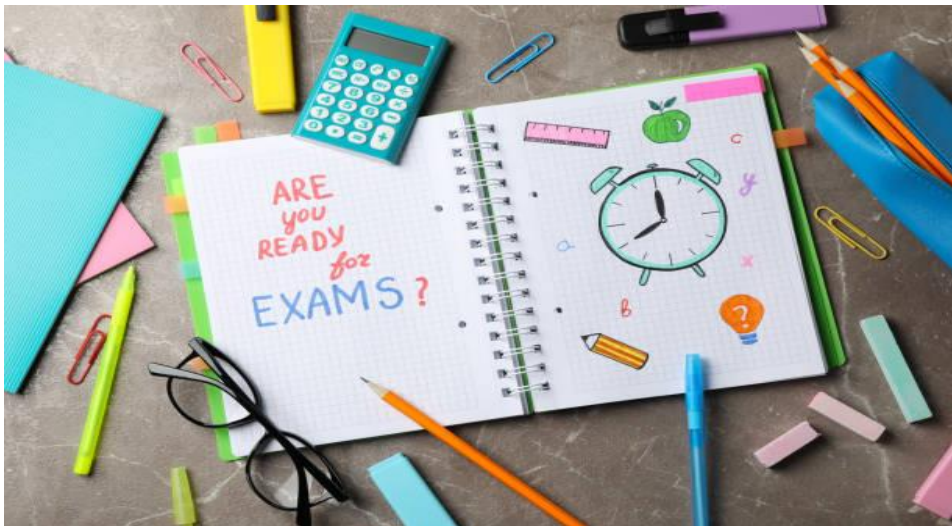




Southam College

Examination Handbook 2023

Information for Students, Parents & Carers



Centre Number 31290

Exams Office: 01926 812560 option 3

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Be the best you can be!



Southam
College

Examination Handbook 2023

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Welcome to Exams

At Southam College we want your examinations to be a successful and positive experience. In this handbook we have lots of advice on how you can best prepare for your exams, from what equipment you require to what behaviour is expected. It also has specific information about the exam boards that we use and their expectations.

We will make every effort to ensure you receive the best possible preparation for your exams. Most departments will offer revision sessions & exam breakfasts, please try and attend these so you are fully prepared to help you achieve your best.

We understand that exams can be a stressful time for students and also for parents/carers so please read this booklet carefully, so you are aware of all the rules and regulations. If you know these, you will understand that they are in place to help you, to ensure everything is fair and that you are receiving the best possible exam season with minimal disruption.

At the back of this booklet are the posters the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications), the exams regulator, expect us to have outside every exam room. Please make yourself familiar with the posters 'Notice to Candidates' & 'Warning to Candidates'

If there's anything you cannot find or would like to discuss further, please speak to the Exams office or your Head of Year.

Lastly, if there is anything worrying you, please tell someone. We are all here to help you the best we can.

GOOD LUCK ALL!

Miss Rebekah McNally
Examinations Officer

Mrs Chris Murrin-Foyle
Exams Administrator

Mrs Joanne Pilbeam
Exams Administrator

Phone: 01926 812560, option 3
Email: SOUExam@stowevalley.com

The Exams Office is open from 8.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am – 4pm on a Friday, term time only.

Student Wellbeing

Exams, internal or public, can seem like a daunting experience and therefore have the potential to cause stress and anxiety. They are currently the way schools and your parent/carers learn about your academic progress that will map out your future pathway.

It is perfectly normal to experience these emotions but please remember this is not necessarily a bad thing. During challenging times our bodies release adrenaline which, according to research, is helpful when responding to challenging situations. You will continue to feel these emotions way into adulthood for example at a job interview.

While we recognise it is 'normal' to have these feelings, we still want to do our best to give you as much of a stress-free experience as possible.

We would like all our students to: -

1. Feel safe
2. Be happy & confident
3. Be respectful to other students
4. Be able to voice any concerns
5. Learn in a calm environment
6. Develop resilience
7. Be equipped for a successful adult life
8. Be ambitious

We have provided a list of links in the Exams section on the Southam College website which include the following: -

- [Coping with exam pressure](#)
- [How To Deal with Exam Stress](#)
- [Revision Hints & Tips](#)
- [Exam techniques](#)
- [Helping you prepare for an exam](#)
- [Managing time between finishing exams and receiving your results](#)

If you would like to discuss any wellbeing concerns, please contact your Head of Year.

If you wish to discuss any Special Educational Needs, please contact the SEN Department.

If you wish to discuss any Safeguarding issues, please contact Miss Harwood, the Safeguarding Lead at Southam College.

