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**St Robert of Newminster School**

**Centre Number 39573**

**Exam Guidance for Students and Parents**

**Summer Season 2024**

**School Telephone: 0191 716 1700**

**School email: school@str.bwcet.com**

**Exam email: Exams.4609@str.bwcet.com**

**Introduction**

It is the aim of St Robert of Newminster School to make the examination experience as stress-free and successful as possible for all candidates.

Hopefully, this booklet will prove informative and be helpful for you and your parents. Please

read it carefully and show it to your parents so that they are also aware of the examination

regulations and the procedures to follow in the event of any problems occurring.

The awarding bodies (or examination boards) set down strict criteria which must be followed

for the conduct of examinations and St Robert of Newminster School is required to follow them precisely.

You should therefore pay particular attention to the **JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) Information for Candidates and Warning Notices** included at the end of this booklet. If there is anything you do not

understand please ask.

We would be grateful if you would check the details on the Statement of Entry are correct (spelling of name, date of birth etc.) and report any errors to the Exams Officer, or your child’s Head of House / Head of Year in writing as soon as possible as these details will appear on your child’s official certificates.

If you or your parents have any queries or need help or advice before, during or after the

examinations please contact:

**Examinations Officer**

Miss L Duffy

0191 716 1700

Exams.4609@str.bwcet.com

**Senior Teacher**

Mr D Mitchell

**Senior Assistant Head Teacher**

Mrs M Salmon

**Contents**

4 Contingency day 2023

4 Written exams

4 Coursework/controlled assessment/non-examination assessment

4 What to do if you identify you have two or more exam papers timetabled at the same time (an exam clash)

4 Where you will take your examinations

4 What time your examinations will start and finish

5 Supervision during your exams

5 Exam conditions

5 Where you will sit in the exam room

6 What equipment you need to bring to your exams

7 What you should not bring into the exam room

7 Food and drink in exam rooms

7 What you should wear for your exams

7 What to do if you arrive late for an examination

7 What to do if you are ill on the day of an examination

7 Special considerations

8 What happens if you are absent from an exam

9 What will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room

9 Suspected malpractice

9 Candidates with access arrangements

9 Students with medical needs or severe anxiety

10 Results Days

10 Post-results services

10 Certificates

10 Review Fees

10 Link to JCQ Information for Candidates/JCQ Warning Notices/school website exam information

**Contingency Sessions 2024**

The Exam Awarding bodies and JCQ (The Joint Council for Qualifications) have arranged 3 contingency sessions on the afternoons of **Thursday 6th and Thursday 13th June** and **all day Wednesday 26th June**. These sessions would be used in the unlikely event that an exam had to be moved nationally because it could not take place when planned. **You must be available for all 3 contingency sessions, even if you do not have exams scheduled on that day**. These sessions cannot be used to reschedule an exam that you have missed. If an exam has to be moved to one of these sessions, the school will inform you of the change.

This means that all exam candidates **must be available to sit exams up to, and including, Wednesday 26 June 2024.** This decision is not a school decision and applies to all candidates in all schools nationwide. Please make a note of this important date as it is common practice, and completely understandable, for many families to book holidays at the end of June and into July to take advantage of the lower prices available. However, it would be devastating for a student to miss out on a good grade, after working hard during the GCSE course, because they may be absent from a rearranged final exam.

**Written exams**

When you receive your individual exam timetable it will show your own specific, timetabled examinations with your name, Unique Candidate Identifier (UCI), exam number and details of the date, time, and duration of each exam. Check it carefully. If you think that something is wrong, please see the Exams Office immediately. You may have already completed some practical components.

**Coursework/controlled assessment/non-examination assessment**

JCQ notices about coursework, controlled assessments and non-examination assessments are available on the St Robert of Newminster School Website.

**What to do if you identify you have two or more exam papers timetabled at the same time (an exam clash)**

Occasionally some candidates will have a clash where two or more subjects are timetabled at the same time.

The school will make special timetable arrangements for candidates who have an exam clash.

The times for these exams will be shown on your individual timetable. You will be supervised by an invigilator until you have finished all the exams scheduled for that day so you may also have to bring a packed lunch and a drink with you on that day as you will not be able to communicate with other students. A break will be allowed between papers.

**Where you will take your examinations**

The majority exams will take place in the Sports Hall, Performance Hall, and Drama Hall but other venues have also been used. Please check your timetable so that you know where you will be for each of your

exams.

