



**GCSE, A- LEVEL and BTEC EXAMINATION
INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

2022/23

The Examinations Department

The Examinations Manager, at Sir Harry Smith Community College is responsible for administering all public examination arrangements under the direct responsibility of Head of Sixth Form, Tim Smith.

There is a team of adult invigilators, managed by the Examinations Manager.

Awarding Bodies (Examinations Boards) have strict regulations for the conduct of examinations, which must be followed precisely by both the college and students.

Exams at Sir Harry Smith Community College

All GCSE and A level courses are now 'linear' which means students will sit their exams at the end of the two-year course, in Year 11 or Year 13. The level 2 OCR Cambridge Nationals courses in Sport and Child Development have multiple opportunities to sit exams.

Mock (internal) examinations are administered in the same way as external examinations to give students a realistic experience and prepare them for their final exam period in May and June, which is very intense. It is expected that students will take mock examinations seriously and follow regulations to ensure good practice is embedded by May and June, this will help to reduce examtime anxiety.

Entries for examinations are made to exam boards about three months before the exam season begins. When all the entries have been submitted, students will receive a college statement of entry detailing the subjects and tiers for which they have been entered. This should be checked by both student and parent/carer and any errors or problems should be reported to the examinations office immediately (including incorrect spelling of names) or, alternatively, please speak to the subject teacher who will inform the examinations office of any necessary changes. On occasion, a student will receive an amended statement if changes to their entry have been made.

The examinations department will arrange seating for each examination and exam timetables will be issued via EduLink showing each exam and its location before the exam season starts.

Coursework / Controlled Assessments/ Non-examined Assessments (NEAs)

Some subjects have an element of coursework included in them, which has to be completed, marked, assessed and then sent to the examination board for moderation well before formal examination sessions begin.

Departments have their own deadline for receiving coursework. Students will be made aware of these deadlines in plenty of time, and must submit their work promptly.

If coursework is not submitted on time, no mark will be given and the overall grade of the GCSE will be lower if at all awarded (some GCSEs have a minimum coursework requirement.)

Students will be informed of their mark for their coursework and have the opportunity to request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the Centre's marking of the assessment.

Examination boards have strict regulations about coursework and portfolios. These regulations are available to view on our school website under the Examination Regulations section. Please read them carefully.

Examination and Preparation Period

In the months before the examination period begins, teachers will offer revision sessions as part of examination preparation. These sessions are extremely valuable to students.

Personal Holidays

It is strongly against college policy to take holidays in term time. Controlled Assessments are scheduled throughout the school year and are essential components of some courses. Dates for examinations are rigidly fixed by the Examination Boards and cannot be changed.

Standards of Behaviour expected at Sir Harry Smith Community College during Examinations

The examination regulations titled 'Information for Candidates' and 'Warning to Candidates' files on our website, are the regulations set down by the Awarding Bodies as to how all students should conduct themselves during an examination. Sir Harry Smith Community College and the Awarding Bodies regard breaches of examination regulations very seriously. Parents/Carers should please impress upon your son/daughter the importance of good behaviour in an examination, as any activities that may disturb or upset other students will not be tolerated. Disruptive students will be removed from an examination, the incident reported to the Awarding Body, who will very likely disqualify the student from the examination. However, we are proud to report that, generally, behaviour is excellent during examinations here. (Well done to our students).

Uniform

Students should wear correct uniform to all examinations. Students not wearing the correct uniform run the risk of not being allowed into the examination room. Sixth form students should adhere to the dress code of the college.

Examination Clashes and Supervision

In some cases, two or more examinations are scheduled at the same time. If the clash is for two exams in the same subject, it is intentional on the part of the Examination Board; one examination will simply follow the other, as will become clear when the seating timetables are issued to students.

If the clash involves two, or more different subjects then the Examinations Manager will make one of the following decisions;

- One examination will follow another in the same session, usually the longer examination first.
- If the examinations total more than three hours, one of the examinations may be moved to either the morning or the afternoon session of the same day. This will involve the student being supervised between examinations.

If a student has to be supervised, due to an examination clash, this is to ensure the integrity of the examination is not compromised: the student will not be allowed contact with anyone else and will not be allowed to use a mobile phone, smartwatch, ipod, the internet or any other means of electronic communication.

Students will not be allowed to leave the examination room unless accompanied by the supervisor and will be escorted to their next examination. It is recommended that a student brings some food, a drink and some revision material or some reading material for the time they are to be supervised.