Key Dates

The bulk of summer exams run from the 15th of May 2023 until 26th of June 2023.

We will be having our MFL speaking exams on the following days:-

Monday 17th April - PM only (lunch, P4 & P5)

German

Tuesday 18th April - ALL DAY (including AM reg)

German

Thursday 20th April - ALL DAY (including AM reg)

Spanish

Thursday 27th April - ALL DAY (including AM reg)

French

Contingency Date

A contingency date is in place in case of a significant or unexpected event that happens nationally or locally during the exam period that means no students, or a large number of students are unable to take an exam on the planned date.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, further resilience was needed within the exam timetables. A single contingency day was not felt to be sufficient if a national event or incident had a significant effect on the exam timetable. For example, summer exams could be affected by extremely high temperatures.

For the June 2023 exams, the awarding bodies have therefore introduced two additional half-day contingency sessions. These are on Thursday 8th of June 2023 and Thursday 15th of June 2023.

The standard contingency date this year is:-

WEDNESDAY 28TH OF JUNE 2023

As tempting as it seems we ask that you do not make any summer plans until after this date. If a significant event happens there will be no other time to re-sit the exam missed.

Exam Timetables

All students will receive an individual candidate timetable which displays the date and time, subject title, exam level, room, seat number and the length of all written exams.

Also on the timetable will be the candidate/exam number – all students must learn this.

The majority of our exams are held in the Sports Hall unless you have an alternative arrangement. The room you will need to go to is on your timetable.

Please check all of your information on this timetable carefully, including your name (**all exams are taken using your legal name**)

Morning exams start at 9.15am and afternoon at 1.15pm. Please arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of an exam. Some exams may run past the end of the day. Southam College offers late buses on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. **Please remember to arrange alternative transport home on a Tuesday or Friday if you know an exam will run past the end of the day.**

Clashes

Arranging so many exams at the same time is bound to result in some exam clashes. We understand this may be worrying for you. By the time you receive your **seated** timetable your clash will be resolved so please do not look at others timetables and be concerned that your exam is not at the same time as everyone else.

Your clash could be a 'Back-to-Back clash' where you take one exam straight after the other or it will be a 'Proper Clash' where you will have one exam in the morning and one in the afternoon.

If you have a 'proper clash' you will

- Be kept under supervision in between the two exams.
- Will not be allowed access to your phone until the clash exam has finished.
- You can revise but you cannot have any internet access.
- You cannot have contact with any other student except those under supervision at the same time.
- You must bring a packed lunch as you **cannot** go to the canteen.

If there is anything you do not understand if you have a clash, please come to the Exam Office.

Equipment you Require

To make the entry into the exam room as smooth and as quick as possible, at the beginning of each exam please make sure you have the following with you:-

- A transparent pencil case, this must be totally clear with no names or patterns
- **Black** ball point pens – **No** blue pens or gels pens as the exam scanners may not be able to read these.
- A pencil, a sharpener & an eraser – Correction pens or fluid is not allowed.
- A ruler with mm and cm.
- Calculator – These are allowed for some exams, but they must not have any instructions or a lid in the exam hall. Please remove them **before** entering the exam room. Please also make sure they are working.
- A clear water bottle – must only contain water. Labels must be removed. Own water bottles must be totally clear with no names or patterns,
- Place **all** equipment on your desk. If you are seen going through your pockets, you will receive a warning.

You are responsible for providing your own equipment for Exams

If you realise you do not have a piece of equipment, please tell your teacher during the Exam Breakfast and they will be able to provide it for you.

- You cannot borrow from or lend equipment to another student in the exam room.
- Only material listed on the question paper is allowed in the exam room.
- You must not have any other materials. This means nothing should be in your pockets or on your person. Please do not bring any books, notes (unless specifically asked to) bags or coats into the exam room.
- Mobiles phone should be switched off and placed in your bags. Placing on silent **isn't** an option.
- No watches of any kind – please leave these in your bag.
- No headphones or air pods of any kind – please leave these in your bag.
- **6th Form** – please leave your lanyards in your bags and place them back on immediately after your exam has finished.

Possession of any unauthorised items in an exam is a serious offence even if you don't intend to use it. It could result in disqualification from your examination and your overall course.

The Role of the Invigilator

All external exams (and most PPE's) are supervised by a team of staff called Invigilators.

Invigilators are employed by Southam College to make sure the conduct of exams follow the strict rules and regulations set out by the JCQ exam boards.

An invigilator will:-

- Distribute and collect exam papers.
- Tell you the rules at the start of each exam.
- Tell you when to start and finish the exam.
- Hand out any extra paper if required.
- Deal with any problems that occur during the exam.
- Look out for any incidents of malpractice (talking, notes, unauthorised items etc)

Students are expected to treat invigilators in a respectful manner. They are there to help you. Please listen to their instructions carefully.

