



Arden

Student Information Booklet

GCSE Examination 2025

Arden Examination Information Booklet Summer 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Arden aims to make the examination experience as stress-free as possible for all candidates, to allow them to perform to the best of their ability.

Hopefully this booklet will provide informative and helpful information for you and your parent/carers. Please read it carefully as the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ; representing all Awarding Bodies / Examination Boards in the country) set strict criteria for the conduct of examinations and each centre is required to enforce the regulations. It is essential you are aware of all the rules and regulations; if there is anything you do not understand please ask.

The mock examinations will follow the same guidelines as set out in this booklet to ensure students are familiar with the regulations before they undertake external examinations. Please see the provisional exam timetable 2025 on the school website (Information / Examination Information) if you wish to note dates in advance.

We must also draw your attention to the ‘Contingency Days’ which have been set aside by the awarding bodies. These are:

- **11th June 2025 AFTERNOON**
- **25th June 2025 ALL DAY**

All candidates should be available for examinations up to and including this date should any exam board have to invoke their “exam contingency plan”.

Contingency Day - All GCSE and GCE Candidates must remain available should an awarding body need to complete an exam. This is consistent with the JCQ "Exam Contingency Plan" for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

At Arden our examinations are administered by the following awarding bodies:

- AQA
- OCR
- Pearson Edexcel
- WJEC Eduqas
- VTCT

This information has been provided in booklet form in the hope that you will **read it now and keep it, to refer to before all examinations at Arden.**

Mrs Judith Miners
Examinations Officer

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PREPARING FOR EXAMINATIONS

Personal Details

For external examinations candidates will receive a personalised 'Candidate Timetable'. Please check all personal details very carefully as this information will appear on certificates and awarding bodies (Examination Boards) will charge for amendments. Your name format will be first name + one initial + surname. You should be aware that if your legal names differ from your chosen names that all **examinations must be completed using your legal surname and forename** and that Examination Boards do not use chosen names even though the school is willing to do so.

You should check that you have been entered for all subjects at the correct tier of entry. This applies to maths, the science subjects and languages.

Your candidate number / exam number is 4 digits. This number will be the number you will use for all external exams at this school from year 10 to year 13. You will be seated in exams in numerical order, by subject and tier and your details will be on your desk. You will have to write your candidate/exam number, full legal surname, first name and signature on every examination paper and on any additional answer booklets used.

The school centre number is **20740** and will be written on the board at the front of the exam room.

Personal timetables for summer exams will be issued via Edulink in March 2025. If you think there is an error on your timetable you must report it to the Exams Officer (Mrs Judith Miners) immediately.

Occasionally you might have a clash if two subjects are timetabled at the same time. This is normal and does happen fairly frequently. School will make arrangements for candidates to be supervised until all the examinations have been completed.

Absence from Examinations

You must attend all examinations you have been entered for; misreading the timetable is not accepted as a satisfactory reason for absence. Candidates will be invoiced for failing to attend an examination that has been paid for by school. If you are absent due to illness please notify the school on 01564 773348 by 8.30am on the morning of your examination. A medical certificate must be produced to the Examinations Officer (Mrs Miners) within 3 days of the examination.

Whilst we make every effort to contact you if you fail to turn up for a timetabled examination, this may not always be possible. It is your responsibility to ensure you arrive at least 15 mins before the start of each examination. Please ensure the school has an up to date contact telephone number for you.

Arriving for Examinations

Please assemble outside the exam room (usually the Sports Hall), or under the library if it is raining, 15 mins before the start time i.e. 8.45am for morning sessions and 1.15pm for afternoon sessions. This includes a Wednesday when the school day starts later. You must wear full school uniform. Line up within **tiers and alphabetically**. **Listen for instructions and do NOT talk when staff and invigilators are giving instructions.**

EQUIPMENT

Bags and Coats

Bags and coats are not to be taken into the examination room and should be left in lockers or at home. School accepts no liability for items of value left in bags; please do not bring these items to school on examination days.

Food and Drinks

You may only bring water in a clear, colourless bottle (with no label). No other food or drink is allowed.

Pens, rulers etc.