Starting Times of Examinations

All morning examinations start at 9am and the afternoon examination session starts at 1.10pm (mock exams will start at 1pm.) Students should check their timetables carefully.

The length of an external examination varies so if an examination runs past normal school hours, it is up to the student to ensure arrangements for getting home are in place. Students will not be allowed to leave an examination early for any reason.

Students should arrive at the Dining Hall by 8.45am for a morning exam, and 12.45pm for an afternoon exam.

Some students have an allowance for extra time. During internal exams – also known as mocks, we try to ensure all exams are finished in time for students to catch the bus home, this may mean a student may not receive his/her extra time but will be asked to write on the exam paper how much extra time they think they would have used.

Afternoon Examinations

If you have an afternoon exam, you must follow this procedure;

1. After lesson 3 bell has sounded at 12.20pm, do NOT go to your period 4 lesson. Go to the dining area.
2. 12.20 – 1pm will be your lunch break; you must stay in the Dining Area.
You are not allowed to leave the college.
3. Hot food can be pre-ordered; pre-order your lunch from the Catering Manager.
4. Hot food will be served from 12.30pm
5. After you have finished your lunch, put your bag in your locker, go to the toilet and return to the dining area by 1pm. Don't forget to bring your exam equipment with you.
6. You will be brought into the exam hall / room
7. Afternoon exams start at 1.10pm

Students Late to an Examination

Once it has been discovered a student is absent from the examination, we generally try to contact the student at home so they can try to get to College in time to sit the examination, depending on how long the examination has been in progress. Candidates with a genuine reason and who are brought straight to college will be admitted into the examination room; the Examination Board will decide whether to accept the script or not. Unless told otherwise, late students should report to Reception where a member of the Examinations team will collect them and take them to the exam room.

Students Absent for an Examination for reasons other than illness

Should a student not turn up for an examination, the college will seek to recover the cost of the examination. Parents will be invoiced, as it is in all our interests that the college's examination budget is not wasted.

Students Absent from an Examination due to Illness

If a student is unwell on the day of an examination, you should telephone the College on 01733 703991. You should then arrange to visit the Doctor and ask them to provide you with a letter stating the reason for the illness which can then be forwarded to the Examination Board asking for special consideration on the grounds of illness. If a student sits an examination when they are unwell, a medical letter should be obtained as the examination board may, after examining the GP's letter and any evidence of performance on other papers, decide to award a grade.

It is essential that you see your Doctor on the day of the examination. Retrospective information is not accepted by the Examination Boards and any doctor's letters must be forwarded to the Examinations Officer without delay as there is a tight deadline to request special consideration.

Please ensure that the medical certificate is accompanied by a note detailing the examination to which it refers and the date on which the paper was sat.

Equipment for examinations

Bring everything you need to the examination in a clear pencil case or clear plastic bag. Pencil cases and tins that are not clear will not be allowed into the examination room, or will be removed from the student before the examination starts.

Black pens, pencils, rubbers, rulers and maths equipment should also be brought.

Calculators should be brought to examinations (except for mathematics non-calculator papers). However, there are restrictions to the type of calculator allowed:

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| Calculators must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Of a size suitable for use on an exam desk• Either battery or solar powered• Free of lids, cases and covers which have printed instructions or formulae | Calculators must not: <p>Be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language translators• Symbolic algebra manipulation• Symbolic differentiation or integration• Communications with other machines or internet <p>Be borrowed from another candidate during an examination for any reason</p> <p>Have retrievable information stored in them- including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Databanks• Dictionaries• Mathematical formulae• Text |
| The candidate is responsible for <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The calculator's power supply• The calculator's working condition• Clearing anything stored in the calculator | |
| | Candidates must not bring the following into an examination: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calculator cases• Instruction leaflets• Instructions and formulas printed on calculator lids or covers• Similar materials |

Please note: Students are responsible for ensuring they bring everything needed for their examinations. Exam essentials can be purchased via ParentPay for students to collect from Reception.

Dictionaries and spell checkers are not allowed in the examination room unless you are specifically told you can bring one.

Drink You may take only water to drink into the exam. The bottle must be transparent with all labels removed and not be larger than 750ml; remember that whilst sipping water is good, drinking too much and needing to go to the toilet is not ideal during an examination.

Fizzy drinks, cans and pouches are not allowed due to the risk of spillage.

Items not allowed in the examination room

Mobile phones, watches of any kind, ipods, MP3/4 Players, No potential technological / web enabled sources of information or other electronic equipment.

