



Student and Parent Examinations Handbook

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Introduction

It is the aim of St. Martin's School (SMS) to make the examination experience as stress-free and successful as possible for all candidates.

Candidates should read this booklet carefully to ensure that they are aware of the examination regulations and the procedures to follow. It would be beneficial for candidates to keep this booklet, as it provides useful information from entry through to the issue of results and post-results services.

Candidates can also find a copy of this booklet on the SMS website [here](#).

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has strict rules and regulations that all schools must adhere to and SMS practice these from Year 7.

If candidates have any questions in relation to this booklet or need help/advice at any time before, during or after the examinations, they should not hesitate to contact the Examinations Office:

Senior Examinations Officer – **Ms. Carly Adams** (cadams@st-martins.essex.sch.uk)

Deputy Examinations Officer – **Mrs. Clare Bates** (cbates@st-martins.essex.sch.uk)

The Examinations Office telephone number is: **01277 238350 or 01277 238321**

Remember – we are here to help.

GOOD LUCK!

1. Before the Examinations

Statements of Entry

All candidates are asked to check their examination entries via Insight. Candidates should check that an entry has been made for each subject and tier (Higher or Foundation). If there are any discrepancies, candidates should refer to the Examinations Office (not their teacher).

Candidates must check all details on the Statement of Entry very carefully. They should check all personal details (date of birth, spelling of names and legal name etc.). These details appear on certificates. The Examination Boards charge an amendment fee once the certificates are issued. Legal names show on the certificates, not preferred names.

To view a Statement of Entry on Insight, candidates should open the 'Assessments' tab, select 'Exam Entries'. All entries appear in this section, including those for Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs). Students will also receive a paper copy during form time early February.

Examination Boards

The School uses the following Examination Boards: AQA, Pearson, Eduqas and OCR.

Candidate Name

Candidates are entered under the name format of first name, one middle initial and (Legal) surname, e.g. Adam J Smith. The format cannot be altered.

Candidate Number

Each candidate has a four-digit candidate number and this number is unique within the Centre. Candidate numbers need to be written on the examination paper, and identify the candidate to each Examination Board. The number appears next to the candidate's name on seating plans, desk slips and registers. If a candidate is unsure of their candidate number, they can check the notice board in the North Foyer.

Unique Candidate Identifier (UCI)

In addition to a Candidate Number, each candidate must have a UCI, comprising 12 numbers and one letter, which is shown on the top of the Statement of Entry. This number usually begins with the Centre Number (16126), unless the candidate has transferred from another school that had already issued a UCI. A UCI is used for administration purposes.

Examination Timetables

Timetables for 2023/2024 are available on the SMS website. Candidates can view their individual timetable by logging into Insight. The individual timetable details all examinations that a candidate has been entered for, as well as the date, time and duration. **Candidates should check the timetable carefully.** This timetable also details which room and seat number has been allocated. Candidates are advised to take a photo of their timetable.

If a candidate thinks that there may be an error on their timetable, they should refer to the Examinations Office immediately.

Contingency Day

The following dates have been set by the JCQ as contingency days:

- Thursday 6 June 2024 (afternoon session);
- Thursday 13 June 2024 (afternoon session);
- Wednesday 26 June (all day).

Wednesday 26 June is also the last date that any examination can take place should it have to be moved from its original date or time.

The JCQ states: “The designation of a ‘contingency day’ within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies’ contingency planning for examinations”.

Candidates are advised to stay available up to and including Wednesday 26 June 2024 should an Awarding Body need to invoke its contingency plan.

Clashes

Some candidates may have a clash of examinations, where two subjects are timetabled at the same time. SMS makes special provisions for these candidates. Clashes are resolved and shown on individual timetables. If a candidate thinks that there is a clash on their timetable that has not been resolved, they should see the Examinations Office immediately.

Examinations cannot be moved to another day, regardless of the reason.

