



CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK 2026

Introduction

This handbook is designed as a guide to the external exam procedures at Swans International School. As an exam centre we are required to adhere to the regulations set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and Cambridge Examinations (CIE) therefore we will run all of our external exams in accordance with these regulations. All candidates should read the document links indicated in the Further Guidance section. If there is anything in this handbook that you do not understand or if you have any further questions please contact the Exams Officer (Lucy Armes).

Coursework/non-examination assessments

Certain components of IGCSE that contribute to the final grade of the qualification are internally assessed (marked) by the centre. The marks awarded are then submitted before the deadline set by the awarding body for external moderation. Candidates will be informed of internally assessed marks before they are submitted to the awarding body for JCQ exams. At this point if a candidate believes that correct marking procedures were not followed they should refer to the internal appeals policy (please see the Exams Officer for more details). Candidates should be aware that the internally assessed mark may change during the external moderation process. Therefore, the mark given by the teacher is only provisional and may be increased or decreased by the awarding body following moderation. Please see additional guidance links for Exam Board information for candidate documents relating to coursework and non-examination assessments.

Written exams

All exam candidates will be issued with separate Statements of Entry from each exam board, which they should check to ensure personal details and exam entries are correct. If you think any of the information is incorrect, you should inform the Exams Officer immediately. If there are subsequent changes, another Statement of Entry will be issued. Candidates should read the published information for written exams, a link for which can be found in the further guidance section of this document. Candidates should also ensure they read and understand the exam board posters, links to which can be found in the further guidance section. These posters will be displayed outside and inside of each exam room in accordance with Exam Board regulations. If you notice you have a clash of exams, notify the exams officer.

Exam start and finish times

Candidates should arrive outside the exam room at least 15 minutes before the published start time, ensuring they have only the correct equipment with them for their exam. Bags should be left in a locker. External exams at Swans will normally start at 9.30 am or at 2.30 pm but candidates should always check the exam timetable to confirm start times. All exam candidates will be expected to remain in the exam hall, under exam conditions until the exam has ended and all papers have been collected.

Supervision during your exams

Exams are supervised by the exams officer/ invigilators/ teachers who ensure the exams are conducted within the rules and regulations directed by the Exam Boards. Candidates are expected to follow the exams officer/ invigilator / teacher instructions at all times. If you need to speak to an invigilator at any point, you should stay seated and raise your hand.

Full centre supervision

Sometimes students will have an exam clash. In this case students will have to be in periods of full center supervision. During these times students will not be able to communicate with any other students, nor have access to phones or other devices, and will not have access to their bags. Students must comply with these regulations as failure to do so may put their results at risk. Students may be allowed to have revision materials available during these sessions.

Permitted questions in an exam

In the exam you may not ask for help interpreting a question, guidance on which questions to answer, help with vocabulary, nor how much time is left.

Exam room seating

A seating plan will be in place for all exams. You will be called into the exam room in candidate number order and your desk will have your exam details displayed on it. Prior to the start of your exam, the invigilator will ask you to check the details displayed on your desk as it is very important that you sit in the correct seat.

Exam room conditions

From the moment you enter the exam room until you have left at the end of the exam, you are under exam conditions. During this time you must not communicate with any other candidate. If you have any questions or concerns, you should raise your hand for invigilator assistance. You must listen and follow the invigilator's instructions at all times. You must not open or write on your exam paper until told to do so. When the invigilator instructs you to fill in your details on the front of the paper, you should complete this fully using a black pen. On all exam papers you will be required to enter an exact copy of the name on your desk, along with the centre number for the relevant exam board and your candidate number. Exam information will be displayed on a whiteboard at the front of the room. This will include the Centre Number and the start and finish times for your exam. All answers should be written in the designated sections of your answer booklet/exam paper. If you require additional answer sheets you should raise your hand for an invigilator. It is important to make sure you enter your details (name, candidate number etc.) on any additional answer sheets you use – failure to do so may result in lost marks. You will not be able to have paper to make notes all exam materials have to be submitted to the exam board

Equipment required for exams

Please ensure you arrive fully prepared with the correct equipment required for each exam. Pencil cases must be clear plastic only and not overfilled with unnecessary equipment, as all of the contents should be clearly visible to invigilators.

