

Candidate briefing – Summer 2025 exam series

Guidance notes

The senior leader responsible for examinations/assessments may use this PowerPoint to reinforce what candidates must and must not do when sitting written examinations, as required by JCQ's *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, section 5.8.

Additional information will need to be included to cover:

- On-screen tests
- Non-examination assessments/coursework

Each slide should be reviewed to amend/add text to reflect practice within your centre.

The images included in the slide set are free to use, however, confirmation of use should be acquired for any other images used when devising a centre-specific presentation.

Below is information and guidance relating to each slide, including advice and suggestions relating to additional text which should be included to reflect how examinations are conducted within your centre.

Slide 1

You have the option to delete the text/text box and add your centre logo.

Slide 2

This is an introductory slide.

Add any other areas, if any, which you will be covering during this briefing.

Slide 3

Candidates should be asked to check their examination entries.

Candidates should be asked to check their entry information.

It is good practice to issue a document such as a *Statement of Entry*, which details a candidate's personal details and exam entries which should be checked for accuracy.

Candidate must be familiar with their *Exam Timetable* so they are aware of the dates and times of all their exams/assessments. When disseminating this information to

candidates, they should also be issued with information relating to seating arrangements, exam rooms, etc.

Candidates should be informed of how any errors and/or clashes (within the same exam session or over two exam sessions) in their timetable will be managed (see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, section 7).

Slide 4

Candidates should be made aware of the contingency sessions/days and why they are part of the exam timetable (the designation of ‘contingency sessions’ within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies’ standard contingency planning for examinations)

Ensure that candidates are aware of the importance of making themselves available for these sessions/dates regardless of the dates of their examinations (see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, section 15).

Please note that as these contingency arrangements apply to exams taken under JCQ regulations, therefore, candidates may be taking non-JCQ regulated exams on the afternoon of 11 June 2025. It is also possible that an exam clash could be moved to the contingency afternoon or contingency day.

Slide 5

Candidates should be made aware of the contents of the social media poster which states that candidates must not:

- Buy/ask for/share exam content
- Pass on rumours of what is in the exam(s)
- Share their work
- Work with others so that their coursework is not their own independent work

If they do any of the above, they may:

- Receive a written warning
- Lose marks
- Be disqualified from a part of or all of their qualifications
- Be banned from taking assessments for a number of years

(see *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, section 5.8)

Slide 6

Explain:

- any relevant exam room information relevant to your centre
- your centre's start times (perhaps explain JCQ awarding body/other awarding body published starting times if relevant here)
- your centre's policy for how long candidates must remain in exam rooms (if different to the JCQ awarding body/other awarding body minimum requirement) etc.
- how candidates will be seated (and/or how the room is set out)
- how candidates will be able to find their desk (and what to do if they cannot find their desk) etc.
- your centre's arrangements for storing bags, coats, unauthorised items including switched off mobile phones, watches, etc.

Slide 7

The information contained within this slide is for guidance only. It should be replaced with your centre policy/procedure for candidates who arrive late for their examination (see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, section 21).

Slide 8

The information contained within this slide is for guidance only. It should be replaced with your centre policy/procedure for candidates who may be feeling unwell on the day of their examination which may include:

- What you would expect the candidate or parent/carer to do if the candidate is unwell and unable to attend the exam
- What to do if a candidate is unwell but manages to attend the exam
- What to do if the candidate feels unwell during the exam
- Provide any relevant JCQ information regarding absence from exams for illness or other acceptable reason
- Provide any relevant information regarding application for special consideration, etc. (and the appropriate evidence that may need to be provided to support a request for special consideration)

Slide 9

Candidates should be aware of:

- how they are involved in any decisions/discussion regarding appropriate arrangements
- how they will be informed of the approved arrangements that are in place for them and any instances when these arrangements may not apply
- where their exams will take place, etc.