If a clash of examinations totals three hours or less, a break of no longer than 15 minutes is given within the examination room. Candidates are not permitted to revise during this time.

If a clash of examinations totals more than three hours, one of the examinations can be moved to an earlier or later session on the same day. Candidates can revise in their supervised break.

Overnight Supervision

Overnight supervision arrangements must only be applied in rare and exceptional circumstances, and as a last resort.

If the total duration of three or more examinations to be taken in one day is **more than five hours 30 minutes** for GCSE examinations or **more than six hours** for GCE examinations (AS, A2, A-level), overnight supervision can be applied for. The candidate is offered the opportunity to sit all of the examinations on the scheduled day. A request for Special Consideration to the relevant Awarding Body for the final paper, which has been taken, is then submitted.

Where a candidate takes an examination, scheduled for the afternoon session, the following morning, the Centre appoints a member of Centre staff or an invigilator to supervise the candidate while on the premises. The candidate **must** be under Centre supervision **from 30 minutes after the Awarding Body’s published starting time for the delayed examination**. SMS ensures that there is no contact with other candidates.

Contact Numbers

Candidates must check that SMS has, at least, one up-to-date contact number for the candidate. It is useful to have a mobile telephone number for the candidate in addition to that of the parents/carers.

2. During the Examinations

JCQ Regulations

The JCQ Information for Candidates can be accessed via the SMS website: <https://www.st-martins.essex.sch.uk/curriculum/exams/>.

Candidates **must** read all of the documents thoroughly.

Identifying Candidates

Lower School candidates are required to wear full school uniform for examinations. A senior member of staff is present at every examination to identify candidates.

Sixth Form candidates are required to wear their photo identification. If the ID has been forgotten or lost, candidates need to see the Sixth Form Administrator for a temporary replacement.

Candidates are not permitted entry to an examination without photo identification.

External candidates must show photo identification before entry to the examination room.

Attendance

Candidates are responsible for checking the timetable and arriving at school on the correct day and time, appropriately dressed and equipped.

All candidates should arrive 20 minutes prior to the start time of their examination

Examinations may start slightly earlier or slightly later than the published time.

Full SMS uniform must be worn by all candidates attending School for GCSE examinations.

Correct Sixth Form dress code must be adhered to.

If examinations are in the winter series, candidates are advised to dress accordingly. Hoodies, coats, scarves etc. are NOT permitted in the examination room.

All items of equipment: pens, pencils, mathematical instruments, etc., should be visible to the invigilators at all times. They should be stored in a transparent pencil case or clear plastic bag. Pens should be black ballpoint. Correction pens/fluids are not permitted. For mathematics and science examinations, candidates should ensure that their calculators conform to the examination regulations. If in doubt, candidates should check with their teacher. Covers/cases/instructions should be removed from calculators and left in bags.

Examination regulations are very strict in relation to the items that may be taken into the examination room (see FAQs). If a candidate breaks these rules, they may be disqualified.

Mobile telephones and watches must not enter the examination room. If a mobile phone or any other type of electronic communication or storage device is found in a candidate's possession (even if it is turned off), a report is made to the appropriate Examination Board. No exceptions are made.

SMS does offer to store electrical devices whilst an examination is in progress. Candidates are provided with a numbered ticket, which can then be exchanged for the items at the end of the examination. The School provides racks for coats, bags and personal items. Property left is done

so at the owner's risk and SMS does not take any responsibility for theft, loss or damage to these items.

Food is not permitted in the examination rooms, only water in a clear bottle with the label removed is allowed.

Candidates must not write on examination desks. This is regarded as vandalism and candidates are asked to pay for any damage. If a candidate is seen writing on the desks, they are reported to the Examinations Officer. A candidate may not be informed that they have been reported. Invigilators thoroughly check all examination desks for graffiti prior to each examination. Each candidate is pre-allocated a desk, so that vandalism can be identified immediately.

