



Soham Village College

The A-Z Guide to Exams

For non-Year 11 Students



Updated December 2024

Your A-Z Guide to your Exams at Soham Village College

Arrival Time

The time stated on your exam timetable is your exam start time. Please ensure you arrive at least 10-15 minutes **before** this time. Unless you have been told otherwise make sure you are lined up in your correct subject set on Beechurst Playground a minimum of 10 minutes **before** the time on your timetable.

Access Arrangements

If you are entitled to exam access arrangements such as a reader, scribe, extra time or laptop, this will be listed on your name label on your exam desk and the invigilator will have been made aware of these arrangements in advance.

Behaviour

Soham Village College expects the highest standards of behaviour during all exams. The awarding bodies set strict rules which you must follow. If you don't, you will be reported for **malpractice** which could lead to you being disqualified from one or multiple exams.

Remember: Always listen to instructions from the invigilator, **never** attempt to communicate with another student, and **never** bring unauthorised items into the exam room.

Break and Lunchtime

Exam start times are scheduled by the awarding bodies and cannot be changed. This may mean that you miss your normal break or lunchtimes. Make sure you know when your exams are, and make sure your teacher knows that you may have to leave your lessons early. You will always be allowed a short break before and after an exam, if applicable. You may need to plan your meals slightly differently if you have an exam. The canteen may be available, but there won't necessarily be a full selection of food to choose from, you may prefer to bring a packed lunch. Make sure you eat and drink.

Certificates

The awarding bodies will issue exam certificates in the autumn term and these will be distributed in school from the end of November 2025.

Please ensure you look after your certificates – they will be essential to you when applying for colleges and job, both now and in the future. Awarding bodies will charge approximately £50.00 to replace a certificate and in most cases, it will be in the form of a Certified Statement of Results.

Communication

You must not talk to, attempt to communicate with, or disturb other candidates once you have entered the exam room.

Remember: Do not be tempted to turn around, always face the front. If you need assistance, raise your hand and an invigilator will come to you.

End of the exam

Make sure you use all the available time in your exam and check your answers carefully. Don't forget that questions sometimes appear on the back page too. You will not be allowed to leave the exam early. Once your exam papers have been collected in, the invigilator will dismiss students a column at a time.

Remember: Some students may still be working, and you are still under exam conditions and must not talk to anyone until you are completely out of the exam room.

Equipment

You are responsible for bringing the correct equipment to all your exams. Make sure you have the following:

- **Black** pens (you must write in **black** unless instructed otherwise as exam papers are scanned)
- Pencils / pencil sharpener / eraser
- Ruler
- Calculator (without lid) – if permitted in the exam
- Any other specific equipment required for the exam you are sitting

You may also bring:

- Tissues
- Transparent bottle containing water only (no labels, no logos)

You are not allowed to use correcting pens, correcting fluids/tape, erasable pens, highlighters or gel pens in your **answers**, you may highlight questions, however, if this is helpful to you.

Exam Timetables

You will be given a **provisional exam timetable**, which is printed on white paper, before the Easter holidays. This individual timetable will give you the date of each of your exams so you can plan your revision.

You will be given your **final exam timetable**, which is printed on green paper, as soon as possible after the Easter holidays. This individual timetable will give you the date, time and exam room for all your exams. Make sure you look after your timetable. If you lose it do **not** use someone else's timetable – come and see me and I'll print out a replacement timetable for you. It is extremely important that you check your timetable every day to make sure you arrive on the correct day at the correct time for all your exams.

Remember: GCSE exams are not the same as mock exams. There is no catch-up session. GCSE exams cannot be rescheduled for a later time or day.

JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) Information for Candidates

The JCQ represents all the awarding bodies that offer GCSE qualifications. It sets out all the regulations for exams which the college must adhere to. You **must** read and familiarise yourself with the following JCQ documents intended to give candidates more information about exams:

- JCQ Information for Candidates – Coursework
- JCQ Information for Candidates – Non-examination Assessments
- JCQ Information for Candidates – Onscreen Exams
- JCQ Information for Candidates – Social Media
- JCQ Information for Candidates – Written Examinations
- JCQ Information for Candidates – Preparing to sit your exams
- JCQ Information for Candidates – Privacy Notice
- JCQ Unauthorised Items Poster
- JCQ Warning to Candidates Poster

Click on the link below to access these documents on the school website:

[Soham Village College - GCSE and Exam Information](#)

Legal names

You will be entered for your exams using your legal names. It is possible to use your preferred name, but you must let me know by noting this on the exam statement of entry you are given in January. Return your statement of entry to me by the deadline you are given otherwise you may have to pay a penalty fee.

Results Day

You will be able to come into school to collect your results on Thursday 21 August 2025 from 10am-12pm. If you do not collect your results by midday they distributed in school in September. You will also be able to see your results on Go4Schools from midday on Results Day.

It is not possible to tell you your results over the phone or by email. If you are unable to collect your results yourself you can ask a family member or friend to collect them for you, but they must be able to show either a letter or text message from you which gives them authorization to collect on your behalf.

Reviews of Results

Exams only measure your performance on the day, and candidates can do better or worse than anticipated for all sorts of reasons. If you have **serious** concerns about your received grade, please contact me as soon as possible either on Results Day or the start of term. As long as you give your consent in writing, it may be possible to view a copy of your exam script (Access to Scripts) to see whether you would like to proceed to a Review of Marking (ROM). Awarding bodies will charge a fee to carry out a Review of Marking.