These items are strictly banned from the examination room; our advice is to **not** bring them to college at all on an examination day. However, if you do bring any of the above in, you should leave these in your bag, mobile phones should be **switched off** (not set to 'silent'). If you enter the exam room with any of these items you must hand these to the invigilator, who will place it in a bag and give you a number card. These items will be removed from the exam room. After the exam, please go to the exams office; your item will be returned to you upon presentation of the number card.

Sir Harry Smith Community College cannot be responsible for any of the above items if you do bring them to school.

There are severe penalties for candidates found in possession of any unauthorised items, or indeed if a mobile phone rings or beeps during an examination. All cases must be reported to the Examination Board who will very likely disqualify you from that examination paper and possibly from the whole subject.

Highlighters or pale coloured gel pens must not be used in your answers. However, you may use them to highlight words in questions and in texts / anthologies. We strongly encourage this good practice.

Correction fluids, pens or tape are not allowed to be used during any examination. Students should simply put a neat line through work they do not want marked.

Food is not permitted in the examination room. (The exception is for medical reasons and a doctor's letter must be brought to the Examination Office as early as possible.)

Do not bring lucky mascots etc. into the examination room.

Jackets and coats are not allowed in the examination room. Items of jewellery, such as rings or bracelets should not be worn as they make a noise on the desk and would be deemed a disruption to other candidates.

Students who finish their Exam Early

Students should use all of the available time on their answers and spend any time at the end checking their answers. In any event they are not permitted to leave before the timed end of the exam. They must sit quietly at their desk so as not to disturb other candidates.

Access Arrangements

Some students are eligible for extra time or special examination arrangements. These are normally identified by the SENCO. The SENCO will liaise with the Examinations Manager to provide the appropriate arrangements. Most Access Arrangements have to be applied for well in advance of the Examination period.

Special Consideration

Any illness, or family circumstances, which may affect examination performance, arising shortly before or during the exams, should be notified as soon as possible to the Examinations Manager so that an application for special consideration can be made to the boards. Parents/Carers should be aware that any adjustment is likely to be small and that no feedback is ever provided.

Parental / Carers Help during Examinations

Examinations are inevitably a stressful time for some students and support from both college and at home can be helpful. The college will provide advice about revision programmes and examination techniques, and if this is followed it should not be necessary for any student to work abnormally long hours during the revision period. It is probably helpful to discuss with your son/daughter how he/she intends to organise revision and to talk through any anxieties about particular techniques or subject matter. Testing knowledge of factual material can benefit the student if such help is requested, but often all that is needed is a quiet place to work and lots of encouragement. Students should get plenty of sleep and some opportunities for relaxation.

Managing exam anxiety

You may find the information on the links below useful:

Beat Exam Stress, Childline

This guide from the Childline charity includes dos and don'ts for young people preparing for exams:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/advice-and-info/beat-exam-stress.pdf>

14 ways to beat exam stress, Mind

Mind, a mental health charity, has a blog on the best exam tips for young people, such as how to get motivated:

<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/14-ways-to-beat-exam-stress/#.WCmnmS2LRhE>

Exam stress booklet for students, Student Minds

[exam_stress_print.pdf \(studentminds.org.uk\)](#)

After Your Exams

Sometimes exam stress doesn't just disappear once you have finished your exams as you might be worried about your results. There are post-results options available to you if you don't get the results you need. But until then, take time to celebrate your exams and your achievements so far

We have listed below some frequently asked questions we receive after exams to help put your mind at rest.

- **I forgot to label my answer**

If you forgot to label your answer with the correct question number, you don't need to worry about it, examiners will make every effort to try and match a non-labelled answer with the correct question.

- **I answered too many questions**

If in your exam you were asked to answer two out of three questions and instead you answered all three. Examiners will mark all three questions and your final marks will be awarded based on the two highest scoring questions you answered.

- **I think there may have been an error in the question paper**

If after your exam you feel there may have been an error in the exam paper, then you should speak to the Exams Manager, who will contact the awarding body. If there has been an error, examiners will ensure that this mistake will not affect your result.

If you feel that the error may have affected your overall performance in the exam, then talk to your teacher. If they agree, the Exams Manager can apply for you to get Special Consideration.

- **What if the examiner struggles to read (can't read) my handwriting**

Examiners have seen lots of different styles of handwriting and can usually work out what you have written or were trying to say.

Additional support

If you are feeling particularly overwhelmed or anxious at any time before or after exams, talk to your school counsellor, teachers or parents. Remember, they have taken exams before and know what you are going through so will be able to help you.

