

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023

Our Ref: MBA/ETA



**RUSHEY MEAD**  
**ACADEMY**

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**Executive Principal:** Ms R Hindocha MBE  
**Principal:** Mrs V Barwell

Dear Parent/Carer,

### GCSE Exams

The official exam period is **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023** (not including Contingency Days, detailed below). Whilst exam dates have been published, **students must be available for the whole exam series** in case one of their exams is moved. Individual timetables will be sent out to each student.

**Please note unlike GCSEs in 2022 and 2021, when only certain elements of subjects were included, this year sees a return to the full subject content for all papers.**

GCSE results day is **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023**.

### Exam Rules/Conduct

It is important that students adhere to the JCQ guidelines in the summer, so they do not fall foul of malpractice which can result in a disqualification from the paper the incident happened in AND other papers by that same exam board.

Key things to note:

- Students should have nothing in pockets. All items must be stored in their bags.
- Water bottles can be out on the table however they must be clear and have no labels on them so students should remove these before entering the exam hall.
- Communication with other candidates is prohibited as soon as the leader of the exam declares exam conditions have begun. *This will happen during the line up before entering the examination room.* Communication is defined by JCQ as both verbal and non-verbal. Gestures to each other such as head nods etc are all classed as non-verbal communication and are seen by JCQ as intent to cheat and the act is a refusal to follow the instructions of the examiners and thus can be considered malpractice and result in a disqualification.

Full JCQ guidance for students on exam practice can be found here: [https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/IFC-Written\\_Examinations\\_2023\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/IFC-Written_Examinations_2023_FINAL.pdf).

### Equipment

Students must make sure they have all the equipment they need ready as they line up at the start of each examination. If they aren't sure – ask.

- **Compulsory:** Black biro pens, pencil, clear 30cm ruler, rubber, pencil sharpener
- **Subject Specific:** pair of compasses, clear protractor, scientific calculator
- **Optional:** Pencil case (must be clear), highlighters

### Ofqual Update 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letters-arrangements-for-exams-and-assessments-in-2023/letter-to-students>

Formulae and equation sheets will be given in GCSE Maths, Physics, and Combined Science exams, so students do not need to memorise as much. In GCSE Modern Foreign Languages, the exams do not have to test unfamiliar vocabulary. Exams may still contain unfamiliar vocabulary, but exam boards can give meanings for words that are not on their vocabulary lists.

### **Grading**

Although GCSE exams in 2023 will be conducted in the same way as before the pandemic, Ofqual has said it will “consider the approach to grading for 2023 in light of outcomes in 2022”.

This means there is still a chance Ofqual may take the decision to adjust grade boundaries to ensure students taking exams in 2023 are not unfairly disadvantaged.

### **Special Consideration**

Every exam series, students can apply for special consideration, this will be the case this year. There will be strict criteria, as normal.

Ofqual defines special consideration as any adjustments given to a student who has temporarily experienced an illness, injury, or other event outside of their control at the time of the assessment which significantly affects their ability to:

- take an assessment.
- demonstrate what they can do in an assessment.

Special consideration is only for things that happen immediately before or during an exam or assessment that has a material effect on a student’s ability to take that exam or assessment, or on how they performed. To be eligible for special consideration students must have been fully prepared for the assessment and have covered the whole course. Students are not eligible for special consideration because their education was disrupted, either by the pandemic or for any other reason.

### **Contingency Dates**

For the summer 2023 exam series, one “contingency” exam day and two afternoons have been arranged by the examination awarding bodies which all students need to be aware of. These contingency days for GCSE examinations have been put in place “in the event of widespread, sustained national or local disruption to examinations during the June 2023 examination series.”

The dates that have been set aside as the contingency days are **Thursday 8th June** and **Thursday 15th June 2023 (afternoons only)**, and **Wednesday 28th June 2023 (all day)**. This means that all exam candidates must be available to sit exams from the date of their first exam until **Wednesday 28th June 2023**. This decision is not a school decision and applies to all candidates in all schools.

Please can all students/parents/carers make a note of the contingency exam dates in the event that an awarding body needs to invoke its contingency plan.

### **Punctuality and Attendance**

It is vital that students attend the GCSE examinations they are entered for and arrive in plenty of time. If a student is late for reasons out of their control and contact Mrs Taylor through the school to inform of this then we can make the necessary provisions to allow the student to still sit the exam. However, turning up late unannounced is considered malpractice by JCQ as there is potential to have attempted to find out information about the paper before sitting it. Students turning up late unannounced will be refused entry to the paper and will therefore fail the exam.

If a student is unwell and unable to sit an exam, they MUST contact Mrs Taylor through the school before the exam. Special considerations can be applied, however there must be a valid reason. Illnesses would need to be accompanied by a doctor's note to validate and provide evidence for the special consideration with the exam boards.

To support with their revision, all students have been given Revision Strategies and Subject Topic List booklets. Please encourage them to use this at home to help manage a stressful time. If you feel that your child needs any support in managing exam stress, please contact the school so that we can work together to support them to achieve the best outcomes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Baldwin-Jones".

Molly Baldwin-Jones

Assistant Principal: Data & Achievement