

Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School



EXAMINATIONS HANDBOOK

Guidance for Students and Parents/Carers

A Level, BTEC and GCSE Examinations 2023/24

Centre No. 16127

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INTRODUCTION

Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School is committed to ensuring that candidates and parents/carers are fully briefed on the exam and assessment process in place in the centre and are made aware of the required Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding body instructions and information for candidates in advance of any exams/assessments being taken.

The purpose of this handbook is to help students understand the exam procedures to follow and answer some of the questions you may have.

Please read this handbook carefully and show it to your parents/carers so that they are also aware of the examination regulations and procedures.

BEFORE THE EXAMINATIONS

Awarding bodies

The school uses the following awarding bodies
AQA, Pearson (Edexcel), Eduqas and OCR

Candidate numbers

Each student is issued a four digit **candidate number** which must be used on examination papers. This number is shown on your individual exam timetable and also on the seating card on your exam desk. Please memorise this number.

Each candidate also has a **Unique Candidate Identifier (UCI)**. This long number is only for administration purposes and you do not need to remember it.

Students who joined the school in Year 12 are issued with a new four digit candidate number to the one they had in their previous school. You must use the new number issued at this school. Your UCI number remains unchanged.

A **Unique Learner Number (ULN)** is a 10-digit reference number which is used alongside and to access the Personal Learning Record of anyone over the age of 14 involved in UK education or training. Learners will need to use their number each time they want to see or confirm the details held about them on their Personal Learning Record.

Contact Details

Please ensure that Data Collection Sheets issued at parent consultation evenings are checked and returned so that the school has up to date contact numbers for you. Please let the School office know immediately if your contact details change at any other point in the year.

Timetables

Examination timetables are regulated by the awarding bodies and you must sit your examination in the timetabled session and day. If you miss an examination you cannot take it on another day.

You will be given an individual examination Entry Statement detailing all the exams and times that the school has entered you for.

Checklist for Entry Statements:

- Is your name absolutely correct? This is how it will appear on certificates.
- Is your date of birth correct?
- Are all subjects included?
- **Inform the Exams Officer immediately if you find any errors.**

Entries for GCSE Maths, Science and Languages are tiered at Foundation or Higher level. Initially your tier of entry is preliminary only and may be subject to change. Teachers will use the mock exam results and ongoing class assessments to make informed decisions regarding every student's tier of entry. If in doubt, you should liaise directly with your subject teacher.

Any amendments to entries (other than tier of entry) which have to be made after the entry deadline will be subject to a late amendment penalty fee imposed by the individual awarding bodies. It is, therefore, essential that the entry details are checked very carefully with subject teachers and any problems reported directly to the Exams Officer. You will be liable for any penalty fees incurred if you fail to do this.

Exact details of exam venue and arrangements will be given to you in due course and the full school exam timetable will also be on the BUCHS website.

If you have an exam "clash" where more than one subject is scheduled for the same time, details of how this can be resolved will be shown on your individual exam timetable that will be issued when entries are finalised.

Written papers for external examinations start on Thursday 9th May 2024 although there are essential non-examination assessments and practical examinations throughout the year. The awarding bodies have designated Wednesday 26th June 2024 as a 'contingency day' for examinations. The designation of a 'contingency day' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations. Candidates must therefore remain available up to and including Wednesday 26th June 2024 should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements.

DURING THE EXAMINATIONS

Exam Regulations

Copies of documents issued by the Joint Council for Qualifications outlining the exam regulations which all candidates must observe were issued to students – via email - as appropriate in the Autumn Term. These documents relate to controlled assessments and written exams. Should you require a further copy, these documents are available under the “About Us/Exams/Exam Regulations” tab on the school website.

Students must not take into the exam room any unauthorised materials or equipment which might give them an unfair advantage. This includes notes, bags, a calculator case/instruction leaflet, a mobile phone, iPod, any watch, AirPods, earphones/earbud, MP3/4 player or any other potential technological/web enabled sources of information even if switched off.