You should bring with you the following items:

- 3 x Black Pens
- 3 x HB Pencils
- 30cm Transparent Ruler
- Protractor
- Compass
- Pencil Sharpener
- Rubber
- An exam board approved calculator (you must be able to prove on entry that the where relevant that the calculator memory has been cleared and then set to exam mode in front of an invigilator)

You must not use gel pens, Tippex or any other correcting material.

You may bring water with you but this must be in a clear non-coloured container without any text. Any labels on water bottles should be removed.

Using calculators

You must be aware of the following exam board instructions regarding the use of calculators in your exams. *"Candidates may use a calculator in an examination unless 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."*

<p>Calculators must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• of a size suitable for use on the desk;• either battery or solar powered;• free of lids cases and covers; <p>The candidate is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the calculator's power supply,• the calculator's working condition,• cleaning anything stored on the calculator.	<p>Calculators must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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 including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ databanks,○ dictionaries,○ mathematical formulas○ text
---	---

What you should not bring into the exam room

Please be aware that possession of unauthorised material is breaking Exam Board rules, even if you do not intend to use it. If you do, you will be subject to penalty from the awarding bodies and possible disqualification. Mobile phones, smart glasses, ipods, MP3/4 players, watches, digital fitness trackers, earbuds or any other technological/web enabled sources or information are not permitted in exams. Do not bring erasable pens, glue sticks, post-it notes, covered erasers, correcting fluids, tissue packets, ink cartridge boxes, calculator cases, packaging for maths equipment. nor scissors to exams. No food or drink (other than water in a clear un coloured plastic bottle) is permitted in exam rooms.

What should you wear for your exams?

Candidates are required to attend exams in full school uniform as outlined in the school handbook. If a candidate arrives inappropriately dressed for an exam they may be refused entry.

What to do if you arrive late for an exam

You should arrive in plenty of time for your exam. However, candidates may be late due to circumstances beyond their control. Please inform the Exams Officer as soon as possible if you think you may be late for an exam and on arrival report to Reception so that the Exams Officer can be contacted.

What to do if you are unwell, absent on the day of an exam?

If you are unable to attend school on the day of an exam due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, please contact the Exams Officer as soon as possible. External exams cannot be rescheduled due to absence, so failing to attend an exam will have a significant impact on your overall grade. If a candidate is not fit to attend an exam the school may be able to make an application to the awarding body for special consideration. However, in order to do this the candidate requires a medical certificate detailing the illness.

If you are feeling unwell but can still manage to attend the exam you should inform the Exams Officer as soon as possible. We may be able to make alternative seating arrangements for you before the exam begins and depending on the nature of your illness it may be possible to apply for special consideration. If you begin to feel unwell during an exam you should inform an invigilator. You may be accompanied by an invigilator if you need to leave the room temporarily. If you are unable to complete the exam due to illness the partially completed paper will be sent for marking and the exam board will be informed of the situation. Special consideration applications will be considered where appropriate.

What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from an exam?

If a candidate is absent at the start of an exam and has not contacted the Exams Officer, the school will attempt to contact the candidate (or their parents/carers). Candidates who fail to attend an exam will be marked as absent.

What happens in the event of an emergency in the exam room?

At the start of each exam the candidates will be reminded that in the event of an emergency they should close their papers and follow the Exams Officer/Invigilator's instructions for evacuating the building. This will be in line with the appropriate school Evacuation Procedure for the room in which the exam is being conducted. During evacuation candidates should not communicate with each other (except where necessary for the safety of themselves or others) and under no circumstances should they discuss the exam. Invigilators will escort candidates to the assembly point where a staff member will indicate where they should line up. Once the situation is resolved, candidates will be permitted back into the exam room and when everyone is seated the invigilator will re-start the exam. The time at which the emergency situation begins will be noted so that on return to the exam room, candidates can be given the full remaining allowance of time to complete the exam. Please note practice fire drills will not be scheduled during external exams.