Invigilators **cannot** discuss the exam paper with you or explain the questions.

If you find a mistake in an exam paper or are missing an insert or a book, please alert an invigilator by silently putting up your hand and they will alert the Exams Officer.

During Your Exam

As soon as you enter the exam room you are under exam conditions. Only when you are given permission by the lead invigilator will you be allowed to leave the room and only when you leave the room will exam conditions cease.

You must:-

- Leave all bags and possessions where your Head of Year or Invigilator tells you, only taking out necessary equipment.
- Listen to and follow the instructions given by the invigilators.
- Face the front at all times.
- Behave in a respectful manner toward all invigilators and follow their instructions.
- Check you have the correct exam paper.
- Check that you can see a clock.
- If you have any issues, put your hand up and wait for the invigilator to come to you – **DO NOT** call out.
- If you finish an exam early, take this time to check over your answers. Make sure you have completed everything correctly.
- If you finish early, you must sit quietly, facing the front.

You must not:-

- Speak as you are entering the exam room.
- Speak to anyone during the exam except if you have an issue and need to speak to an invigilator – remember to put up your hand to get their attention.
- Take any unauthorised equipment/notes into the exam room.
- Leave an exam early even if you have finished.
- Distract or communicate with any other students. Please do not tap pens, rulers etc as this can be a distraction to other students.

The Exams officer or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will remove any student who is disruptive or behaves in an unacceptable manner from the exam room. All acts of inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with JCQ regulations and the schools behaviour policy. This means that you may be disqualified from the paper or the whole subject.

If you leave an exam room without supervision, you will not be allowed back in.

At the End of the Exam

The lead invigilator will announce when you have 5 minutes left to complete your exam. They will then tell you to stop when the exam time is up.

- You must stop writing immediately remaining silent and facing the front. Remember that you are still under exam conditions until you are outside of the exam room.
- Invigilators will collect all exam papers and any additional paper that you have used.
- If you have used extra paper, please remember to write your name on them.
- Leave the room in silence when instructed to by the invigilator. Please remember that we have numerous exams going on at the same time so please show consideration to other students who will still be working.
- Please remain silent when collecting your possessions.

Malpractice

Candidate malpractice' means malpractice by a candidate in connection with any examination or assessment, including the preparation and authentication of any controlled assessments, coursework or non-examination assessments, the presentation of any practical work, the compilation of portfolios of assessment evidence and the writing of any examination paper.

Examples of Candidate malpractice include (not an exhaustive list):-

- Defacing exam papers
- A breach of the instructions or advice of an invigilator, supervisor, or the awarding body in relation to the examination or assessment rules and regulations.
- The unauthorised use of alternative electronic devices or technology.
- Accessing the internet or online materials where this is not permitted.
- Failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to maintain the security of the examinations or assessments.
- Working collaboratively with other candidates, beyond what is permitted
- Copying from another candidate or allowing work to be copied.
- The deliberate destruction of another candidate's work.
- Disruptive behaviour in the examination room or during an assessment session (including the use of offensive language).
- The inclusion of offensive comments, obscenities, or drawings; discriminatory language, remarks or drawings directed at an individual or group in scripts, controlled assessments, coursework, non-examination assessments or portfolios.
- Theft of another candidate's work.
- Being in possession of unauthorised confidential information about an examination or assessment.
- The unauthorised use of a memory stick or similar device where a candidate uses a word processor.
- Facilitating malpractice on the part of other candidates.
- Behaving in a manner so as to undermine the integrity of the examination.
- Impersonation: pretending to be someone else, arranging for another person to take one's place in an examination or an assessment.

If a candidate is suspected of malpractice the invigilator will warn the candidate that they may be removed from the exam room. The candidate will also be warned that the Exam Board will need to be informed and may decide to disqualify them.

They may also receive a written warning from the Exam Board, loss of marks, disqualification from **all** exams, be barred from taking any exams in the future.

Special Consideration

Special Consideration (Spec Cons) is an adjustment to the marks of a candidate who has been affected by circumstances outside of their control.

This includes:-

- Illness
- Bereavement
- Injury
- Domestic Crisis
- Any incident witnessed that may impact their concentration in an examination.

The allowance for Special Consideration is from 0% (consideration given but addition of marks considered inappropriate) to 5% (reserved for exceptional cases). Southam College do not decide what percentage is given, this is up to the exam boards.