No watches at all may be brought into the exam room.

Staff will not be responsible for the safekeeping of students’ property, including mobile phones and electronic equipment.

All labels must be removed from drinks bottles. Drinks containers will not be permitted. Only water bottles (max. 750mls) with small sports or screw on tops, and containing clear water, are allowed.

No food or sweets may be brought into the exam room unless prior permission has been given as there is a medical need.

Please refer to the previously issued ‘Information for Candidates’ for further details of exam regulations.

Possession of unauthorised material or equipment is in breach of exam regulations and awarding bodies will disqualify candidates either from that component or the whole subject qualification.

You must not write anything until the instructed to do so. Leave your pen on your desk until the invigilator tells you to complete the details on your exam paper.

If you require extra stationery or have any other query during the course of the examination, put up your hand for one of the staff to come to you. You should not walk about to collect paper etc.

You must not write inappropriate, obscene or offensive material as the awarding body may refuse to accept your paper.

You may not communicate in any way with, ask for help from or give help to another candidate while you are in this exam room. This includes the time when the exam is finished and the invigilators are collecting in the exam papers and during the time candidates are being dismissed from the exam room. **You remain under examination conditions the entire time you are in the exam hall or room.**

Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper must not be taken from the exam room.

You will only be allowed to leave the exam hall/room at the end of the time allocated for your examination. No papers may be handed in early. If you have finished your exam before the actual finish time use that time to check your answers.

Fire alarm and emergency evacuation

If the fire alarm sounds, please remain seated and wait for instructions from the invigilator.

You will be instructed to stop writing, close your paper and put down your pens. You will still be under exam conditions and must not communicate with each other or anyone outside the exam room. You will leave everything in the exam room, including your exam papers, and be taken by the invigilators in silence to the exam fire assembly point and there to stand in silence 1.25 metres apart so that you remain under exam conditions. When it is safe to return to the exam room you will return there under exam conditions. You will be told when to restart your exam and will receive the full time allowance for the paper. The awarding body will be notified of the disruption to your exam.

Malpractice

Failure to comply with the exam regulations constitutes malpractice and Awarding Bodies will normally impose sanctions and penalties on individuals found guilty of malpractice. These penalties include:

Warning

Loss of all marks for a section, a component or unit

Disqualification from a unit, all units in one or more qualifications

Disqualification from all qualifications taken in that series

Candidate debarred from entering for one or more examinations for a set period of time

Equipment

You must remember to take with you materials needed for your examinations, e.g. **BLACK** pens/biros – NOT GEL PENS (please also bring spares), pencils, rubbers, rulers, protractors, coloured pencils, calculators.

Any pencil cases taken into the exam room must be see-through. Pens & instruments, etc. can be put into a clear plastic bag or wallet.

You must write ONLY in BLACK ink or biro, unless the instructions on the front of the question paper say otherwise. HB pencil may only be used for diagrams, multiple choice etc.

No Tippex or any eraser other than a rubber may be used. Follow the instructions on the front of your question paper if you wish to change your answer.

Calculators (Taken from JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations 2023-2024)

Candidates may use a calculator in an examination unless prohibited by the awarding body's specification. Where the use of a calculator is allowed, candidates are responsible for making sure that their calculators meet the awarding bodies' regulations.

Before an examination you must clear anything stored in the calculator's memory. Calculator lids must not be brought into the exam.

The instructions on the question paper will say whether calculators are not allowed or if they are expected to be used in the examination. If the instructions do not include either of these statements, calculators are treated as standard equipment and may be used by candidates.

Where access is permitted to a calculator for part of an examination, it is acceptable for candidates to place their calculators on the floor under their desks in sight of the invigilator(s) for the non-calculator portion of the exam.

The instructions set out below apply to all examinations unless stated otherwise in an awarding body's specification.