Candidates should not draw graffiti, write offensive comments, or anything apart from answers on the examination paper – the Examination Board may refuse to accept papers.

Candidates should listen carefully to instructions and notices read out by the invigilators – there may be amendments to the examination paper. Candidates should check that they have the correct question paper – check the subject, paper and tier of entry. Read all instructions carefully and number answers clearly.

Once candidates have entered an examination room, they cannot leave until dismissed by an invigilator. Candidates should ensure that they have all equipment needed to take an examination before entering the room.

Candidates are not allowed to leave early. If a candidate has finished the paper, they should use any time remaining to check over answers and ensure that all of the details on the front of the paper have been entered correctly.

At the end of the examination, all work must be handed in – and any rough work crossed out. If a candidate has used more than one answer book, or loose answer sheets, they must ensure that they are arranged in the correct order and placed inside the examination paper/answer booklet.

Invigilators collect examination papers before candidates leave the room. Silence must be maintained during this time. Candidates remain under examination conditions until they have left the examination room. Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper must NOT be taken from the examination room. If this incident does occur, it has to be reported to the Examination Boards as malpractice.

Candidates should remain seated and in silence until told to leave the examination room. When leaving the room, consideration should be made to other candidates, who may still be working in rooms close by.

Alarms

If the fire alarm sounds during an examination, candidates should remain in silence and seated and await instructions from the invigilator. If evacuation is necessary, candidates should leave in silence and remain in the order in which they were seated. They are escorted to a designated assembly point. Everything should remain on the examination desk, including the examination paper. Candidates must not attempt to communicate with anyone during the evacuation. Upon returning to the examination room, candidates should wait for further instructions from the invigilator. Candidates should not start writing until instructed. The full allocated time for the

examination is given, and any time missed during the disturbance is added on at the end. A new finish time is noted on the board. A report is sent to the Awarding Body detailing the incident in application for special consideration.

If the **lockdown alarm** sounds during an examination, candidates should stop working and await further instruction. Candidates SHOULD NOT leave the room. Staff ensure that the windows and doors are closed/locked and screened, where possible, and candidates are under tables and positioned away from possible sightlines from external windows/doors. Lights, smartboards and computer monitors are turned off.

NO ONE SHOULD MOVE ABOUT THE SCHOOL.

Staff are to remain in lockdown positions until informed by key staff, e.g. the Senior Leadership Team. The end of lockdown is signaled by the class change bell ringing ten times.

Candidates should not start writing until instructed. The full allocated time for the examination is given, and any time missed during the disturbance is added on at the end. A new finish time is noted on the board. A report is sent to the Awarding Body detailing the incident in application for Special Consideration.

All SMS students have been made aware of the different alarms.

Invigilators

The School employs external invigilators. Training is provided twice a year to ensure that the JCQ regulations are met.

Candidates are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards all invigilators and follow instructions at all times. Invigilators are in the examination rooms to supervise the examination. They distribute and collect examination papers, advise candidates of the start and finish times of the examination, hand out extra paper, if required, and deal with any problems that occur during the examination, for example, if a candidate is feeling ill. Candidates should note that invigilators cannot discuss the examination paper, read any part of the examination paper or explain the questions. Candidates, who are reported to the Examinations Office by the invigilators for disruptive behaviour, or who behave in an unacceptable manner, are reported to the Head of Year and Head of Key Stage.

Absence

The Examinations Office calls/texts any candidate, who is not present when their examination begins, using the mobile number provided. Failing this, the contact numbers of parents/carers are called. Candidates have 30 minutes from the start time of the examination to guarantee entry.

If a candidate arrives 30 minutes after the start time, they may not be permitted entry to the examination room to attempt the paper. This is at the discretion of the centre. If entry is permitted, a late form is sent to the Examination Board and they will have the final decision as to whether the paper can be accepted for marking.

Candidates should note that misreading the timetable is not accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.