Bring ALL the equipment you need for the examination in a clear case or plastic bag. Maths sets (protractor, compass and pencil, ruler, rubber etc) are often required for Maths exams. They can be purchased in advance from the Maths department. Candidates must provide their own equipment and must not borrow equipment from other candidates. Black biros / ink pens are to be used in all examinations and many require an HB pencil for diagrams etc. All rough work must be done in the answer booklet and neatly crossed out; tippex and correcting pens are not allowed. Highlighter can only be used if the question booklet is NOT the answer booklet.

There is a limited amount of spare equipment, this is for equipment that does not work, runs out or breaks during the exam, it is not for forgotten equipment. If you do borrow equipment please leave it on your desk when you leave. The less that is returned the less we have to lend out.

Calculators

Calculators may be required in some examinations; your subject teacher will advise you if they are prohibited. You must bring your own calculator if you need one, you may not use a mobile phone as a calculator. Where restrictions apply to the type of calculator, please check with your subject tutor in advance to ensure you are using an approved calculator.

As a general rule calculators should be non-graphic; handheld size; no printed instructions or cases; not have noisy keys which would disturb other candidates; not use mains supply and not have a permanent memory. **Any memory should be cleared before the exam.** Calculator cases should not be brought into the Examination Room. No allowances will be made for calculator failure or operational errors. Calculators are also available for sale from the Maths department.

Dictionaries

Dictionaries may not be used unless they are specifically permitted by the subject specification or unless the awarding bodies have approved special arrangements.

UNAUTHORISED ITEMS

Mobile Phones, and Electronic Equipment

Mobiles phones; other technological / web enabled sources of information; any items with digital storage and watches/fitbits (of any kind) are not allowed into the examination room. The awarding bodies forbid you from bringing them into an examination or quarantine room, either before or after an examination. **If you are found in possession a mobile phone (even if it has been turned off) or any of the above during an examination you will be reported to the awarding body.** All awarding bodies have advised schools that any candidate reported will face disqualification from the subject concerned and there can be no exception to this.

Prohibited Material

The following items **must not** be brought into an examination room

- Mobile Phones
- Watches
- Potential technological / web enabled devices or a wrist watch which has data storage.
- Pencil Cases - unless transparent
- Calculator cases and instructions
- Tippex, Highlighters and Gel Pens
- Books / notes – (except for set texts for specific examinations)
- Bags and coats

CONDUCT IN THE EXAMINATION

When you are asked to enter the examination room **YOU MUST REMAIN SILENT AND NOT COMMUNICATE OR ATTEMPT TO COMMUNICATE WITH ANY OTHER CANDIDATE UNTIL YOU LEAVE THE EXAM ROOM.** If you attempt to communicate with any other candidate, you may be disqualified from all examinations.

Look for your name on a label on the desk. When you have found your place, sit down and wait in silence. **DO NOT TOUCH ANYTHING THAT MAY BE ON YOUR DESK** until told to do so.

LISTEN CAREFULLY TO ALL INSTRUCTIONS and if you are not sure then raise your hand and wait for a member of staff to come to you.

You will be asked to check that you have been given the correct examination paper (including tier where applicable).

If you require any assistance during the exam please raise your hand and wait for the invigilator to attend to you. If you require extra paper the invigilator will bring some to you.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR SEAT WITHOUT PERMISSION.

For the first 20 and last 20 minutes and during any extra time of the exam, going to the toilet will not be allowed unless you have a medical exemption.

During the examination, be aware of the time.

Candidates are not permitted to leave early, even if they have finished before the published end of the examination.

Candidates must stay in the exam room until the exam has finished and the papers have all been collected.

You are under examination conditions until you have left the room.

Please be aware that if you talk as you are leaving or just outside there may be students still working, talking is considered malpractice at all times during the exam, this includes at the start as you walk into the exam room and until you are outside the exam room at the end of the exam. If you talk at any point during the time you are in the exam hall and when you leave, a notice of malpractice will have to be issued to the board. This could result in a reduced mark or even zero for that exam.

JCQ Regulations

It is the candidates responsibility to familiarise themselves with the awarding bodies regulations 'Information for Candidates'. Copies are posted on the Exams notice board and it is also posted under Exams on the school website. Further copies are available from the Exams Officer on request.

JCQ information and warning notices are reproduced in the appendices at the end of this booklet and on the school website.

