



**St Mark's Catholic School
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**EXAMINATIONS HANDBOOK
2025-2026**

To be read by Year 10, 11, 12 & 13 Students

Centre Number: 13156

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This Handbook has been produced for all pupils in years 10, 11, 12 and 13 who will be sitting public exams in Summer 2025 and for other students in Years 10 and 12 who are currently studying A Level & GCSE courses. Whilst this information refers to public exams, it is also relevant for internal school examinations as they are run under the same conditions. We would ask that all candidates and their parents/carers read it carefully and ensure they are aware of the examination regulations and procedures. If you have any queries, please contact the Examinations Office – contact details are printed on the cover.

The awarding bodies and examination boards, set down very strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations and, as an examination centre, St. Mark's is required to adhere to them.

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Before the examination period starts:

- Read your individual timetable carefully – check the dates and times of all your exams and ensure that *you know your exam candidate number* (as shown on your individual public exam timetable). If you have lost your timetable please go to the Exams Office immediately to ask for another copy.
- If you have any concerns – e.g. not entered for exams you were expecting to take; entered for exams you were not expecting or you think you have been entered for the wrong GCSE tier, please see Mrs O'Neill immediately.
- If we have identified a clash of exams there will be a clash form attached to your individual final timetable. If you think the times of two (or three) of your exams clash, please check the exam timetable – taking two modules in the same subject in the same session does not count as a clash. For any queries regarding a possible exam clash, especially if you are due to take GCE exams at Gunnersbury or Gumley, please see Mrs O'Neill straight away. The recommended maximum hours of exams that candidates should sit in any one day is 6 hours for GCE and 5 ½ hours for GCSE.
- Make sure that the school has a correct and up-to-date record of telephone numbers for your home, mobile and parents'/guardians' day time contact.
- **It is very important that you carefully check your public exam timetable to make sure that all personal details on your timetable are correct as these are the ones which will be printed on any certificates.**
- If you need to check the date, time or venue of an exam, a copy of the timetable will be posted on the school website and will be displayed on the notice board outside the Exams Office (Room 59).

On the day of an examination

- Arrive at school in good time and be outside the exam room at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam. Year 11 must be in school uniform; Year 13 should be in their usual formal business wear. Morning exams will start at 9.00 a.m. and afternoon exams at 1.30 p.m. Go to the toilet before the exam as there will be no toilet breaks during exams!
- Make sure that you have everything that you need for the exam – black pens (at least two), pencils, pencil sharpener, eraser, maths equipment, calculator etc. You will not be allowed to borrow anything from other candidates once you have entered the exam room. Tippex and correcting pens are not allowed in any circumstances. Highlighters and gel pens can be use on the question paper only. They cannot be used in your answers.
- You can only take clear/transparent pencil cases into the exam room – any candidate who has a non-transparent pencil case will have to empty the contents onto the desk and collect the case at the end of the exam. You cannot borrow any equipment from another candidate.
- Mobile phones, iPods, ear buds, ear pods, MP3/MP4 players, smart glasses or any other smart devices, personal stereos, **all watches**, or any product with an electronic communication/storage device or digital facility must not be taken into the exam room. Examination board regulations require that a candidate bringing any of the above into an exam room will be reported to the awarding board (**even if the equipment is switched off** and you do not intend to use it). The penalty will range from loss of marks to complete disqualification.
- If you realise that you have any of the above with you, you must ensure it is turned off and handed into an invigilator immediately.
- **All types of watches are now no longer allowed in the examination room.**
- You are allowed to bring a screw-top plastic, see-through bottle of water into the exam room – no other drinks are allowed. (If you need to keep a particular drink or medication with you for medical reasons, please speak to the Exams Officer prior to the exam). All labels must be removed from the bottles before you enter the exam room.
- If you have a programmable calculator, you may use it, but all programmes and/or information stored in its memory must be cleared before you enter the exam room. It should be placed into exam mode. **THE LID OF THE CALCULATOR MUST NOT BE BROUGHT INTO THE EXAM ROOM.**

- You must ensure that your pockets are **completely empty** and you do not have any notes, books, revision papers etc. on your person - if you do find any of these make sure they are handed in to the invigilator before you sit at your desk.
- If you are allowed to bring set texts, books or plays into the exam you must check to ensure that no notes or papers have been accidentally left inside them. If you find anything please hand it in immediately.
- Bags, coats, books etc. should not be brought into the exam room – if you have a locker please ensure you use it to store such items. Any items brought into an exam room which are not required for the exam will have to be stored where directed. Possession of unauthorised material is an infringement of the regulations even if you do not intend to use it and will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification.
- Once you enter the room examination regulations apply and silence is required. Sit at the desk labelled with your name and candidate number. Read the instructions on the front of both your question and answer papers thoroughly, ensure that you understand them, and **listen carefully to any announcements made by the invigilator.**
- **DO NOT WRITE ANYTHING ON YOUR PAPER UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO BY THE INVIGILATOR.**
- If you need to talk to an invigilator at any time or need extra paper, please raise your hand and someone will attend to you.
- Work quietly at all times so that you do not distract others in the room.
- Do not draw graffiti or write comments on examination papers – if you do, you risk the examination board refusing to accept the paper.
- Remember to write clearly so that the examiner can read your work and award you the marks you deserve.
- Any candidate who defaces or writes on an exam table will have to stay after the exam to clean it. If the graffiti cannot be removed the candidate will have to pay the cost of having the exam table professionally cleaned.
- If a fire alarm sounds during an examination, the invigilators will tell you what to do. If you have to evacuate the examination room, you will have to do so in silence and in the order the invigilators direct. Close your answer paper and leave everything on your desk. You will be escorted to a designated assembly point, and you must not communicate with any other candidate during the time you are away from the examination room. On your return you will be allowed extra time to make up for the interruption and a report will be sent to the examination board detailing the incident.