If a candidate experiences difficulty during the examination period, e.g. illness, injury or personal problems, they must inform the Examinations Office at the earliest possible point so that help and advice can be given. Only in 'exceptional circumstances' are candidates allowed special consideration for absence from any part of an examination. It is essential that medical or other appropriate evidence is obtained on the day by the candidate or parent/carer, and given to the Examinations Officer without delay.

Parents/carers and candidates are reminded that SMS requires payment of entry fees should a candidate fail to attend an examination.

Access Arrangements

In line with the JCQ regulations, a privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the Centre cannot be used to award access arrangements.

Access arrangements must be overseen by the SMS Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo).

Access arrangements are not intended to give candidates an unfair advantage over their peers, nor do they exist to 'maximise the potential' of a given candidate.

If a candidate thinks that they require access arrangements, they should contact the SENDCo on 01277 238 359 or SENDCO@st-martins.essex.sch.uk.

Separate Invigilation (Side Room)

Candidates are not permitted to sit in a separate room or request to sit by the door unless there is a specific history of need.

If the request is due to a medical condition, background evidence is required from a qualified professional. A letter from the GP is not sufficient.

For example: Candidates suffering from anxiety close to an examination period with no previous history, are not permitted separate invigilation.

Special Considerations

Special Consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or other indisposition at the time of the assessment, which has, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their normal level of attainment in an assessment.

Candidates are NOT eligible for Special Consideration if preparation for or performance in the examination is affected by long-term illness.

When an application for Special Consideration is accepted by the Examination Boards, an adjustment to the marks or grades of a candidate, who is eligible for consideration is made. The allowance for Special Consideration is from 0% (consideration given, but addition of marks considered inappropriate) to 5% (reserved for exceptional cases). Parents/carers should be aware that any adjustment is likely to be small, and no feedback is provided. Candidates are only eligible for Special Consideration if they have been fully prepared and covered the whole course, but performance in the examination, or in the production of coursework, is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. Examples of such circumstances may be illness, accident or

injury, bereavement or domestic crisis. The Examinations Officer must be informed immediately, so that the necessary paperwork can be completed (within seven days of the last examination session for each subject) and the candidate is required to provide evidence to support such an application. Applications for Special Considerations after the issues of results will not be accepted.

Behaviour

SMS takes behaviour in examinations very seriously. The Examinations Office is required to report every incident to the Examination Boards. Penalties from the Examination Boards can range from a warning to being barred from taking any examinations for a set period of time (disqualification)

PPEs are taken in line with JCQ regulations.

3. After the Examinations

Notification of Results

Results are available for collection on:

GCE/BTEC Level 3 – Thursday 15 August 2024

08.00 – 09.00

GCSE/BTEC Tech Award – Thursday 22 August 2024

08.00 – 09.00

If a candidate requires someone to collect results on their behalf (including family members), they must give written authorisation to the Examinations Office **before results day**.

Results that are not collected remain in the Examinations Office until collected.

If a candidate would like their results posted, they must provide the Examinations Office with a stamped addressed envelope **before results day**.

Results are not given out by telephone or email under any circumstances.

Pass grades at GCSE are from 9 – 1. A pass grade at GCE are A* - E. BTECs are graded Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*.

Certificates

A presentation evening takes place for Year 11 leavers in November 2024. Invitations to candidates and their parents/carers are sent out with full details in September.

Year 13 leavers are asked to collect their certificates during specified opening times. If the certificates are to be collected by someone other than the candidate, written authorisation must be sent to the Examinations Office prior to collection. This must be sent from the candidate.

SMS is only required to keep certificates for a one-year period. If a candidate does not collect their certificates within this time, they are destroyed in line with JCQ regulations. Certificates can only be replaced by direct application to the appropriate Examination Board, and there is a fee of approximately £50 per certificate. Candidates should note that most Examination Boards do not issue replacement certificates, and instead issue a certified statement of results.