**What time your examinations will start and finish**

Most morning exams start at 9:00am and the afternoon exams at 1:20pm. You must assemble outside your examination room 10 minutes before the start time. It is not the school's policy to allow candidates to leave the exam room early, as this is disruptive to others, so please do not ask to leave but use the time to check through your answers thoroughly and to make sure that you have completed your personal details correctly.

**Supervision during your exams**

Senior members of staff will be present at the start of their relevant exams. The school employs external invigilators to conduct the examinations. They are members of staff. You will be expected to behave in a respectful manner towards them and **follow their instructions at all times**. Invigilators are in the examination rooms to supervise the conduct of the examination. They will distribute and collect the examination papers, tell you when to start and finish the examination, hand out extra paper if required and deal with any problems that occur during the examination. They cannot discuss the examination paper with you or read or explain the questions. You may not leave the examination room without the permission of the invigilators. Students should ensure they attend the toilet prior to entering the exam room to limit the disruption to other students. If you need to go to the toilet, you will be escorted by an invigilator and **you will not be allowed any extra time.**

Any student who behaves in a disruptive or unacceptable manner will be removed from the examination room by invigilators. They will be escorted to the Examination Officer and their conduct will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team. A report will then be sent to the relevant examining body.

**Exam conditions**

Copies of the 'Information for Candidates' which is issued jointly by all the examination boards is included in this booklet. You must read these carefully and note that to break any of the examination rules or regulations could lead to disqualification from all subjects. The school must report any breach of regulations to the awarding body.

Candidates are expected to adherer to the following rules whilst they are in the examination room:

* Absolute SILENCE applies once the candidate enters the hall / examination room
* Candidates are to always face the front. Any turning around will be deemed as trying to make contact with another candidate
* Candidates are to put their hand up if they require assistance throughout the examination and an invigilator will respond
* Candidates must not distract another candidate
* Any breach of JCQ regulations could lead to a loss of all marks for a particular paper or disqualification

Listen carefully to instructions and notices read out by the invigilators — there may be amendments or corrections to the exam paper that you need to know about. Check you have the correct question paper — check the subject, paper, and tier of entry.

Do not draw pictures or write offensive comments on examination papers — if you do the examination board may refuse to accept your paper.

At the end of the examination all work must be handed in — remember to cross out any rough work. If you have used more than one answer book or loose sheets of paper, make sure all papers and all loose sheets are in the correct order and insert inside the last page of the exam booklet.

Invigilators will collect your exam papers before you leave the room. Absolute silence must be maintained during this time. **Remember you are under examination conditions from the time you enter the exam room until you have left the room.**

Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper **must not** be taken from the exam room. Remain seated in silence until told to leave the examination room. Please leave the room in silence and show consideration for other candidates who may still be working.

**Where you will sit in the exam room**

You will sit in candidate number order for each exam. A card with you photograph, name and exam number will be on the desk so you can find your seat. Do not write on or deface the card.

**What equipment you need to bring to your exams**

Examination regulations are extremely strict regarding items that may be taken into the examination room.

It is your responsibility to arrive at all your examinations with full equipment.

**You will need**:

* Black Pen (including spares). No eraser pens are allowed
* Pencil
* Pencil Sharpener
* Eraser
* Ruler
* Calculator (scientific for specific subjects) - please see further guidance below
* Pair of compasses
* Protractor
* Coloured Pencils (for specific subjects)
* Highlighters

Pencil cases will only be allowed in the examination room if they are transparent.

All items of equipment (pens, pencils, mathematical instruments) should be visible to the invigilators at all times.

Using calculators - You must be aware of JCQ awarding body instructions regarding the use of calculators in your exams which state:

**‘Candidates may use a calculator in an examination unless this is prohibited by the awarding body’s specification. Where the use of a calculator is allowed, candidates are responsible for making sure that their calculators meet the awarding bodies’ regulations. ‘**

Calculators must be:

* of a size suitable for use on the desk;
* either battery or solar powered;
* free of lids, cases and covers which have printed instructions or formulae

Calculators must not:

* be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities:
* language translators;
* symbolic algebra manipulation;
* symbolic differentiation or integration;
* communication with other machines or the internet;
* be borrowed from another candidate during an examination for any reason;
* have retrievable information stored in them

This includes:

* databanks;
* dictionaries;
* mathematical formulae;
* text

The candidate is responsible for the following:

* the calculator’s power supply;
* the calculator’s working condition;
* clearing anything stored in the calculator

(Taken from JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations 2023 – 2024 downloaded March 2024)

**If you break these rules, you will be disqualified from the examination.**

**What you should not bring into the exam room**

Only material that is listed on question papers is permitted in the examination room and students who are found to have any material with them that is not allowed will be reported to the appropriate examination board. In such circumstances, a student would normally be disqualified from the paper, or the subject concerned.

