

Backwell School Examinations GENERAL INFORMATION and FAQs

Introduction

The aim of this guide is to supplement the orange Examination Information Booklet that was issued with your statement of entry and to answer some of the most frequently asked questions.

Please read it carefully, and if you are still not sure about anything

Please come to the Exams Team and ask!

The Exams Office is located next to Student Services. Exams Office staff are:

Mrs Kearney – Examinations Officer

Mrs Grant - Assistant Examinations Officer

Mrs Robinson

You can contact us by:

- a) Speaking to us in person at break or lunchtime.
- b) Telephoning us on 01275 463371

Please don't forget we are here to help YOU!

The school will make every effort to ensure that candidates receive the best possible preparation for their examinations, that the administrative arrangements run smoothly, and the examinations are conducted in a way that will cause as little stress as possible and help students to achieve their best.

Rooming

We try to use the Sports Hall for most large exams, but we also use several other rooms around the school. Your detailed timetable will tell you where to go - please check it carefully. You may not be in the same room as your friends.

Seat Numbers and registers

You **MUST** sit at the correct desk! Check your timetable for your seat number before each exam. You can also check the register outside the exam room. The register will have your exam listed at the top and then a list of names in alphabetical order – find your name and then the seat number will be printed next to it (eg: A2, F12, G9, etc.). If you are unsure of where you are seated please ask an invigilator.

By following the labels across the back of the room (A-Y in the Sports Hall) you should be able to find your seat. Each exam will have a different seating plan so **BEWARE!** Bring your timetable to every exam so that you can check, if you forget – check the register outside the exam room. If you are still not sure where you should sit – speak to an invigilator – they will be able to look up your seat number.

At the start of an examination

Check you have the correct paper in front of you.

You will be told when to complete the details on the front of your exam paper or on the answer booklet. You should not write anything until you are told to do so by the invigilator.

LISTEN carefully to all instructions given at the start of the exam and make sure you know how long you have to complete the paper.

On every paper, you must write:

1. Your surname and forename (this is your legal name not your 'known as' name).
2. Candidate (exam) number.
3. Centre Number 50601

Only write in **BLACK** ink or Black ballpoint pen – DO NOT WRITE IN PENCIL – only use pencil for diagrams. Do not use correction fluid or correction pens.

You cannot ask the invigilators questions regarding the content of the exam, but if you think there is something missing from your paper, then put your hand up and ask for guidance.

When your exam has finished and your papers have been collected in, you will be dismissed a row at a time. PLEASE LEAVE IN SILENCE – other students may still be working in the room or an adjoining room.

You are not allowed to take anything from the exam room except your own possessions – it is an offence to remove exam material.

Once you have been dismissed you go to normal lessons or, if you are on study leave you should either go home (you must sign out at reception) or go to the library or a free room.

PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB THE REST OF THE SCHOOL.

The right equipment

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the necessary equipment with you for each examination, eg: black pens x 2, pencils x 2, coloured pencils, eraser, ruler, pencil sharpener, calculator, compass and protractor (if you are unsure, check with your subject teacher) and if in doubt bring it anyway!

There is a limited supply of replacements available should yours stop working. Whilst we make every effort to help our students **WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT WE WILL PROVIDE EQUIPMENT TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE FORGOTTEN!**

You will need to bring all your equipment to the exam room in a **clear** plastic pencil case or plastic bag.

You must not bring any unauthorised books or paper into the exam room – this is CHEATING. If you are caught with unauthorised materials in your possession, we are required to report this as malpractice and you risk being disqualified from your exams.

During the summer months exams rooms can get very hot you are advised to bring a drink of water with you – this should be in a **clear** plastic bottle, with any labels removed. Water only - fizzy or fruit drinks are not allowed.

Your coats, bags and valuables

For all exams in the Sports Hall, coats, bags and personal belongings will be left in the changing rooms. If your exam is in another room you will be advised by the invigilator where to leave your belongings.

Please Note: Backwell School cannot guarantee the security of your personal property during examinations. Our advice therefore is that all valuables should be left at home. You are advised to make use of a school locker if you have one.

Mobile phones, smart watches, MP3 players and any other gadgets

The Exam Boards wish to make it clear to all students that taking mobile phones, ipods, MP3 players, smart watches or any other unauthorised device into an examination is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

Please be aware that any infringement of this rule WILL be reported to the relevant Exam Board.

Do not risk it – there are no exceptions!

Please Note: Backwell School cannot guarantee the security of your personal property during examinations. Our advice therefore is that all valuables should be left at home. You are advised to make use of a school locker if you have one.

We suggest that you do not bring mobile phones to school during the examination period. There is a public telephone in Reception if the need arises. Remember, if you are found to have a mobile phone on you during an examination – whether it is turned on or not – you will be disqualified from that examination and may jeopardise all your other examinations. Exam Boards can disqualify students from taking examinations for up to 5 years.

You have been warned!

Being Silent

Please wait quietly outside the exam room – you will be called in when the room is ready.

Once you enter the exam room, YOU ARE UNDER EXAM BOARD RULES AND YOU MUST REMAIN SILENT until the examination is over and you are well away from the exam room. You must not communicate with any other student either by speaking or mouthing to them. Even eye contact or smiling at another student is counted as communicating and would be treated as misconduct – you could be disqualified from all your exams – BEWARE!

You may not pass anything to another student in an examination. If you need to borrow a pen or pencil or have a question – put your hand up and speak to an invigilator – they are there to help you.

