



# Student guide to exams & assessments



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## Introduction

Dear Student,

Sitting your exams and assessments can be a challenge for some but at the same time it is an opportunity to show everything you have learnt and are capable of doing. Your tutors will not present you for exams or assessments until you are ready and through the awarding bodies we work with we have a degree of flexibility in the timing of these.

Your tutors will explain to you all the requirements of the qualifications you are going to be working towards and will prepare you for sitting the final exams and assessments. If at any time you feel that the tutor is not adequately preparing you please contact us to explain your concerns and we will then act as required to remedy any issues.

If you would like full copies of our policies in relation to Appeals, Malpractice, Maladministration, Complaints etc. please ask your tutor or Hub Manager. Policy documents can be provided in a range of formats including; electronic and large print.

Good Luck



Clint Lanyon

Director



Karen Pearce

Director



openawards



**ASDAN**  
Registered Centre



## **Exam Timetables**

Once you have been entered for exams you will be provided with your own individual exam timetable. You must check this very carefully. If there are any mistakes, for example, your name (this needs to be your legal name), date of birth, exam entry etc. you **MUST** report it to the exams officer. Mistakes that are not spotted at this stage could mean that your certificate is incorrectly printed later on.

Check each exam date carefully, making note of whether they are morning or afternoon exams. If there is an exam on the list that you were not expecting to take you **MUST** inform the exams officer immediately. Extra time will not be permitted if you have simply misread your timetable.

You, alone, are responsible for checking your exam timetable.

## **Coursework/Non-Examination Assessments**

Your tutor will advise you on when coursework/non-examination assessments are due, it is important that you stick to these deadlines.

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 set out by JCQ (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments>).

You must make sure that, when using published sources for information, you do not copy it and claim it as your own work. The work which you submit must be your own and you must not copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you. If you copy the words or ideas of another and do not show your source through referencing, this will be considered plagiarism.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism involves using someone else's ideas, words and passing them off as your own. Awarding bodies have ways of detecting plagiarism so do not think that you won't be caught. Please see Malpractice on page 10 for the penalties of malpractice.

## **Good Practice**

If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your tutor, you must tell your tutor so they can record it.

If you work as a group, you must each write up your own account of the assignment. You must meet deadlines that your teacher gives you. Take care of your work and keep it safe.

## Appeals

Once your tutor has marked your work they will inform you of your mark. On being informed of your mark, if you believe that the correct procedures were not followed and/or that the mark scheme was not applied properly, then you can appeal.

Please be aware, you are not appealing your mark, you are appealing against the method in which it was marked. If you wish to appeal please inform your tutor as soon as possible. They will then provide you with all the paperwork needed for you to read and complete.

If any student wishes to appeal a decision, they should follow the following procedure within 10 working days of receiving the disputed decision

- If possible, speak to the member of staff responsible for teaching the qualification in the first instance about the reason they wish to appeal.
- The member of staff has a responsibility to explain to the candidate why he/she received the grade/mark.
- If the student is not satisfied with the explanation, the piece of work will be re-marked by another member of staff also involved with that qualification.
- The student will be informed of the outcome of the re-marking by letter within 2 weeks of their original appeal.
- If the student wants to continue the appeal, he/she needs to contact the exams officer, who will provide the student with information about the appeals procedure for the relevant awarding body and explain what is involved. The exams officer will assist with the completion of any forms and will correspond with the awarding body on behalf of the student. Please note: a student must have the support of the centre to be able to appeal against a result.

## Written Examinations

### Where?

All examinations will take place in the Hub unless stated otherwise. If you have access arrangements in place your examinations will take these into account and if more than one person is sitting the exam yours may take place in a separate room.

### When?

All examination times will be clearly stated on your exam timetable. If exam times are changed you will be informed of this in advance and details will be provided before each exam.

### Where do I sit?

Seating plans will be displayed in the exam room and to ensure smooth running of the exam you need to make sure you know what seat number you are sat in.

## **Supervision**

Exams are supervised by invigilators, some internal members of staff and some external. Invigilators have to follow strict rules and regulations when conducting exams as directed by the awarding bodies and JCQ. This includes reporting on any suspected/actual malpractice.

## **The Rules**

### **Arrive on Time**

Aim to get to an exam at least 15 minutes before the start of your exam. If you are late your work might not be accepted. Arriving early also gives you some breathing space to relax before you start writing.

### **Equipment**

Your pockets should be empty. You must not take into the exam room:

- notes;
- potential technological/web enabled sources of information such as mobile phones, MP3/4 player, smartwatches or a wrist watch which has data storage;
- correcting pens, fluid or tape, erasable pens or gel pens;
- scrap bits of paper.