Mobile phones, iPods, smartwatches, MP3/MP4 players and wrist watches must not be brought into the exam room. Being in possession of any electronic communication device in the exam room is regarded as cheating and is subject to severe penalty from the awarding bodies. The school must report any such incident whether or not the device was used, and the awarding body will decide the penalty.

Any of the above devices must be removed and handed in with mobile phones **before** the start of the exam.

**Food and drink in exam rooms**

No food or drink (except a small clear plastic bottle of water, **label removed**) is allowed in the examination rooms.

**What you should wear for your exams**

**Full School Uniform** must be worn by all students attending school for examinations.

**What to do if you arrive late for an examination**

If you arrive less than one hour after the published starting time of the examination, it may still be possible for you to sit the paper. Report the exam office as soon as you can; A member of exams staff will then escort you to the exam room as after an examination has begun you must not enter the examination room without permission from an invigilator or the Exams Officer.

You should also be aware that if you start the exam more than one hour after the published starting time the school must inform the exam board who may decide not to accept your work. Please ensure that you allow enough time to get to school so that if you are delayed you will still arrive on time.

**What to do if you are ill on the day of an examination**

If you are ill on the day of an examination, please contact the school as soon as possible so we can help or advise you. In the case of an accident that means you are unable to write, it may be possible to provide you with a scribe to write your answers, but we will need as much prior notice as you can give.

You will need to obtain written medical evidence from your GP or hospital if you wish the

school to make an application for Special Consideration on your behalf.

**Special Consideration**

Special Consideration is an adjustment to the marks or grades of a candidate who has sat the exam but has been disadvantaged in some way because of 'exceptional circumstances'.

Candidates will only be eligible for Special Consideration if they have been fully prepared and covered the whole course but performance in the examination is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. Examples of such circumstances may be illness, accident or injury, bereavement, or a domestic crisis at the time. The Examinations Officer must be informed immediately so that the necessary paperwork can be sent to the board and the candidate will be required to provide written evidence to support the application. **This must be received no later than 5 days after the examination date.**

Parents should be aware that the decision to apply any adjustment is made by the examining body. It is likely to be small and no feedback is ever provided.

If your child experiences any difficulty during the examination period (e.g., illness, injury, personal issues) please report these to your child’s Head of House / Head of Year for Sixth Form immediately.

**What happens if you are absent from an exam**

If you miss an exam without informing the school of the reason your parents/guardians may be charged the entry fee for the exam. Please note that misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.

The JCQ states ;

When a candidate has missed a timetabled component/unit for acceptable reasons and the centre is prepared to support an application for special consideration, an adjustment may be made to the terminal grade. However, the component/unit must have been missed in the terminal series and the minimum requirements in section 4.3.

4.3 The minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence are detailed below. In all cases, candidates must have been fully prepared and covered the whole course.

GCE AS and A-level qualifications (AQA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC specifications):

one whole component, which is a minimum of 15% of the total assessment, must have been completed. Please note that partially completed AS or A2 units are not acceptable.

• AS linear specifications: one whole component, which is a minimum of 15% of the total assessment, must have been completed.

• AS unitised specifications: one whole component, which is a minimum of 15% of the total assessment, must have been completed.

• Enhancement given at AS level (unitised specifications) will be carried forward to A-level.

• A-level linear specifications: one whole component, which is a minimum of 15% of the total assessment, must have been completed.

• A-level six-unit award (unitised specifications): one whole component, which is a minimum of 15% of the total assessment, must have been completed.

• A-level four-unit award (unitised specifications): one whole component, which is a minimum of 15% of the total assessment, must have been completed with at least one A2 unit completed.

• An A-level award (unitised specifications) will not be issued based on AS units alone.

GCSE (AQA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC specifications): one whole component, which is a minimum of 15% of the total assessment, must have been completed

A minimum of 15% of the total assessment must have been completed.