Retention of Work

Centres are required to retain candidates' marked coursework, under secure conditions, whether it formed part of the moderation sample or not, until every possibility of a review of moderation has been exhausted. If no request for collection of work has been submitted to the relevant department by 1 October 2024, the disposal of all coursework commences.

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) Appeals Procedure

SMS is committed to ensuring that, whenever staff assess students' work for external qualifications, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments should be conducted by staff that have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. Students' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the Examination Board.

Where a set of work is divided between staff, consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation. If a student believes that this may not have happened in relation to their work, they may make use of this appeals procedure.

The Centre:

- informs candidates with an entry for Centre-assessed work of the mark(s) awarded. A candidate may request copies of materials to assist in considering whether to request a review of the Centre's marking of the assessment[†];
- having received a request for copies of materials, promptly makes them available to the candidate;
- makes any necessary changes to marks and informs the candidate of the outcome, all before the Awarding Body's deadline;
- ensures that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor, who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the outcome of the review[‡];
- instructs the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the Centre;
- informs the candidate promptly in writing of the outcome of the review of the Centre's marking.

[†] These materials could include a copy of their marked work, the relevant specification and associated subject-specific documents.

[‡] This may be a third party, provided that they meet the conditions defined above.

Appeals should be made, in writing, to the Examinations Office within one week of receiving NEA results.

A written record of the appeal is kept and made available to the Awarding Body at its request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the Awarding Body is informed.

After work has been assessed internally, it is moderated by the Awarding Body to ensure consistency between Centres.

Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally-assessed work. This is outside the control of the School and is not covered by this procedure.

Enquiries About Results

The below sections detail the services that are offered by the Examination Boards in relation to results. If a candidate wishes to use any of these services, they should request a 'Review of Results' form from the Exams section of the SMS website: <https://www.st-martins.essex.sch.uk/exams>. The form should be completed and returned to the Examinations Office with the relevant fee by the deadline.

Service 1 (clerical re-check)

This service includes the following checks:

- that all parts of the script have been marked;
- the totalling of marks;
- the recording of marks.

The outcome of the clerical re-check is reported together with a statement of the total marks awarded for each unit, or component, included in the enquiry. Only Service 1 clerical re-checks can be requested for objective tests (multiple choice tests).

Candidates' grades/uniform mark score (UMS) can go up or down. The Examination Boards aim to complete the enquiry within ten days of receiving the request.

Service 2 (review of marking)

This is a post-results review of the original marking to ensure that the mark scheme has been applied correctly.

A marking error can occur because of:

- an administrative error;
- a failure to apply the mark scheme where a task has only a 'right' or 'wrong' answer;
- an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement.

The Awarding Body trains its reviewers to conduct reviews of marking accurately and consistently. Reviewers do not re-mark the script. They only act to correct any errors identified in the original marking.

Candidates' grades/UMS can go up or down. The Examination Boards aim to complete the enquiry within 20 days of acknowledging the request.

Priority Service 2 (review of marking)

The service is available for externally-assessed components of both unitised and linear GCE A-level specifications.

This is a priority review of the original marking to ensure that the mark scheme has been applied correctly.

A marking error can occur because of:

- an administrative error;
- a failure to apply the mark scheme where a task has only a 'right' or 'wrong' answer;
- an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement.

The Awarding Body trains its reviewers to conduct reviews of marking accurately and consistently. Reviewers do not re-mark the script. They only act to correct any errors identified in the original marking.

Candidates' grades/UMS can go up or down. The Examination Boards aim to complete the enquiry within 15 days of receiving the request.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

Components excluded from this ATS service have a report service. Components may be excluded due to their ephemeral nature or due to other special characteristics.

Coursework

Coursework, practicals and NEAs cannot be reviewed.

Refunds

Refunds are only issued if a review leads to the change of an overall subject grade.

Appeals

If you think an awarding body has made an error on a review of results (review of marking or moderation) or not applied its procedures consistently, properly or fairly, it's possible to submit an 'appeal'.