You must not borrow anything from another candidate during the exam.

You must:

- write clearly in BLACK pen (please bring 2 pens in case one runs out);
- only use coloured pencils for diagrams, maps, charts etc. unless the instructions printed on the front of the question paper state otherwise;
- use a clear pencil case for storing your equipment or an elastic band.
- The exams officer will provide any maths equipment needed such as a compasses and protractors (not including a calculator). Pencils, rubbers and rulers will also be provided however these are limited and we would advise you to bring your own. We ask that any equipment provided is left on the desk at the end of the exam. We also ask that you do not write on any of the equipment or the exam desk. We will regard any such incidents as vandalism and you will have to pay for the damage.

### **Calculators**

You may use a calculator unless you are told otherwise. Calculators must be:

- of a size suitable for use on a desk;
- either battery or solar powered;
- free of lids, cases and covers;
- a natural display calculator.

Calculators must not:

- be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities
  - language translator;
  - 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.

You are responsible for the following:

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

NOTE: spare calculators will only be provided if your calculator stops working during the exam. If you come to the exam without a calculator or with a broken calculator you will not be provided with a spare. It is your responsibility to ensure your calculator is working correctly before you enter the examination room

## Mobile Phones

Make sure your mobile phone is not on you. Phones and other similar portable devices, are not allowed in the exam room.

## Watches

Smart watches of any kind are not permitted in the examination room. If you wish to bring an ordinary analogue/digital watch into the examination room you must place it on the exam desk to be checked. The watch must then be left in place until you are dismissed from the examination.

## Water Bottles

You may take a water bottle into the exam room providing:

- the label around the bottle has been removed;
- it has a sports cap;
- that the liquid within the bottle is clear.

If your bottle has writing on it which cannot be removed we advise against bringing it into the examination room. JCQ has informed us that they are allowed providing an invigilator examines it before the start of every exam to confirm that the writing is not informative in any way. Any other bottles will be confiscated and returned at the end of the exam.

## **Food**

No food is allowed into an exam room unless there is a medical reason. A medical certificate or note from your Doctor must be provided to the exams officer at least four weeks before the start of the examination season.

## **Empty Pockets**

You should have nothing in any pockets when you enter the examination room. If you are caught with anything in your possession, even if you do not have it out, this will be classed as malpractice and a report generated.

DO NOT bring tissues into the exam room. Tissues will be available, just inform the invigilator.

## **Hands**

You are not allowed to have any information written on your hands/arms when entering the exam. If you are found to have writing on your hands a report will be made as this is malpractice. This includes your seat number or candidate number.

On entering the exam room your hands will be checked.

## **What should I wear?**

You should come to examinations wearing clothing that is

## **Be Quiet**

Talking to, or disturbing, other students is seen as malpractice and will lead to a penalty. Disturbing other students could be something as simple as tapping your pen or stretching. If you try to cheat, or break the rules in any way, you could be disqualified from all your subjects.

## **Listen Carefully**

Make sure you listen and follow all instructions given before, during and after the exam, particularly those relating to unauthorised materials and equipment.

## **Questions**

If you have a question, feel sick or need to leave the room, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to come to you. Do not shout out.

You must not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions.

## **Leaving the Exam Room**

If you leave the exam room at any point unaccompanied before the exam has finished, you will not be allowed to return. The manner in which you leave will also be assessed for malpractice. You will not be allowed to leave the exam early if you have finished, as this disturbs other candidates in the room.



## Needing the Toilet

If you need to go to the toilet whilst in an exam, put your hand up and an invigilator will come to you. DO NOT walk out or shout for attention. You will be escorted to and from the toilet by an invigilator. You will not be given extra time. You are not allowed to leave the exam room until after the first hour.

## Unexpected Problems

### Sickness

If you are sick on the day of your exam, please ring the Hub Manager to let us know as soon as possible. We will then let the awarding body know.

You will need a medical certificate.

\*Please see the 'Attendance' section for more information.

### Severe Weather

Where possible, all exams will go ahead as planned. If the hub can open, you will sit your exams as normal. If you are unsure please contact the Hub.

When there is a severe weather forecast, allow extra time to travel. If the weather conditions mean you will arrive late you must let the Hub know as soon as possible. Depending on how late you are, you might still be able to sit the exam. If many students arrive late, you will all sit the exam and the hub can apply for special considerations.

### Error on the question paper

It is important for you to know that an error on the paper doesn't mean you will get a lower grade. The exam boards have a process in place to manage these rare instances.

If you notice during the exam....