If this happens, the exam board will approximate a grade for the component missed using the students’ other components/papers’ results. They will compare these to how other candidates nationally have achieved on the missing component in relation to the completed papers/components.

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Guide_to_spec_con_process_2023_24_FINAL.pdf>

**What will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room**

If the fire alarm sounds during an examination the examination invigilators will tell you what to do. Do not panic. If you must evacuate the room, you will be asked to leave, in silence, in the order in which you are sitting. You will be escorted to a designated assembly point. Leave everything on your desk. You must not attempt to communicate with anyone else during the evacuation and absolute silence must be always maintained.

When you return to the exam room do not start writing until the invigilator tells you to. You will be allowed the full working time for the examination and a report will be sent to the awarding body detailing the incident.

**Suspected malpractice**

St Robert of Newminster School adheres to the JCQ Policies and Procedures for Suspected Malpractice in

Examinations and Assessments which can be found on the school website.

**Candidates with access arrangements**

If you have approved exam access arrangements check your timetables carefully so you know where you are going for each exam. Please wait outside the venue 10 minutes before the start time of the exam. If you are unsure about any of the arrangements, please see the Exams Officer.

Access arrangements are designed to allow students who may otherwise be disadvantaged by a recognised learning need and who may require some support in an examination. This may include extra time awarded on a subject-by-subject basis, a prompt, rest breaks, a reader, a scribe, or modified papers etc (the list is not exhaustive). Access arrangements are usually applied for at the start of Year 10; some exceptional cases where a new learning need has been identified will be considered after this date. Urgent cases will always be considered (e.g., broken writing hand/arm where a scribe or word processor can be provided).

Students are monitored throughout their learning at St Robert of Newminster School and any concerns affecting assessments and examinations are reported to Learning Support. Evidence is then gathered and if supporting the need for it, students are assessed for access arrangements. If there is sufficient evidence an access arrangement is applied for.

**Students with medical needs or severe anxiety**

As with access arrangements, support can be offered for students who are undergoing treatment at the time of examinations. This may include rest breaks, prompts, different seats, and quiet rooms. These can only be arranged for students who are receiving treatment from a level 3 practitioner (i.e., Hospital consultant, CAMHS (Child and Mental Health Services)) and with medical evidence to support an application.

To have some exam nerves is normal and most students do feel anxious around examinations. Students who are suffering severe exam anxiety but are not under CAMHS can be seated at the back/side of the hall/sports hall. This decision is made in consultation with the Head of House and Director of SEND (special education needs), Miss B Salmon.

**Results Days**

Results will be available for **Year 11 students to collect on Thursday 22nd August** from **08.30am** and for **Year 13 Thursday 15th August** from **08.00am**. If you would like anyone else to collect your results, please contact the Examination Officer before Friday 19th July.

Any results not collected on the day will be posted out to the address held on our MIS system.

If you need post-results advice, staff will be available during the morning on Results Day. The examinations office will be open for enquiries on results day.

**Post-results services**

If you feel strongly that it is necessary to make an enquiry about your result you should first consult the Head of Subject to obtain their advice as to the advisability of requesting a review. You should be aware that your mark could go down, up or stay the same, the latter being the most likely outcome. There is a review fee, and it is refunded only if there is a change of the overall grade following the review.

If you decide to go ahead with a review, please complete the Enquiries about Results Form (available from the exams office) this will need to be returned to the school exams office with the correct payment before the review can be processed.

**Certificates**

Certificates will be available for collection from December 2024. Any student continuing onto Sixth Form will be given their certificates in school, any student continuing their studies elsewhere will need to collect their certificates from Visitors Reception. Any certificates not collected will be held securely for a period of time. After this date they will be destroyed. To replace certificates from exam boards costs from £50 per qualification (depending on the examination board) so it is highly recommended students collect these on the day specified and keep them safe.

**Fees for Exam Reviews**

Correct fees for any Enquiries about Results are released by exam boards in Spring of that year. For guidance, fees in 2023 cost up to £48 a paper, this is likely to have increased for 2024.

**JCQ Information for Candidates and JCQ Warning Notices**

**These and any other JCQ relevant materials can be found on the school website under Parents or Students / Examinations.**

Link to school website : [Examinations - St Robert of Newminster](https://www.strobertofnewminster.co.uk/students/examinations/)