Slides 10, 11 & 12

Candidates must be informed that centres are mandated to distribute the following JCQ Information for candidates documents, if applicable, prior to assessments and/or examinations taking place (*General Regulations for Approved Centres*, section 5.8):

- Coursework
- Non-examination assessments
- On-screen tests
- Privacy notice
- Social media, and
- Written examinations

Slide 10

Explain that this poster is known as the *Unauthorised items poster* and lists the items of potential items of technological /web enabled sources of information which are prohibited in the exam room. These include:

- Mobile phone/smartphone
- Smartwatch
- Analogue watch
- AirPods
- Earphones/Earbuds/
- iPod
- MP3/4 player
- Memory sticks

Slide 11 & 12

Explain the contents of the *Warning to Candidates poster*...and the potential penalties (which are listed on slides 22, 23 and 24).

The poster in slide 11 is the version used in previous exam series. The poster in slide 12 is the redesigned version as per this year's ICE document.

Use the slide which shows the poster used in your centre.

There are seven areas addressed in the poster:

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 exam/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

Slide 13

Candidates must be aware of the definition of formal exam conditions and when they apply (see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, section 19).

Slide 14

Explain to candidates that exams are supervised by a team of invigilators (indicate if invigilators will be external or internal staff that candidates may know).

Confirm the role of your invigilators which includes ensuring that candidates follow strict rules and regulations when conducting exams as directed by JCQ awarding bodies, etc.

Slide 15

This video covers the content of the *JCQ Information for candidates for written examinations* (see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, Appendix 5 or the information document itself on the JCQ website).

This includes information on:

- Regulations – Make sure you understand the rules
- Information – Make sure you attend your exams and bring what you need
- Calculators, dictionaries and computer spell-checkers
- Instructions during the exam
- Advice and assistance
- At the end of the exam

Slide 16

Explain the following to candidates:

- How candidates are invited or escorted into the exam room
- Explain candidates are under formal exam conditions from the moment they enter the exam room until they are given permission to leave by the invigilator
- Candidates must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times in the exam room
- Candidates must not communicate with or disturb other candidates
- What information is displayed in the exam room (centre number, subject title, paper number and the actual starting and finishing times, and date, of each exam)
- Any relevant information relating to the completion of the front of their answer books (first name and surname that matches their entry information, candidate number etc.) and that this must not be completed until instructed to do so by the invigilator - candidates must only do this when the invigilator's announcement instructs them to
- Any relevant information regarding the use of additional answer sheets/answer books, etc.
- Candidates must not open the question paper until instructed to do so by the invigilator when the examination begins

(see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, sections 19)

Slide 17

Detail the JCQ information regarding authorised materials that should be brought by the candidate and the materials and resources which will be provided by your centre.

You will need to add the relevant images (or remove images and insert a bulleted list instead).

(see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, sections 9 and 18)

Slide 18

Detail the JCQ information regarding unauthorised items and what will happen if the regulations are breached.

You may need to add images of any materials which you decide to prohibit from the exam room.

NOTE: The arrow above the glasses is highlighting the HD camera on a pair of Smart glasses.

Slide 19

Ensure that candidates are aware of JCQ awarding body instructions regarding the use of calculators in their exams and your centre procedure for checking that they are compliant with JCQ regulations as set out in section 10 of the *Instructions for conducting examinations* publication.

The slide states that the Maths teacher will explain how a calculator can/cannot be used in an exam. This should be altered if another member of staff will explain how a calculator can/cannot be used.

Slide 20

(If it is your centre policy (discretion) to allow food and drink in the exam room) Explain which water bottles are/are not permitted in the exam room.

JCQ regulations (*Instructions for conducting examinations*, section 18) state:

Food and drink may be allowed in the examination room at the discretion of the head of centre. However, any food or drink brought into the examination room by the candidate or the centre must be free from packaging and all labels removed from drink containers. To enable invigilators to check these items quickly and efficiently:

- food brought into the examination room by the candidate must be free of packaging and in a transparent container;

- drink bottles must be transparent with all labels removed which would include transparent, reusable plastic bottles

Note: Food may be required for medical purposes (e.g to maintain blood sugar levels, cough sweets etc)

Slide 21

Detail your centre's emergency evacuation policy/procedure and/or any specific instructions which candidates need to be aware of.