Access Arrangements

i.e., Extra Time, Reader, Scribe, Word Processor

Your Individual Candidate Timetable will reflect the presence of an Access Arrangement by indicating any additional time and/or an alternative room. If you have any queries regarding your Access Arrangement or feel that you no longer require an existing Access Arrangement please see a member of the Education Support Team immediately.

Please be aware that your Access Arrangement usage will be monitored and may be withdrawn if not used.

Uniform

Year 11

School uniform must be worn at ALL times when sitting exams and when you are in school during the study leave period.

Year 12 and 13

All Sixth Form should be aware that 'appropriate' casual clothing should be worn. Hats, scarves and coats are not allowed in the exam room.

Travel arrangements

It is your responsibility to ensure you arrive at the examination room at least 15 minutes before the examination is due to start, using the timings on your individual candidate timetable. If your exam is not due to finish until after 3:30pm, you must make your own arrangements to get home. There is a late coach available on Mondays – Thursdays.

If you are ill or have transport problems

If you are ill, or going to be late on the day of your exam, you or your parent/carer should notify the school IMMEDIATELY on 01275 465943.

If you are unable to attend due to illness, you and your parent/carer must complete a Self Certification Form (available from the Exams Office) this form should be completed and returned to the Exams Office as soon as possible. The Self Certification form must give specific information about dates and exact reasons why you could not sit the paper. Without this the Exam Boards will not issue final grades for the missed exam. You must be aware that if you are very late your exam paper may not be accepted by the Exam Board and you may not get the full time allowance for the paper.

Special Consideration

The school can write to the Exam Board to ask for Special Consideration in exceptional circumstances ONLY. Feeling unwell or stressed will not qualify for Special Consideration. Serious illness of a student will qualify, as will deaths of immediate family members and major traumas but in all cases we will require you to complete a Self Certification Form specifying dates and exact reasons – otherwise we will not be able to submit an application to the Exam Board. Please inform the Exams Office on the morning of your exam if you have any problems i.e. broken arm where we will need to put arrangements in place for you.

Remember Special Consideration is only applied for in exceptional circumstances.

Frequently Asked Questions.

What if the fire alarm goes off?

If the fire alarm does go off during an exam, you will be told to put your pens down and to sit in silence while awaiting instructions. If the fire alarm is genuine, you will be instructed by the invigilator, and led to the assembly point in an orderly manner and in silence. You must not communicate with the other candidates. If the fire alarm is false, you will remain seated in the exam room in silence. In either situation, the length of time of disruption will be noted and will be added on at the end, and Special Consideration will be applied for all candidates.

What if I need to go to the toilet during the exam?

If you are desperate to go to the toilet during the exam, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to come to you. He or she will then accompany you to the toilet. **Please remember – going to the toilet not only disturbs other candidates in the room, it also breaks your concentration.**

What if I feel ill during the exam?

If you feel unwell during an exam, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to come to you. Explain what the problem is and they will deal with it appropriately. **Please remember – if you have a cold or suffer from hay fever, bring plenty of tissues with you!**

What if I have a clash?

Depending on the total length of the exams, you will take them one after the other in either the morning or afternoon session. Any serious clashes will have been identified by the Exams Office and you will have been informed what arrangements have been made. We can move an exam due to clashes from a morning or afternoon session and very occasionally we can move it to the next day – we CANNOT move it to the previous day! If you notice you have a clash or are concerned please contact the Exams Office immediately.

What if I have an appointment the same day as my exam?

You will need to change your appointment! Exams MUST happen on the date and time specified by the exam board. Going on holiday, or to a wedding or having your hair done for the ball is not a valid excuse!

For the scribblers!

Defacing of exam papers is forbidden and could result in you being disqualified. Graffiti on exam desks is also forbidden. All the desks are scribble free and we would like to keep them that way. If you are found scribbling or scratching on your desk you will be asked to remain behind after the exam to clean it.

We have detailed seating plans and we will know WHO YOU ARE! When you are caught, you will be charged with the cost of the desk (£25.00). You have been warned!

Enquiries About Results

If you are concerned about any aspect of your results, please speak to your subject teacher or Head of Department urgently – there are strict deadlines provided by the Exam Board and these are not negotiable. If you are not able to find your subject teacher or Head of Department on Results Day, please go to Reception or the Exams Office.

Further information regarding Enquiries About Results will be available on Results Day.

Certificates

Year 11 will receive their certificates at the Certificate Presentation Evening in November or December; an invitation will be sent to your home address.

Year 13 will receive their certificates at the Certificate Presentation Evening in December or January; an invitation will be sent to your home address.

Lost Certificates - Students are warned that replacing lost certificates can be expensive. It currently costs around £45 to replace one certificate from the exam boards. Please be advised that certificates should be treated with the same level of care as a passport or driving license.

Careers Advice

Several senior members of Backwell staff will be available to discuss any concerns you may have on results day.

If you wish to change your A Level choices in the light of examination results you can discuss this with a member of the Sixth Form Team either on Results Day or on the first day of term in September.

Examination Policies and Internal Appeals

There is separate Examinations Policy and Internal Appeals Policy held in school. If you require a copy please contact the Examinations Officer.

And finally ...

These exams represent the culmination of several years' of your hard work at Backwell School. Do not behave in any way that might jeopardise your chances or those of other students in the exam room. **Remember – even eye contact can be taken as communication!**

Exam Board rules are strict and must be followed to the letter – the Exams Officer – Mrs Kearney – has no choice but to report any breaking of rules. Any misbehaviour or infringement of rules **MUST** be reported to the Exam Board and will **ALWAYS** be dealt with very severely.

On behalf of all staff at Backwell School

