

Summer 2024 Examinations Newsletter

Balcarras is responsible for implementing and facilitating a very precise set of requirements in all public Exams and are governed by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) in this process. The Exams Officer, Assistant Exams Officer and a team of invigilators will enforce and maintain these rules and regulations for the Summer exams.

Examination Dates

A Levels and GCSE's commence on Thursday 9th May and finish on Wednesday 26th June. 26th June is a contingency day, any day up to and including this day may be used to rearrange exams that have had to be cancelled because of a national or local disruption to exams and as a result, Students must make themselves available.

Study Leave

Study Leave for Year 11 students will commence **7th May**. The Library will be made available for revision purposes for a maximum of 30 students, should you wish to use the Library you will be required to sign up. please see your Head of House.

Examination Timetables

All students will be given a copy of their individual examination timetable. This will also be emailed to the student together with a copy of the JCQ "Instructions for Candidates".

All details about exams, including exam schedules, latest newsletters, Instructions for Candidates can be found on the school website:

www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

- Learning at Balcarras
- Examinations

Clashes

Students with examination clashes will receive a sheet detailing the procedure on the day of a clash, along with the revised timings of one or more exams. Students with an exam clash are invited to bring snacks, drinks, and revision – this is very important to note as the student will be supervised in isolation between examinations and cannot be escorted to the canteen to purchase food. If any student is concerned or has any questions regards examination clashes please come and see a member of the exams team.

Attendance

Punctuality is **very important**. Please read your timetable very carefully as start times may vary.

However, as a rule:

- **Morning Exams will Commence at 9am**
- **Afternoon Exams will commence at 1.30pm**

Students **must** arrive **20 minutes before** the scheduled start time – this is to ensure all students can be seated, in a calm and orderly fashion, notices read, and examinations started promptly. A candidate will be considered very late if arriving one hour after the start time of the exam, whereupon we are duty bound to inform the awarding body of whom may not accept the script for marking.

Rooming

All examination venues will be indicated on the students' individual timetables. Replacement timetables can be obtained for the exam's office located in the 6th form block. Candidates are requested to respect the barriers and the silence signs on their way to and from their exams.

What do I wear?

The uniform rules for examinations are the same as for normal school lessons. Full school uniform must be worn, smart school shoes, correct skirts and trousers, no hoodies or non- school jumpers, makeup and jewellery are not permitted.

What do I bring?

The JCQ regulations stipulate that it is the student's responsibility to ensure they have the correct equipment/tools they will require during the exam.

- **Black pens** only to write with (no gel pens)
- Pencil, eraser, ruler etc
- Maths equipment
- Calculator (must be cleared of memory in advance. Calculator lids/cases are not permitted)
- Students may bring these items in a **clear pencil case/bag**.

Please note that hi-lighter pens maybe used on the question paper but NOT on the students answers. Correction fluid/tape are also not allowed.

Students may bring a drink, but it must be **clear** liquid in a **clear bottle** - the invigilators must be able to "see through" it. No labels or writing on the bottles.

We would strongly suggest WATER as the best possible option as research has shown, consuming water may have a physiological effect on thinking functions and cognitive

processes that lead to improved exam performance. According to Dr Pawson one of the other benefits of drinking water during an exam, is that it may also alleviate anxiety.

You must not write anything until invited to do so.

ALL STUDENTS MUST USE THEIR LEGAL NAME IN EXAMINATIONS – To avoid any delays in marking all answer booklets being handed in to be marked MUST contain the students' legal name. Their legal name will also appear on the students' certificates.

Try to avoid bringing any personal possessions. Please bring to school only what you require to sit your exam. If you need to bring other items into school, please store them in your locker or tidily under the stairs in the foyer between Maths and Science. NB: The school cannot be held responsible for the safety of student's possessions.

Mobile Phones/Watches & Any Other Electrical Devices (iPods/mp3/4 players/earphones)/Notes

These items are strictly prohibited from the examination room. If possible, it is advisable to **leave these items at home – THEY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED INTO THE EXAMINATION ROOM.** If bringing them in is unavoidable you will be asked to hand them into an invigilator whereupon they may be collected outside of the exam's office after the exam. Please be advised, exams cannot accept responsibility for these items. Should you be found with any of these items, **WHETHER IT WAS YOUR INTENTION TO USE THEM OR NOT – ALL ALLEGATIONS OF CHEATING/MALPRACTICE WILL BE FULLY INVESTIGATED AND REPORTED TO THE AWARDING BODIES WHICH COULD RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION NOT ONLY FROM THAT EXAM BUT ALSO SUBSEQUENT EXAMS.** Don't throw away years of hard work on the whim and/or assumption of "I won't get caught...."

Illness

If you are unwell on the day of an exam the best advice is to **COME IN AND ATTEMPT THE EXAM.** Special consideration can be applied for, and it is better therefore to sit the exam than not at-all as there will be no other opportunity to do so. If you really are not well enough it is **ESSENTIAL** you speak to a member of staff, ideally in the exams office as early as is possible. **DO NOT LEAVE AN ANSWERPHONE MESSAGE** as this may not be accessed until after the exam has started.

Conduct

The high levels of conduct expected at Balcarras extends to behaviour during the examination period. Appropriate conduct during the exams is of utmost importance for the good of all students, any student found talking, napping, creating a disturbance, or exhibiting unruly behaviour will be asked to leave the examination room and be reported to the awarding body and senior management.

Students will be under exam conditions from the moment you enter the exam room until the moment you leave. Students are asked to respect the exam barriers and to move quickly and quietly away when they leave the exam room – others may still be working!

These are YOUR EXAMS, the Exams team/Invigilators are here to ensure your examinations run as smoothly as possible and we are here to assist you in whatever way we can. Once you are in the examination room, PLEASE raise your hand and speak to an invigilator if you are unsure about anything or something is troubling you – we can remedy and action such occurrences before the exam but is very little that can be done at the end of an exam.

May we remind students to eat something beforehand **Research shows that pupils and students who eat breakfast perform better in exams.** For the best breakfast, include slow-release carbohydrates, such as whole rolled porridge oats, whole grain bread or low-sugar muesli, as they provide slow-release energy.

In the words of George Elliot “**no man can be wise on an empty stomach**”

Results

Results will be available from the 6th form common room on the following dates:

- Thursday 15th August 2024 at 9am for Year 13 Students
- Thursday 15th August 2024 at 11am for Year 12 Students
- Thursday 22nd August 2024 at 9am for Year 11 Students

Results will NOT be given out to a 3rd party unless signed authorisation from the student has been provided. This authorisation must name the person allowed to collect the results. Any such provision needs to be arranged with the Exams Office before the end of the summer term.

RESULTS WILL NOT BE GIVEN OUT OVER THE PHONE.

If the only option available is to email the results to the candidate this will be done on the following day.

Our aim is to hand out results as speedily as possible. We would therefore ask you to refrain from telephone enquiries except in exceptional circumstances.

Staff will be available on results days to offer advice and guidance on the best course of action and of course to offer their congratulations! It is important that students come into school on results day, particularly if this is their final year of study.

Arrangements for receipt of exam Certificates

GCSE and A-Level certificates will be available for collection early December from the main reception.

We wish all students taking exams the **very best of luck**.

Heather Harris

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