Calculators must be: o of a size suitable for use on the desk; o either battery or solar powered; o free of lids, cases and covers which have printed instructions or formulas.	Calculators must not: • be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities: - o language translators; o symbolic algebra manipulation; o symbolic differentiation or integration; o 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: o databanks;
The candidate is responsible for the following: o the calculator's power supply; o the calculator's working condition. o clearing anything stored in the calculator.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o dictionaries; o mathematical formulas; o text.
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Attendance for exams

Examination papers in the morning will begin at **9.00 am** and those in the afternoon at **1.30 pm**, unless otherwise timetabled due to a clash. Please be punctual.

Please check your examination timetables carefully each day. The School cannot make any allowances for students who do not arrive at the correct time. You must line-up on Sunny Side/outside exam room (as shown on your timetable) at least 15 minutes before the exam start time shown.

Students are then lined up in candidate number order for external exams and escorted to the exam hall. You will be seated at a desk that has your individual name card.

Students who have a pre-agreed access arrangement such as extra time or rest breaks will have an additional green seating card indicating the agreed arrangements.

Correct full school uniform, including blazers, must be worn during the examinations and while travelling to and from school. However, if it is hot blazers may be removed once you are in the exam hall.

A candidate who arrives after the start of the examination may be allowed to the exam room and sit the examination. This is entirely at the discretion of the school.

A candidate will be considered very late if they arrive more than one hour after the awarding body's published starting time for an examination which lasts one hour or more. For examinations that last less than one hour, a candidate will be considered very late if they arrive after the awarding body's published finishing time for the examination. The awarding body may not accept the script of a candidate who arrives very late.

Absence from or illness during exams

If you know you will miss an exam due to illness please let the Exams Officer know as soon as possible on 01277 227156.

If you miss an examination and do not produce a medical certificate, you will be charged the full examination fee.

Only in exceptional circumstances are candidates allowed special consideration for absence from any part of an examination. Medical evidence must be obtained on the day of absence by the candidate/parent/carer and given to the Exams Officer within three days of the examination affected. If you miss an examination and do not produce a medical certificate, you will be charged the full examination fee.

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the Exams Officer, or the Exam Invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example, by providing the Exams Officer with a letter from the candidate's doctor.

Invigilators

The school employs external invigilators to conduct the examinations. Students are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards all invigilators and follow their instructions at all times.

Invigilators conduct examinations in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding body regulations and Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School instructions. They play a key role in upholding the integrity of the examination/assessment process.

Invigilators remind candidates of the exam regulations, tell them when to start and finish the examination and distribute and collect in all exam papers, additional answer sheets and resources used in the exam. They will also deal with any problems that may arise during the examination, e.g. illness of a candidate.

They cannot help you offer help or advice about the questions on your exam paper

AFTER THE EXAMINATIONS

Results Days

November 2023 GCSE	11th16 January 2024
January 2024 BTEC	21st March 2024
Summer 2024 A Level & BTEC	Thursday 15 August 2024
Summer 2024 GCSE	Thursday 22 August 2024

If you wish anyone other than yourself, e.g. parents or a friend, to collect results on your behalf you must notify the Exams Officer before the end of the summer term. You will then receive an email containing an online form to complete, where you will nominate a representative to collect on your behalf. The person collecting on your behalf will be required to produce Photo ID when they collect the results. Results will not be issued by telephone, post or text.

Post Results Services

Full details of post results services (e.g. access to scripts and reviews of results), their related deadlines and costs and procedures to be followed are communicated to students at the time of the issue of their results.

Requests for post results services must be made by completing a form available from the Exams Officer and making payment by the deadline published by the School. Students considering a review of marking should first discuss this with their subject teacher. Students need to sign a permission form before a review of marking of any externally marked examination to confirm that they understand and accept that marks may go down or up or remain the same as a result of a review of marking.

Service 1 - Clerical re-check

This is a re-check of all clerical procedures leading to the issue of a result.