Your attention is drawn to the Information for Candidates - written examinations, which confirms that you **MUST NOT write (or draw) any inappropriate, obscene or offensive material or deface your exam paper in anyway**. The penalties will include disqualification from the subject concerned.

NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENTS

Non-examination assessments measure subject-specific knowledge and skills that cannot be tested by timed written papers and may be an important element of some qualifications. Deadlines will be set at various stages throughout the course and **MUST BE ADHERED TO**. If you have difficulty in completing assignments, please speak to your subject teacher sooner rather than later.

We wish to bring to your attention concern being expressed by Awarding Bodies regarding the authenticity of assessments submitted by candidates. In an effort to combat this, all candidates are required to sign a declaration form for each separate piece of work submitted. You are required to acknowledge used sources. In the interest of fairness to ALL candidates we ask parent/carers to do their best to ensure their son/daughter is clear about this and that they are aware of the implications of submitting work which is not their own (either wholly or in part).

Students must keep their work secure at all times and not share completed or partially completed work on-line, through social media or any other means.

Neither copying nor allowing your work to be copied is acceptable. Both practices constitute infringements of the regulations which can be sanctioned by disqualification. Awarding Bodies are very likely to disqualify anyone caught cheating, certainly from the subject concerned and possibly from all examinations in the series. We too, as guardians of the integrity of the examination process at Arden, are likely not to support any candidate found guilty of malpractice and will always report incidents to Awarding Bodies, without exception.

Please read the “Information for Candidates - non-examination assessments” as well as the “Information for Candidates – using social media” at the end of this booklet.

EXTERNAL COURSES

If you plan to sit examinations for extra-curricular courses at this centre, please advise the Examinations Officer before the end of autumn term to see if we can accommodate these examinations at Arden. You may be required to pay costs (entries / visiting examiners / invigilation). No entries will be made after the end of January.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The Equality Act 2010 requires that all candidates taking examinations have fair access to assessment. Access Arrangements are not there to give candidates an unfair advantage, but to put all candidates on a level playing field on which to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding by applying reasonable adjustments. They only apply to candidates who have been assessed as being at a substantial disadvantage i.e. beyond the normal differences in ability that exist among people.

All assessments for Access Arrangements are carried out through the Learning Zone by a teacher who holds a special JCQ qualification. Applications go through a rigorous checking procedure to ensure current JCQ criteria have been met. **Awarding bodies specify that arrangements must be in place at least three months before the examinations to which they apply.** Arden may also on occasion use Solihull Specialist Inclusion Support Services, however **access arrangements may no longer be awarded on a privately commissioned report alone.**

If you have approved Access Arrangements, you will have been told in advance. Candidates requiring a reader/scribe/word processor will normally be accommodated separately and will follow exactly the same rules as everybody else. Candidates permitted extra time for written examinations will usually have this added at the end.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Only in 'exceptional circumstances' are awarding bodies likely to allow candidates special consideration for absence, or because of impaired performance, on the day of an examination. Special consideration cannot remove the difficulty faced by a candidate and only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded. It is essential that medical or other appropriate evidence is obtained on the day of the examination by the candidate/parent/carer and is given to the Examination Officer without delay.

If you experience any difficulties during the examination period, please inform the school at the earliest possible point so that we can help or advise you.

INVIGILATORS

The school employs external invigilators to ensure examinations are conducted within JCQ regulations. Students are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards all invigilators and follow given instructions at all times. Remember invigilators are expected to report any incidence of suspected malpractice to Awarding Bodies. Please note invigilators cannot discuss the examination paper with you or explain the questions.

Senior school staff will normally be present at the start of an examination only. Any student behaving in an unacceptable manner will be removed from the examination room by invigilators; the student will then not have an opportunity to complete the examination.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

- Remain calm and follow instructions from invigilators.
- You will be asked to put your pens down and stop writing.
- You will be told if the alarm constitutes a real threat or whether to await further instructions.
- Leave exam papers, answer scripts and all equipment in the exam room. All exam answer booklets must be closed on the desk.
- Leave the exam room as directed, in silence and proceed to the MUGA
- Remain under exam conditions.
- **Do not attempt to communicate with anyone.**
- Full working time will be allowed for the examination.
- Awarding bodies will be notified of the disturbance which may qualify for special consideration.