Absence /Late arrival

Please telephone the main School Switchboard (020 8577 3600) and leave an urgent message and contact phone number for the Exams Officer if: -`

You are unable to be present at an exam through illness

You are absent due to a genuine emergency

You have been delayed getting to school for the start of an exam

Please ensure you telephone by 8.30 am for morning exams and 1.00 pm for afternoon exams.

Do not leave messages for teachers or departments or use the school absence phone line.

For the examination board to accept absence due to illness you must get a letter from the GP or hospital outlining the reasons and give this to Mrs O'Neill within five days. **You will be asked to pay the exam entry fee if there is no valid reason for missing an exam.**

Any candidate who arrives at school after the start time of any exam must report to Reception and wait to be escorted to the appropriate exam room.

Please note that the examination boards do not accept misreading the timetable as a satisfactory explanation of absence/late arrival.

In the case of delayed arrival at school please note that any candidate who arrives more than 30 minutes after the published starting time of an exam will be allowed to sit the exam, but must be aware that the Exam Boards may not be prepared to accept the work and reserve the right not to accept the script. Any candidate who arrives more than one hour after the published start time for the exam will not normally be allowed to take it.

At the end of an examination

- You must stop writing immediately when instructed to do so by the invigilator even if you are half way through a sentence. Failure to do so will be reported to the examination board and you risk losing marks.
- Ensure you have completed and signed the front of the answer paper using **your legal name**. Remember to cross out any rough work. If you have used extra sheets, please write how many sheets you have used in the box on the front of the answer paper, and ensure the extra sheets are attached *inside* the back cover of the answer paper with a treasury tag. Ensure you have indicated clearly the number of the questions you have answered.
- Remember you are still under examination conditions when the exam has finished, you must stay in your seat until given permission to leave by the invigilators. You must remain silent whilst you are in the examination room.
- Remember that exams may be continuing after yours has finished, possibly in the same room. Please respect other candidates by keeping silent until well away from the building.

JCQ Information for candidates' documents

All candidates in exam years **must** read the relevant JCQ 'information for candidates' documents produced by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) on behalf of the examining bodies.

Summer 2025 exam season students have been issued with individual booklets with all these documents and can also be found on the school website under '**SCHOOL INFORMATION/EXAMINATIONS/Examinations 2025/2026 – JCQ Information for Candidates**'

The Information for Candidates documents are as follows:

Written Examinations

Non-examination assessments

Coursework assessments

- Some GCSE and GCE Subjects include coursework or controlled non-exam assessments. The Notice and Information for completing these give very clear guidelines of what is expected of candidates who have to produce these assessments. It is very important that all candidates and their parents/carers read this and ensure that any work submitted is the candidate's own work. Plagiarism is a serious offence and there are measures in place to detect when work has been copied. Any candidate found to have submitted work that is not their own will incur the penalties listed on page two of the Notice.

Candidates must ensure that their coursework/assessment has their name, Centre Number (13156) and their exam candidate number on every page.

Candidates will have the opportunity to request a review of their internally assessed marks before they are submitted to the exam boards.

Social Media Guidelines

Infringement of examination regulations – Malpractice Penalties Table

JCQ Privacy Notice

Use of AI in assessments/coursework

Examination season dates

The Summer 2026 GCSE/A Level season runs throughout May and June. the written exam season starts on Thursday 7th May and should finish on Friday 19th 2026.

Wednesday 24th June is a JCQ allocated 'Exam Contingency Day'. All A Level and GCSE students must be available on this day regardless of when their last exam is scheduled.

Results - Summer 2025

- A Level provisional results should be available from the school on Thursday August 13th. Results should be available for collection from 8.30am – 10.00am.
- Year 11 GCSE provisional results should be available from the school on Thursday August 20th from 9am – 10.30am.
- Results must be collected in person. All uncollected results will be posted to the home address registered with the school. If a student wants them sent to another address, they must give Mrs O'Neill an A4 envelope with a large letter stamp, their name and the new address before the end of the summer term.

Results will not be given out over the telephone or by email

Certificates

Year 11 and Year 13 candidates will be invited to attend Prizegiving evening, where they will be presented with their GCSE and GCE Certificates. Prizegiving is usually held in December. Included with the invitation will be a letter explaining how candidates who are unable to attend Prizegiving can arrange to receive their certificates. **After a year all uncollected certificates have to be destroyed.** To replace uncollected and lost certificates costs an average of £50 per examination board per subject level.

If you have any questions, or are unsure about any details in this booklet, please contact Mrs O'Neill in the Exams Office.