More information on this process can be found in the document **Reviews of Marking, Access to Scripts and Appeals** which can be found on the website here:

[Soham Village College - GCSE and Exam Information](#)

Personal Data and Freedom of Information

Relevant personal data (name, date of birth, gender) will be transferred to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications. This personal data, together with the examination results and outcomes of any reviews of marking, reviews of moderation and appeals may be shared within the Academy Trust.

Awarding bodies may be required to provide a candidate's personal data to educational agencies such as the DfE, The Skills Funding Agency, UCAS, Local Authorities, EFA and Learning Records Service (LRS). Additionally, candidates' personal data may be provided to a central record of qualifications approved by the awarding bodies for statistical and policy development purposes. Awarding bodies maintain a comprehensive archive record of candidates' examination results. The purpose is to provide an audit trail of the results certificated and to maintain an accurate record of an individual's achievements.

Questions

If you lose your timetable, are unsure of anything, or have a question, however small, please come and see me, Mrs Botcher, Exams Officer. My office is in the English Department on Beechurst top floor. Both I and my team of experienced invigilators want you to do the best you possibly can during your exams and are always happy to help.

Start of the exam

As you have practised during the mock exams you must enter the exam venue in silence and sit at the desk which has your named exam label on it.

Listen and wait for instructions from the invigilator – do not open your question paper or start writing until the invigilator tells you to.

The invigilator will begin the exam and give you clear instructions – if you have any questions please put up your hand and wait for an invigilator to come to you.

You must hand in any unauthorised items if you have forgotten to leave them elsewhere – don't risk breaking the rules and committing malpractice.

Unauthorised Items

The following are all unauthorised items and must **not** be brought into the exam room:



- Mobile phones
- AirPods/earbuds
- MP3/4 players
- Watches of any type
- Smart glasses or any other smart devices
- Notes / revision notes

If you have your mobile phone on you at the beginning of the exam you must fully power it off and hand it in to the invigilator when prompted during the invigilator announcement. If you have a mobile in your possession during the exam you will be committing malpractice, even if it is switched off and you don't use it.

Uniform

You must wear the correct uniform during exams. You may take off your blazer if the weather is hot. You may not be allowed to enter the exam room if you are not wearing the correct uniform.

Website

Remember to look on the school website where there is a lot of useful information about exams, including this A-Z guide, as well as information about results and certificates. Useful documents include:

- A-Z Guide to Exams: Class of 2025
- Students with Access Arrangements - Notes
- JCQ Guide to the Special Consideration Process
- Reviews of Marking, Access to Scripts and Appeals
- Internal Appeals Procedure
- Complaints and Appeals Procedure (Exams)
- External Written Exams Timetable (this will be updated in February of each year)

Search under Soham Village College / Student Experience / Exams or click on the link:

[Soham Village College - Exams](#)

You will find additional resources about revision and wellbeing here:

[Soham Village College - Year 11 Revision](#)

[Soham Village College - Wellbeing](#)

What if?

What if I feel unwell?

Come and speak to me before the exam or attract the attention of the invigilator during the exam and we will do all that we can to help. If you feel ill during the exam you can leave the room under supervision and return when you feel able to do so. You will be allowed to make up the time lost.

What if I am too unwell to come into school on the day of my exam?

If you are extremely unwell and not fit to sit the exam, your parents/carers **must** phone Reception on 01353 724100 by 8.30am on the morning of the exam you are unable to attend. You must speak to someone, do not leave a message.

The exam boards require a self-certification form to be completed if the school was unaware of your illness. Your parents/carers will be asked whether they contacted a medical professional for advice regarding your symptoms. It is advisable to do this, however please note that Doctor's certificates are not required. You and your parents/carers will have to sign a declaration stating that you understand it is fraudulent to claim illness when this is not the case.

The awarding body may award a grade to students who are absent for an acceptable reason as long as one whole component (a minimum of 15% of the total assessment) has been completed.

What if I have injured myself and cannot write?

If you cannot write, then you may be allocated a scribe. Make sure you speak to me before the exam begins.

What if I think I have the wrong paper?

Put up your hand and an invigilator will help you.

What if the fire alarm sounds?

The invigilator will stop the exam and tell you to close your answer book. When you are told to, you must leave the exam room in silence and in column order. You must remain silent and not discuss the exam with anyone – this would be breaking the regulations. The invigilator will re-start the exam once everyone is back in the exam room and you will be allowed the full time for the exam.

What if I arrive late for my GCSE exam?

Report immediately to Reception or The Finance Office and say you have a GCSE exam, and they will contact me urgently. You will not be allowed to enter the exam room without someone accompanying you.

In some cases, a report may have to be completed which will need to be sent to the awarding body. It will be at the awarding body's discretion if they accept your exam script to be marked.

What if I forget to come for a GCSE exam?

GCSE exams cannot be re-scheduled. If you miss an exam you will receive zero marks for that paper. In addition, you may be charged for any exam you miss unless there is a good reason for your absence.

What if I have problems that may affect my examination performance?

More serious illness, or family circumstances which may affect examination performance, arising shortly before or during the exams, should be reported as soon as possible to me so that an application for **special consideration** can be made to the awarding bodies. Medical letters may be required. It should be understood, however, that the maximum amount of consideration given is 5% of the total raw marks available for the component concerned. This is for the most extreme cases and is entirely at the discretion of the awarding bodies. For more information see the document **JCQ Guide to the Special Consideration Process** located here:

[Soham Village College - Exams](#)

If you have any other questions, please come and see me.

I wish you the best of luck for all your exams!

Mrs Botcher

Exams Officer

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