Please note that if you are unhappy with a result, you first need to submit a review of results and receive the outcome before you can submit an appeal.

SMS may decide not to submit an appeal on behalf of a candidate if the grounds for the appeal are not permitted grounds or where SMS does not agree there is a sound rationale for the appeal.

Fees and Deadlines

Candidates should refer to the 'Exams' section of the School website for all fees and deadlines. Candidates are also able to print the relevant forms from here.

SMS gives advice on all 'Review of Results' requests and issues grade boundaries and marks when requested. SMS does not decline a request for a review of marking made by a candidate within the deadline window. Any application for a review is made at the candidate's discretion.

Upon application, candidates are asked to sign a declaration form, which indicates that they have been made aware of the risks involved with any review of marking application, and that a grade can be lowered, go up or stay the same. Without a signature, an application is not processed.

4. Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What do I do if there is a clash on my timetable?

The School reschedules papers internally (on the same day) where there is a clash of subjects. For examinations that exceed three hours, candidates sit one paper then have short break during which they are supervised and must not have any communication with other candidates. They then sit the second subject paper. If the examinations that clash do not exceed three hours, no break is given. It may be necessary for a candidate to bring a packed lunch if they have examination(s) in the morning and afternoon, as they have to remain in isolation until both examinations are completed. If in doubt, candidates should refer to the Examinations Officer.

Q. What do I do if I think I have the wrong paper?

Invigilators ask candidates to check before the examination starts. If a candidate thinks that something is wrong, they should raise their hand and inform the invigilator immediately.

Q. What do I do if I forget my candidate number?

Candidate numbers are printed on each desk slip, which are stuck to the left-hand corner of each desk. Invigilators are able to help candidates find their numbers.

Q. What do I do if I forget the school Centre Number?

The Centre Number is 16126. This is always clearly displayed in the examination rooms.

Q. What do I do if I have an accident or feel ill before the examination?

Candidates should inform SMS at the earliest possible point so that help and advice can be given. In the case of an accident that means that a candidate is unable to write, it may be possible to provide a scribe to write the answers.

A candidate may need to obtain medical evidence (from the GP or hospital) if they wish SMS to make an application of Special Consideration on their behalf (see below).

Q. What do I do if I feel ill during the examination?

Candidates should raise their hand and an invigilator will offer assistance. A candidate should inform an invigilator if they feel ill before or during an examination and they feel that this may have affected their performance.

Q. If I'm late, can I still sit the examination?

Provided that a candidate is not more than one hour late; it may still be possible for them to sit the examination. Candidates should get to School as quickly as possible and report straight to the Examinations Office. A member of staff escorts the candidate to the examination room.

Candidates must not enter an examination room without permission after an examination has begun.

If a candidate is more than 30 minutes late, SMS must inform the Examination Board. It has the final decision as to whether it will accept the paper for marking. Candidates should ensure that they allow enough time to get to School so that, if they are delayed, e.g. through transport problems, they still arrive on time.

Q. If I miss the exam can I take it on another day?

No. Timetables are regulated by the Examination Boards and candidates must attend on the given date and time.

Q. Do I have to wear school uniform?

Yes. Normal school regulations apply to uniform, hair, jewellery, make-up, etc.

Q. What equipment should I bring for my examinations?

For most examinations, candidates should bring, at least, two pens (black ink only).

For science modules, candidates need two HB pencils.

For mathematics, 3B pencils must be used for diagrammatic work.

For some examinations, candidates need a calculator (maths/science), a 30cm ruler (marked with cm and mm), pencil sharpener and rubber, compasses, protractor, coloured pencil crayons (not gel pens).

Candidates are responsible for providing their own equipment for examinations. They must not attempt to borrow equipment from another candidate during the examination.