Candidate consent is required.

This service will include the following checks

That all parts of the script have been marked

The totalling of marks

The recording of marks

Service 2 – Review of marking

This is a post-results review of the original marking to ensure that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly. It is not a re-marking of the candidate's script. The awarding body will have trained its reviewers to conduct reviews of marking accurately and consistently. Reviewers will not re-mark the script. Candidate consent is required.

This service will include

The clerical re-checks detailed in Service 1

A review of marking as described above

Please note that should an awarding body initiate an extended review of marking candidates' marks and subject grades may be lowered, confirmed or raised.

Service 3 – Review of moderation

This is a review of the original moderation to ensure that the assessment criteria have been fairly, reliably and consistently applied. It is not a re-moderation of candidates' work. Please note that if the School's internally assessed marks (controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment) have been accepted without change by an awarding body, this service will not be available.

Candidate consent is not required

The review of moderation will be undertaken on the original sample of candidates' work and cannot be undertaken upon the work of an individual candidate or the work of candidates not in the original sample.

Access to scripts

Either an advance photocopy or original script can be requested.

Advance photocopy is only for deciding whether or not to subsequently request a review of marking

Original script to support teaching and learning. If an original is requested further enquiry services are not available.

Candidate consent is required

APPEALS

Internal appeals procedure

Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School (BUCHS) is committed to ensuring that whenever its' staff mark candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. BUCHS is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

On being informed of their centre assessed marks, if a candidate believes that the above procedures were not followed in relation to the marking of his/her work, or that the assessor has not properly applied the mark scheme to his/her marking, then he/she may make use of this appeals procedure to consider whether to request a review of the centre's marking. The procedure and form are available on BUCHS website.

BUCHS will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.

Complaints and appeals procedure

Awarding bodies accept appeals in relation to three areas of their work. These are:

Appeals against results – when a centre is still dissatisfied with an examination result or results following the enquiries about results process

Appeals against malpractice decisions following the application of a penalty because of malpractice in an examination/assessment.

Appeals against decisions made in respect of access arrangements and special consideration.

Certificates

All Summer 2024 Candidates will be invited to collect their official A Level and GCSE certificates at an afternoon event in the second half term of the new academic year and a letter giving further details about this will be given with exam results in August. Students who are unable to attend that afternoon must contact the Exams Officer after that date to make arrangements for a time to collect their certificates.

Certificates will be held in school for a maximum period of one year, during which time students must make arrangements for collection. The awarding bodies require the school to keep certificates for one year after the examinations have taken place, after which time they may be destroyed. Some awarding bodies do not offer a replacement certificate service. In such circumstances the awarding body will issue a Certifying Statement of Results.

As the awarding bodies do not replace certificates lost in the post, they will only be posted by 'recorded signed for' if postage is paid and written permission accepting responsibility is given by the candidate to the Exams Officer.

APPENDICES

The following exam regulations documents are available to download from the BUCHS website [Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School - Examinations & Performance](#)

JCQ Information for candidates - coursework

You **must** read this information if you are undertaking any legacy GCE unitised AS and A-level subjects that contain elements of coursework and/or any Entry Level Certificate and Project qualifications.

JCQ Information for candidates – non-examination assessments

You **must** read this information if you are undertaking any GCE and/or GCSE qualifications that contain components of non-examination assessment.

JCQ Information for candidates – on-screen tests

You **must** read this information if you will be undertaking any externally assessed on-screen tests as part of your qualification(s).

JCQ Information for candidates – written exams

You **must** read this information before you undertake any externally assessed timetabled written exams.

JCQ Information for candidates – Privacy Notice

You **must** read this information as it informs you how the “*JCQ awarding bodies will process your personal data.*”

JCQ Information for candidates – social media

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

JCQ No Mobile Phones or Watches poster

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

The following school policies relating to exams are available to download from the BUCHS website

BUCHS Internal Appeals Procedure (Centre assessed marks)