assessment must be your own.
- You must not copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you.

Non-examined assessment (NEA)

- When producing a piece of work, if you use the same wording as a published source, you must place quotation marks around the passage and state where it came from. This is called 'referencing'. You must make sure that you give detailed references for everything in your work which is not in your own words. A reference from a printed book or journal should show the name of the author, the year of publication and the page number, for example: Morrison, 2000, p29.

- For material taken from the internet, your reference should show the date when the material was downloaded and must show the precise web page, not the search engine used to locate it. This can be copied from the address line. For example: http://www.geocases2.co.uk/ rural1.htm downloaded 5 February 2021.

- You may be required to include a bibliography at the end of your piece of written work. Your teacher will tell you whether a bibliography is necessary. Where required, your bibliography must list the full details of publications you have used in your research, even where these are not directly referred to, for example: Curran, *J. Mass Media and Society* (Hodder Arnold, 2005).

- If you copy the words or ideas of others and do not show your sources in references and a bibliography, this will be considered as cheating.

- Internal grades will be shared with you prior to submission, if you do not feel that the grade is representative of your work or is not the grade expected, please do discuss this with your class teacher who will explain the mark process to you.

- Once the grade is submitted to the examination board, the mark may increase and, in some cases, may decrease. If you do not agree with the change, please discuss this with your class teacher and refer to the JCQ process for appeals **(https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/appeals)**

Plagiarism

- Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts or ideas and trying to pass them off as your own. It is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously.

- Don't think you won't be caught; there are many ways to detect plagiarism.

- Markers can spot changes in the style of writing and use of language.

- Markers are highly experienced subject specialists who are very familiar with work on the topic concerned.

- Internet search engines and specialised computer software can be used to match phrases or pieces of text with original sources and to detect changes in the grammar and style of
- writing or punctuation.

Penalties for breaking the regulations in exams

If it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following penalties will be applied:

- the piece of work will be awarded zero marks.

- you will be disqualified from that component for the examination series in question.

- you will be disqualified from the whole subject for that examination series.

- you will be disqualified from all subjects and barred from entering again for a period of time.

- The awarding body will decide which penalty is appropriate.

REMEMBER – IT'S YOUR QUALIFICATION. IT NEEDS TO BE YOUR OWN WORK.

Declaration

By signing this declaration, I am declaring I have read and understand the regulation concerning the conduct of examinations and assessments, I understand what constitutes malpractice (and what AI misuse is) and the consequences of committing malpractice.

Signed		Date	