

Examinations FAQs

Prior to the examination season:

- Q I am disadvantaged in examinations because of a difficulty I have. What can be done to make examinations less stressful for me?
- A To be eligible for support, called Access Arrangements, you must be assessed by Learning Support Services (LSS) or an approved outside agency. LSS will use approved diagnostic software to determine if you meet the criteria for examination support. LSS will advise you about the support most suitable for you. If your issue is something you are in contact with an outside agency about (eg CAMHS) we will require a letter from the outside agency giving details of your particular situation. The outside agency may suggest specific Access Arrangements but the final decision rests with the Examinations Officer at BHS.
- Q Do I have to use the access arrangement/s offered to me?
- A We cannot force you to use the access arrangement granted but if you do not make use of it then it ceases to be your normal way of working and so we may withdraw the support. If you are eligible for extra time, you are not required to stay for the whole period added to any particular exam, but if you regularly do not make use of it for a given subject or fail to make use of a reasonable amount of it, we may withdraw the support.
- Q I have a holiday/family or other event booked when an external examination is scheduled. Can the exam date be moved?
- A No. Examination dates set by an exam board cannot be changed. If you do not attend for a scheduled external examination you will receive an X mark for that subject.
- Q I have a holiday/family or other event booked when a mock examination is scheduled. Can the exam date be moved?
- A Mock exam dates are published well in advance and so we do not encourage unnecessary absences. However, we may be able to schedule an alternative date for sitting a mock exam, or you will be offered time in class to complete it.
- Q When will I receive my examination timetable?
- A You will receive a Statement of Entry in early February that has your examination dates on it. Your final timetable, including exam venues and seat numbers will be published before the Easter holidays.
- Q I have two exams at the same time. What do I do?
- A Exam clashes are unfortunately quite normal. There are rules about how we can resolve a clash and you will be advised what is decided as soon as we possibly can. If one of your exams has to be moved from the AM to PM session or vice versa, you will need to bring a packed lunch and revision materials as you will be kept under full centre supervision between exams.

During the examination season:

Q What do I do if I think I have the wrong paper or the wrong tier of paper?

A Invigilators will ask you to check the subject and tier before the exam starts. If you think something is wrong raise your hand and tell the invigilator immediately.

Q Can I bring sweets and/or a drink into the exam?

A No food (including chewing gum) or drink is allowed in the examination rooms except one bottle of water (up to 500ml in a transparent plastic bottle with a leak proof spout). There must be no label on the bottle. Bottles not complying with these conditions will be confiscated.

Q What do I do if I feel ill during the exam?

A Put up your hand and invigilator will assist you. You should inform an invigilator if you feel ill before or during an exam and you feel this may have affected your performance. You must not wait until you have gone home to let the school know.

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

A It is possible for you to sit the examination provided you are not more than 30 minutes late. You should get to school as quickly as possible and report to Reception. You MUST NOT ENTER an examination room without permission after an examination has started. The Exams Officer will escort you to the exam room. Please ensure that you allow enough time to get to school so that if you are delayed (eg through transport problems) you will still arrive on time.

Q Can I leave the exam early?

A No. The school's policy is that you cannot leave the exam room early, as this is disruptive to other candidates. Use any time remaining to check and re-check your answers. Do not turn around or distract any other candidates in the room. You cannot leave the examination room without the permission of the invigilator and must be accompanied.

Q What do I do if the fire alarm goes?

A Don't panic and continue working. The invigilators will tell you what to do in the event of an evacuation.

Q Can I go to the toilet during the exam?

A It is advisable that you visit the toilet before your exam. If you have a known medical problem you will be issued with a Toilet Pass for exams. If it is not a medical problem you will not normally be allowed to visit the toilet in the first half an hour of an exam. You have to be escorted to and from the exam room and will not be allowed any extra time. Toilet breaks will not normally be allowed in the last 30 minutes of an exam.

Q What do I do if I forget my Candidate Number?

A Candidate Numbers are written on cards which are on your exam desks.

Q What do I do if I forget my school Centre Number?

A Our Centre Number is 45006. It is written on the card found on your exam desk and clearly displayed on the notice board/s in all the examination rooms.

Q What do I do if I have an accident or am ill before the exam?

A Inform the school as soon as possible so that 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 or a laptop but we will need as much prior notice as possible. You may need to obtain medical evidence (from your GP or hospital) if you wish the school to make an appeal for Special Consideration application to the relevant examination board on your behalf. If accepted, the exam board will apply an adjustment to your overall mark/grade to compensate for the missed component.

Q A close family bereavement/funeral means I am unable to attend for a scheduled external examination. What will happen?

A We may require evidence of the bereavement/funeral. In such cases, we will make a Special Consideration application to the relevant examination board on your behalf. If accepted, the exam board will apply an adjustment to your overall mark/grade to compensate for the missed component.

Q I have been accused of malpractice during an external examination. What happens next?

A You will be asked to make a written statement giving your own point of view of the incident. We will submit your statement and that of the invigilator and any other person involved in the incident to the relevant examination board. The examination board will decide whether any action is to be taken over the incident and, if so, what that action will be. If action is taken against you, it may take the form of having your marks for the particular paper cancelled, or the whole grade for the relevant subject withheld.

After grades are published:

Q How do I challenge the grade I received?

A Please come to the Exams Office to find where your subject mark stands compared to the published grade boundaries. We will be able to advise you about whether we believe a challenge is worthwhile. The decision is yours about whether to appeal. A form will need to be completed and a fee paid. The fee is refundable if your grade goes up as a result of the review.

Q I want to resit an exam I sat last summer. What do I do?

A You must complete a resit form, available from the Exams Office, and pay the fee charged by the examination board/s for the subject/s you wish to resit. Your request must be received by the published entry deadline date for the relevant examination series. An administration fee will be added for processing your request.

Q When can I collect my examination certificates?

A Certificates are received in school at the end of November. We compile them together ready for collection from January onwards. They should be collected, by making an appointment with the Exams Office, within 12 months of publication.

Q I did not collect my certificates after I left school. Do you still have them?

A It is very unlikely we will have certificates dating back more than two years as we are required to destroy those that are not collected. We may be able to offer you a print out of results from our school database, which will show the exam boards you would need to contact for copies of your certificates. Examination boards charge for this service.