Q. What items are not allowed into the examination room?

Only material that is listed on question papers is permitted in the examination room, and candidates, who are found to have any material with them that is not allowed, are reported to the appropriate Examination Board. In such circumstances, a candidate would normally be disqualified from the paper or the subject concerned. Bags and coats and any other items not permitted under examination regulations must be left outside the examination room. Candidates should not bring any valuables into School. Food is not permitted in the examination room. Mobile telephones and watches must not be brought into the examination room.

Q. What happens if I continue to write when we have been told to stop at the end of an examination?

The incident is reported to the relevant Examination Board and a candidate could face disqualification.

Q. How do I know how long the examination is?

The length of the examination is shown in minutes on each candidate's individual timetable under the heading 'duration'. Invigilators tell candidates when to start and finish the examination. They write the finish time of the examination on a whiteboard at the front of the examination

room. There is a clock in all examination rooms. There is not a five-minute warning at the end of examinations.

Q. Why can't I bring my mobile telephone or smart watch into the examination room?

Being in possession of a mobile phone, smart watch or any other electronic device is malpractice:

The minimum penalties are as follows:

- Device found on a candidate and turned ON/OFF - disqualification from the paper;
- Candidate found using device - disqualification from qualification.

Before entering the examination room, candidates must switch phones off and hand them to the person collecting items at the door. Candidates are given a number to collect items once the examination has finished. SMS is not held responsible for theft, loss or damage.

Q. Can I leave the examination early?

It is a requirement of the Examination Boards that candidates must stay in the examination room for, at least, one hour after the published start time of the examination (or for the duration of the examination if it is less than one hour). It is SMS policy that candidates are not allowed to leave the examination room early, as this is disruptive to other candidates. A candidate may not leave the examination room without permission.

Q. What do I do if the fire alarm sounds?

Candidates should stay calm and stay seated until they are given further instructions. If candidates have to evacuate the room, they must leave everything on their desk and leave the room in silence. They must not communicate with anyone during the evacuation. Special Consideration is automatically applied for anyone that experiences a fire alarm in their examination.

Q. Can I go to the toilet during the examination?

Toilet breaks are not permitted during examinations unless a candidate has a known medical condition.

Q. If I have more than one examination on a day, can I get lunch at school?

Candidates can obtain lunch at School in the normal way. If a candidate has a clash between examinations and they have to be supervised during their break, they are unable to go to the Common Room or South Hall. This is to ensure that the examination regulations are not breached.

Q. Why do I need to check the details on the Statement of Entry?

The details on the Statements of Entry are used when certificates are printed. If the name or date of birth on a certificate does not match a candidate's birth certificate, it could cause problems if a candidate is asked to show the certificate to a potential employer or college/university at some time in the future. Candidates should also check that the subjects and tiers of entry are correct and that no subjects are missing.

Q. I am entitled to extra time – how will this affect the way I take my examinations?

Candidates, who are entitled to extra time, do not need to line up on the tennis courts. They should go directly to their allocated examination room. The invigilator indicates the Examination Board's finish time followed by the finish time with the 25% included.

Q. What do I do if I don't get the grades I need for college?

Candidates should not panic. Sixth Form has people on site to assist candidates. Candidates can also see if any of their grades are close to the grade boundary as they may want to request a copy of their script to help them decide whether they would like to request a review of marking. Candidates should be aware that a mark could go down as well as up or even stay the same. Review of marking requests must be submitted to the Examinations Office by the deadline published on results day. Candidates must complete a Review of Results form and return it with payment to the Examinations Office.

Q. How many marks was I away from the next grade?

In a candidate's results slip, there is an overall result slip on SMS headed paper and individual statements of result from each Awarding Body. SMS includes the grade boundaries for each subject. Candidates should, therefore, be able to work out how far they are away from the next grade in every subject using the information provided. If candidates need any help, they should refer to the Examinations Office.

Q. How do I achieve an A* in A-level?

For the old-style A-level, the general rule for the award of an A* is an A grade at A-level and 90% of the maximum uniform mark on the aggregate of the A2 units.