Returning Textbooks etc.

Students will have been informed by subject departments, of the arrangements for return of books etc. Please ensure that all textbooks and equipment are returned promptly to school.

Results

GCE A Level results will be published on Thursday 17th August 2023.

GCSE results will be published on Thursday 24th August 2023.

Results will normally be available for collection between 9am and 11am. Students wishing for a relative or friend to collect their results must send a signed letter of authorisation with the collector. Results will not be given over the telephone or emailed under any circumstances.

Post Results

If a curriculum manager has concerns about the marking of exam papers, the school may request a review of marking of the paper. Students will be contacted and their consent obtained before a review of marking is requested.

Students may independently request a review of marking of their exam script, in this case, the student will be expected to pay the relevant fee at the time of making the request. Where marks are increased in the outcome of a review of marking, fees will be refunded.

Students may also like to request their exam scripts. There is a fee for some scripts, to be paid when requesting the script. This is non-returnable.

Post results fees are reviewed by exam boards every year and are published nearer to the exam season. Fees will be posted on the school website in due course.

When do students receive certificates?

Certificates will be issued by the Awarding Bodies by the end of November. These can be collected from the college; students will be contacted to advise when certificates are available to collect.

A friend or family member may collect certificates, but only bearing a letter of request signed by the student and some form of ID.

Enquiries about results (EAR)

After the publication of results, the awarding bodies offer the following services;

- **Service 1** **Clerical re-check.**
This service includes checks to ensure all parts of the scripts have been marked and the total marks are accurate. Candidate consent is required.
- **Service 2** **Post results review of marking**
This is a post results review of the original marking to ensure that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly. It is not a re-marking of the candidate's script. Candidate consent is required.
- **Priority Service 2** **Post results review of marking**
This service is only available if a GCE A Level candidate's place in higher education is dependent on the outcome. It is not a re-marking of the candidate's script. Candidate consent is required.
- **Service 3** **Post- results review of moderation**
This is a review of the original moderation of controlled assessments / coursework where marks have been changed by the awarding body. A request for moderation will only be accepted from a Curriculum Manager. Individual requests cannot be made; a moderation includes the whole cohort of a subject. It is not a remoderation of candidates' work.
Candidate consent is not required as marks may be lowered but published subject grades will not be lowered in the series concerned. However, a lowered mark will be carried forward to a future certification.

All post results enquiries must be made by Sir Harry Smith CC.

If a concern is raised about a particular examination result, the curriculum manager will investigate the feasibility of requesting an enquiry supported by the centre.

Where the centre does not uphold a request from a candidate, the candidate may pay the appropriate EAR fee to the centre, and a request will be made to the awarding body on the candidate's behalf.

If the candidate (or his/her parent/carers) believes there are grounds to appeal against the centre's decision not to support an enquiry, an internal appeal can be submitted to the centre by completing and submitting the internal appeals form by the internal deadline of 10 September.

The appellant will be informed of the outcome of his/her appeal before the internal deadline for submitting an EAR.

Following the EAR outcome, an external appeals process is available if the head of centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome and believes there are grounds for appeal. The JCQ publications *Post-Results Services* and *JCQ Appeals Booklet (A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes)* will be consulted to determine the acceptable grounds for a preliminary appeal.

Where the head of centre is satisfied after receiving the EAR outcome, but the candidate (or his/her parent/carers) believes there are grounds for a preliminary appeal to the awarding body, a further internal appeal may be made to the head of centre. Following this, the head of centre's decision as to whether to proceed with a preliminary appeal will be based upon the acceptable grounds as detailed in the *JCQ Appeals Booklet*. Candidates or parents/carers are not permitted to make direct representations to an awarding body.

The **internal appeals form** should be completed and submitted to the centre within **5 calendar days** of the notification of the outcome of the EAR. Subject to the head of centre's decision, this will allow the centre to process the preliminary appeal and submit to the awarding body within the required 30 calendar days of receiving the

outcome of the enquiry about results process. Awarding body fees which may be charged for the preliminary appeal must be paid to the centre by the appellant before the preliminary appeal is submitted to the awarding body (fees are available from the exams officer). If the appeal is upheld by the awarding body, this fee will be refunded by the awarding body and repaid to the appellant by the centre.

Where an awarding body takes further investigative action candidates' marks and subject grades are not automatically protected. Candidates' marks and subject grades may therefore be lowered, confirmed or raised.