1. Notify one of the invigilators in the exam room immediately
2. Continue with the exam paper as normal and attempt the question if you can
3. The exams officer will contact the awarding body to ensure you are not disadvantaged if there has been an error.
4. After the exam if you feel that the error may have affected your overall performance in the exam, talk to the exams officer. If we feel appropriate the Hub can apply for special considerations.

### Late Arrival

If you arrive late the Hub will allow you to sit the examination as normal. Depending on how late you are we may need to submit a report to the awarding body who may then decide not to count the paper.

## Attendance

You must attend all exams that are allocated to you on your individual candidate timetable. Misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation for your absence.

If you fail to attend an exam we will send you a bill for the cost of the exam. If you miss an exam due to illness, you must telephone the hub as soon as possible on the morning of the exam, and a medical certificate/letter **MUST** be given/sent in within 3 working days of the exam that you missed. If you fail to provide the hub with a medical note you will be charged the entry fee for the exam you missed.

When examinations are missed awarding bodies may ask the hub for your mock grade to help assign you a grade.

If you experience a condition which may affect your ability to do the exam, for example you break your arm, you must inform the hub as soon as possible. Alternative arrangements will be made, in this example if it was your writing arm, a scribe or laptop could be provided and special considerations applied for. You must contact the hub to make arrangements, **DO NOT** assume that you won't be doing the exam.

If after an exam you think you have good reason for applying for special considerations you must see the exams officer as soon as possible within 4 days of the exam. Late applications will not be accepted.

## Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency evacuation, such as the fire alarm, the following will happen:

1. You will be asked to stop writing and to close your exam paper
2. A record of the time will be recorded by the invigilator
3. The invigilators/Exam Officer will advise you on what will be happening
4. You must remain under exam conditions at all times
5. If an evacuation of the room is necessary then you must leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room
6. You will be taken to the exam evacuation point where you must remain in seat order and under exam conditions
7. When instructed you will return to the exam room in silence
8. The time of return will be noted, you will be allowed a few minutes to compose yourself and then you will be allowed the full working time for the exam

### IMPORTANT

During the whole evacuation you **MUST** remain under exam conditions, i.e. silent and must not communicate with any other candidate.

The invigilators will make a record of anyone committing malpractice and these reports will be sent off to the exam boards.

## Malpractice

### What is malpractice?

Examination malpractice is any form of deliberate cheating on examinations which provides one or more candidates with an unfair advantage or disadvantage.

Some examples below:

- Any action which can be seen as attempting to communicate with another candidate during the exam.
- Possession of any unauthorised materials/devices, even if you do not intend to use them.
- Writing inappropriate or offensive material on an exam paper is malpractice.
- Trying to distract another candidates.

The hub has an obligation to report any suspected malpractice.

### Alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice

The invigilators have to report any actual or suspected incidents of malpractice to the exams officer or a Director of Pendynas immediately. Following this a report is generated and sent to the awarding body.

If you are suspected of malpractice you will be informed in writing which will include a copy of the form which the hub has submitted. The awarding body will communicate only with the hub. We will pass on all information and the final decision once we are informed.

### Consequences

Malpractice penalties include:

- a warning;
- loss of marks for a section, component or unit;
- disqualification from a unit, all units or whole qualifications;
- a ban from sitting exams for a set period of time.

Pendynas has no control over the penalty given. These are issued by the awarding body.

In the Summer 2018 examination series, 2,735 penalties were issued to students.

- 885 were given a warning
- 1,415 received a loss of marks for a section, component or unit
- 435 received a disqualification from a unit, all units or whole qualification

## **Results /Certificates**

On receiving your results the hub manager will provide you will a print out of your achievements.

Your result certificates are your official qualification acknowledgments. Once we have received all of the certificates within the hub you will receive a letter informing you how you can collect them. The hub is only required to keep the certificates for 12 months. Any unclaimed certificates will be disposed of.

## **Exam Techniques**

- If you feel you've forgotten everything, it may be just nerves. Take a few deep breaths to help you stay calm.
- Read the instructions; make sure you know how many questions to answer.
- Take your time, read all the questions carefully until you understand exactly what is needed.
- Look for the command words. Identify key words before you answer the question.
- Remember to cross out any draft work you don't want marked.
- Write neatly.
- Answer the questions given on the paper, not the questions you were expecting.
- Use the allocated marks to guide how much time you spend on each answer.
- If you can't answer a question, move on to the next question and come back later.
- Answer the questions that you can do first, not always from the beginning.
- Leave space between answers so if you want to expand on any later, you can add to them neatly.
- Allow time to check back over your work.
- Remember, writing your paper is your opportunity to apply all your hard work and show what you can do.