Joint Council for Qualifications CIC

# Information for candidates

## Written examinations

Effective from 1 September 2026

Produced on behalf of:

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## This document has been written to help you. Read it carefully and follow the instructions.

If there is anything you do not understand, ask your teacher. You should also check with your teacher which calculator you may use in your exams.

## 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 any unauthorised material into the exam room, including:

(a) notes;

(b) earphones or earbuds (e.g. AirPods), MP3/4 players or similar devices, smart devices, smart glasses, tablets (e.g. iPads or iPods);

(c) a mobile phone;

(d) a watch (e.g. analogue, digital, smartwatch);

Any pencil cases taken into the exam room **must** be see-through.

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

5 **Do not** use correcting pens, fluid or tape, erasable pens, highlighters or gel pens in your answers.

6 **Do not** talk to or try to communicate with or disturb other candidates once you have entered the exam room.

7 You **must not** write inappropriate, obscene or offensive material.

8 If you leave the exam room unaccompanied by an invigilator before the exam has finished, you **will not** be allowed to return.

9 **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 your 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 permitted equipment needed for the exam.

5 You **must** write clearly and in black ink. Coloured pencils or inks may be used only for diagrams, maps, charts, etc, unless the instructions printed on the front of the question paper state otherwise.

## C. Calculators, dictionaries and computer spellcheckers

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 its memory and make sure it is in exam mode;

(c) remove any parts such as cases, lids or covers which have printed instructions or formulae;

(d) **do not** bring any operating instructions or prepared programs into the exam room.

3 **Do not** use a dictionary or computer spellchecker 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;

(c) you think you have not been given the expected access arrangement(s).

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 place any additional answer sheets inside your answer booklet. (For CCEA examinations place any additional sheets behind your answer booklet.)

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 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 answer booklet.

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.

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