Lockdown Procedures: If the lockdown bells ring your invigilator will advise you to stop writing and follow their instructions. You will not leave the exam room, you must remain under exam conditions. You will be able to resume your exam as soon as any threat or perceived threat is lifted.

Full working time will be allowed for the examination.

Awarding bodies will be notified of the disturbance which may qualify for special consideration.

AFTER THE EXAMINATIONS

Results

Results are published on the Thursday 14th August 2025 for A levels and Thursday 21st August 2025 for GCSEs. Candidates who wish their summer results to be posted must supply the Examinations Officer with an envelope addressed to the candidate, correctly stamped (we will not take responsibility for incorrect postage which will delay your post) before the end of the summer term.

Results WILL NOT be given over the phone or to an unauthorised person under any circumstances.

Further details regarding results day will be provided via email by the year 11 / 13 pastoral team, during the summer term.

Post Results Services

Unfortunately, some of you may be disappointed with your grades. Senior members of school staff and the Careers Advisor will be available on Results Day should you have any queries. Details about how to contact them will be given with your results.

Post results services offered by Awarding Bodies including access to scripts; reviews of results and clerical checks, are usually available up to three weeks after results are received. Any enquiries should be directed to the Examinations Officer as soon as possible after results are received to ensure you meet the deadline (16th September 2025). Priority requests have a deadline of a week after the results release date (for example priority requests for exam scripts, which may help a candidate decide if a review of results should be submitted). All post results services must be paid for by the candidate before the application is made. Current fees and procedures are available from the Examinations Officer upon request, more information will be given with the exam results.

Certificates

You will be invited to collect your certificates at or shortly after Presentation Evening in December 2025. After that time candidates will be given one reminder that we hold uncollected certificates. This will be posted to the last address on our database, it is therefore vital that we have your up-to-date details. **Any certificates not collected after this may be destroyed after 1 year.** It is not possible to obtain copies of certificates and if they are lost, candidates will have to apply to each Awarding Body for a Certified Statement of Results. Awarding Bodies charge a substantial fee for this service so **please keep them safe.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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

A The Examinations Officer will schedule papers internally on the same day to minimise breach of security and numbers of candidates requiring supervision. You will be notified of any clash arrangements should this happen.

Q What do I do if I think I have been given the wrong paper?

A Invigilators will ask you to check at the start of the examination. If you think something may be wrong put your hand up immediately.

Q What is Special Consideration?

A It is an adjustment to the marks of an eligible candidate. The tariff range is 0%-5%, which is reserved for exceptional cases. Any adjustment is likely to be small and the centre receives no feedback.

Q What do I do if I feel unwell during an exam?

A Put your hand up and an invigilator will assist you.

Q What do I do if I feel unwell or have an accident before an examination?

A Please inform the school who will pass a message to the Examinations Officer. Your circumstances will be taken into account and we will accommodate you for the examination as appropriately as possible.

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

A If you arrive before 10am or 2.30pm for exams at least an hour long, with a **valid** reason, you should be able to sit the examination. Remember it may not be possible to allow you extra time. If you arrive after the published finishing time of the exam you are not permitted to sit the paper.

Q If I miss the examination, can I take it another day?

A No – Awarding Bodies regulate the timetable and no deviations are permitted.

Q Can I use the cloakroom during an examination?

A Most examinations are short enough that this should not really be necessary, unless there is a medical reason. If it becomes absolutely necessary you will be escorted by an invigilator and you will not be given any extra time.

Q What happens if I forget I have my phone on me and don't hand it in at the start of an examination

A Across the country over 5,000 students each year are disqualified from examinations because they fail to declare and hand in their electronic equipment when reminded to do so. If your phone goes off (even if it just an alarm or text) **YOU WILL BE REPORTED** to the awarding body and you will at the very least receive an exam score of zero for that exam. Please leave it at home! The school cannot take responsibility for items that you shouldn't have in an exam and cannot provide secure storage for them.

Q Why do I have to collect my certificates?

A We are required to record proof of collection so you need to collect them in person when invited to do so. We cannot guarantee safe arrival of items posted home.

NOTE: Appendices are provided in the hard copy of this booklet issued to all students in year 11 before Mock exams in December. They are also available on the Arden website (Information / Exam Information).