What happens at the end of an exam?

The invigilator will announce when you have 5 minutes remaining. At the end of the exam the invigilator will tell you to stop writing. You must stop writing immediately (if you continue this is a breach of regulations and you may receive a penalty from the awarding body). You should remain silent and face the front of the exam room – remember, you are under exam conditions until you have left the room. Invigilators will collect question papers and answer booklets. When you are dismissed by the invigilator you must leave the exam room in silence.

Candidates with access arrangements

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for candidates where necessary and informs candidates of any approved arrangements that are in place for them. Depending on the nature of their access arrangements, candidates may be seated in the main exam venue or in a smaller exam room accommodating other candidates with similar requirements. In the unlikely event that a candidate believes they are entitled to access arrangements that have not been put in place during an exam, the candidate must inform an invigilator immediately.

Special Consideration

Special Consideration is an adjustment to a candidate's mark applied by awarding bodies to reflect adverse circumstances beyond the candidate's control which affect their performance in an exam (eg illness, bereavement, domestic crisis). This adjustment is at the discretion of the awarding body. If you think you may be eligible for Special Consideration you should contact the Exams Officer. You will be required to provide evidence in support of Special Consideration applications.

Alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice

Any act or practice which is a breach of exam board regulations, or which compromises the integrity of a qualification, is considered as malpractice. Instances of malpractice may arise for a variety of reasons, some may be intentional with the aim of obtaining an unfair advantage in an exam, others may be due to carelessness or forgetfulness in applying regulations. The School is under an obligation to notify an awarding body immediately of any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice. Following an investigation, the awarding body may impose penalties on individuals considered to be responsible for malpractice.

Results

Cambridge exam results can be accessed on 18th August 2026 by the candidate using their unique access code which will be issued by the Exams Officer in June. You will be able to access your Edexcel exam results via the Results Plus service. Your AQA results will be emailed to you by the Exams Officer on the day of publication. You will receive your results on 20th August 2026.

On the day if you have any queries regarding the results then please email the exams officer at examsofficer@swansschool.net

Post-results services

Post-results services will be available to candidates from results day. If you are interested in applying for one of the services please contact the Exams Officer, in writing, as soon as possible in order to obtain information on deadlines and fees payable.

- Service 1 (clerical re-check)
- Enquiries about results (EAR) - Service 2 (review of marking)
- Access to Scripts (ATS or Service 2S) - this service allows candidates to request copies of their marked exam papers
- Re-sit of an examination in November 2026

Certificates

Awarding bodies will send exam certificates to reach the school by early November. Students continuing their education at Swans will be given their certificates by the Exams officer in the first instance. Any which are uncollected will be stored with Nurse Kathy for 12 months. Students will be asked to sign a photocopy to prove receipt. Students who have followed the ESO course of study will need to have their certificates legalized in the UK prior to receiving them. This process may take a few months to complete.

For those who no longer attend Swans they may give written authority for someone to collect/sign on their behalf. Unclaimed certificates will be retained for a minimum of 1 year. The school is unable to provide replacements for any lost certificates – in such instances candidates will need to contact the relevant awarding bodies.

Appeals procedure

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the exams process; administration, delivery or marking, the school has an appeals process in place. Please contact the Exams Officer for further information.

Contingency arrangements for June 2026

Due to the COVID pandemic, the exam boards have made contingency plans for exams being cancelled. As a result if exams have to be cancelled in a country schools will be required to submit teacher assessed grades. This will need to be supported with a range of evidence. This evidence may be made up of mock exam papers, coursework, controlled assessment pieces, and other associated pieces. In addition, oral exams may be replaced by a language endorsement.

Exam boards have agreed that the 24th June 2026 will be an exam contingency day. Therefore, students will need to ensure that they will be available to sit exams on that day should the need arise.

Further Guidance

The exam timetable, Swans exam policy documents, and awarding body documents may be found in the following webpage

<https://www.swansschool.com/igcse-exam-info>