(see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, section 25)

Slide 22

Ensure that candidates are aware of the definition of malpractice and the possible consequences if candidates engage in malpractice.

Explain each of the following (using the examples as given on this slide)

- Exchanging, obtaining, receiving, or passing on information which could be examination related (or the attempt to)
- Introducing unauthorised material into the exam room
- Undermining the integrity of examinations/assessments
- Offences relating to the content of candidates' work
- Breaches of examination conditions

(see *Instructions for conducting examinations*, section 24)

Slides 23, 24 & 25

Take candidates through the offences and possible penalties on each of the slides.

Explain that committing an offence on a repeated basis will result in the application of an increasingly severe sanction (e.g. from a warning, to loss of marks on one paper, to a loss of marks on all papers within a particular subject).

(see *Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures*, Appendix 6 - Indicative sanctions against candidates)

Slide 26

Please review the text on this slide and amend/add as required.

You will need to confirm your centre policy for the compensation of time lost for toilet breaks - is it given back or not, or only given to candidates with a known medical or other issue?

For information, JCQ regulations state that it is a centre decision whether additional time is awarded to compensate for a temporary absence from the exam room. However, it should be noted that JCQ regulations (Instructions for conducting examinations, section 23.4) state:

- Candidates can only leave the examination room where necessary or where supervised rest breaks have been granted by the SENCo
- The centre must ensure that candidates who leave the room do not have access to any unauthorised materials

Senior leaders will need to decide whether:

- Candidates with an approved medical reason will be permitted to visit the toilet during the exam? If so, will these candidates be given time to compensate for the time lost during their absence from the exam?
- Candidates without a medical reason will be permitted to visit the toilet during the exam? If so, will these candidates be given time to compensate for the time lost during their absence from the exam?

As detailed as a bullet on the slide, you will need to confirm if the following is part of your centre policy:

- If you finish before the end of the exam and you want to leave early, you will not be allowed to leave until the actual finishing time

Slide 27

Please review the text on this slide and amend/add as required.

Confirm your centre policy for candidates awarded extra time for their exams who request to leave before the end of their extra time.

If candidates are permitted to leave before the end of their extra time, detail the centre process - this may include candidates having to sign documentation to confirm that it is their decision to leave before the end of their allocated extra time.

Slide 28

Add your centre's process for disseminating exam results to candidates, including the following information:

- Date(s) (hard copy/electronic) provisional statements of results will be issued/distributed (explain 'provisional')
- What time to attend the centre (for results issued in the summer)
- The availability of senior members of centre staff immediately after the publication of results to provide academic and pastoral advice and 'next steps' if candidates are dissatisfied with their grade(s)
- How to arrange for results to be collected on a candidate's behalf if unable to attend the centre
- What happens to uncollected results, etc.

(see *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, section 5.12 and *Post-Results Services* information)

Slide 29

This slide covers the Review of Results services which will be available to candidates after the publication of their results. You may need to include information relating to Access to Scripts.

Slide 30

You will need to include the following information on this slide:

- The process for post-results services requests (e.g these must be made through the centre etc.) and details of your centre's written procedures for dealing with candidates' requests for access to scripts, clerical re-checks, reviews of marking, reviews of moderation and appeals to the awarding bodies
- How and when candidates are informed about the deadlines, fees and charges for these services
- How and when informed consent/permission is collected, etc.

(see *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, section 5.13 and *Post-Results Services* information)

Slide 31

Include the relevant information regarding:

- When certificates are available/distributed
- How certificates are issued
- How to arrange for certificates to be collected on a candidate's behalf if unable to attend the centre
- What happens to unclaimed certificates, etc.

(see *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, section 5.14)