Students are only eligible for Spec Cons if they have been fully prepared for the whole course but their performance in an exam/coursework/performance is affected by circumstances beyond their control.

The Exams Office must be informed immediately so that necessary paperwork can be completed. Evidence will be required for any Spec Con application.

If you receive any adjustment, it is likely to be small and no feedback is provided to Southam College by the Exams Boards.

Results Day

GCE Results (Year 12 & Year 13) can be collected from **9am on Thursday 17th August 2023**.

GCSE Results can be collected from **9am for Year 11 and from 10am for Year 10 on Thursday 24th of August 2023**.

We would prefer you to collect these in person but if you are unable to you can nominate someone to collect them on your behalf. You must give written permission to the school **before** results day. Your nominated person must have photographic ID with them.

Results will not be given out over the telephone, email or by post.

Post Results Services

On results day if you do not receive the necessary grades you need for 6th Form, college, or University, please do the following:-

- If you feel that your result is wrong, speak to your subject teacher or Head of Department who will be able to advise you if you should apply for a Review of Marking (RoM).
- If you decide to go ahead with a RoM you must see the Exams Officer to complete and sign the relevant forms.
- There is a fee for RoM's which will need to be paid (fees will be updated nearer the time)
- Please be aware that your result could go down as well as up if you apply for a RoM.
- You can also apply to access a copy of your script – relevant fees may apply to this also.

Certificates

Your certificates will start to arrive in school from October/November time and will be given out at an Awards Evening arranged by the 6th Form team in December. You will not be able to collect your certificates before this date (a letter will be sent to all students in year 11 & 13 nearer the time)

Year 10 and 12 students will get their certificates the following year at their award evening.

Guidelines state we only need to keep certificate **for 12 months**. Southam College will hold these for you for 3 years before we securely destroy them.

If you require your certificates **after 3 years** you will need to contact the individual Exam Board to request a replacement.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What if I am late for an exam?

A: Get to school as quickly as possible and report to reception. It is still possible for you to sit the exam. A member of staff will escort you to the exam room. You must not enter the exam room without permission. It may not be possible to give you the full time for the exam.

If you arrive very late, we need to inform the Exam Board giving the reason and evidence for your lateness. It is then up to the Exam Board if they will mark your paper.

Q: What if I am unwell on the day of an Exam?

A: Inform us immediately so that we can help or advise you. If at all possible, you should attend as you will not get another opportunity to sit the exam. If you receive an injury which impairs your writing, we can possibly supply you with a word processor or a scribe. You must obtain medical evidence if you miss an exam for us to make an appeal on your behalf.

If you start to feel unwell during an exam, please inform an invigilator by putting up your hand and they will assist you.

Q: What happens if I have an unauthorised absence from an Exam?

A: If you miss an Exam, you cannot retake it on another day. Timetables are regulated by exam boards and you must attend on the given date and time.

If you miss an exam without good reason, we may charge you the entry fee. You also risk not gaining your final GCSE or GCE result.

Q: What happens in the event of an emergency during an exam?

A: If the fire alarm or lockdown alarm sound during your exam, do not panic. Stop what you are doing, close your paper and listen to the invigilator's instructions. You must remember that you are still under exam conditions so need to remain silent and not communicate with any other student. Do not try to collect any of your belongings. You will be allowed the full time for the exam and a report will be sent to the Exam Board with details of the incident.

Q: Can I go to the toilet during exams?

A: You will only be allowed to go to the toilet if it is deemed necessary. In most cases the invigilators will use their discretion. Please do remember to try to go to the toilet before all of your exams. If an exam is 60 minutes long it is unlikely you will be allowed. Please inform us if you have a medical issue. You will be escorted by an invigilator and you will not be allowed any extra time.

Q: What should I wear to an exam?

A: All Year 10 & 11 students must wear their school uniforms. 6th form students must wear the approved 6th Form dress code. You will be asked to remove your jackets/coats and lanyards before you enter the exam room.

Q: What do I do if I lose my certificates?

A: Unfortunately, Southam College does not hold extra copies of your certificates. You will need to contact the Exam Boards and request copies. The Exam Boards we currently use are:-

- AQA
- OCR
- Pearson also known as Edexcel
- WJEC also known as Eduqas

A list of the subjects we use these Exam Boards for are on the Southam College website.

Q: Who can I talk to if I have any other questions not covered in this booklet?

If you have any other questions, please come and see us in the Exams Office. We are here to help you as much as we can. We want this whole process to be as smooth as possible for you. We understand exams can be daunting so we are here to help you.

You can also speak to your tutor, your subject teacher, the safeguarding team or your Head of Year. Everyone here is willing to help in any way possible. Don't worry or struggle in silence.