

The Bishop's Stortford High School

Guide to Examinations 2025/2026

Wednesday, 10 September 2025



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Purpose of this booklet

The aim of this guide is to help you to get through the examination period by explaining examination procedures and by answering any questions you may have.

Read it fully and if you are still unsure about anything, please ask the Examinations Officer (Ms Lily Chan), your Form Tutor or your Head of Year.

Conduct during the examinations

At the Bishop's Stortford High School we expect the highest standard of behaviour during all examinations from every student.

1. You should leave your phone, MP3/4 players, iPods, iPads, airpods, ear phones or similar devices, any other electronic items or a watch in your locker or in your bag and turned off. If you do arrive at the examination room with a mobile phone or other electronic items, you will be asked to place your phone in one of the racks provided and you will be given a numbered card. At the end of the examination you will need to give your card to the invigilator in order to collect your phone. Any other items must be placed in a labelled plastic bag (watches, calculators where these are not allowed, notes). Please keep this bag and use it for all your examinations. The phone racks and named bags will be placed at the exit to the examination rooms and out of the reach of candidates (and sometimes directly outside the room) while the examination is in progress. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage of these items. They are brought to the examination room at your own risk. Possession of any of these items on or accessible to your person in the examination room will put you at risk of disqualification from both that examination, and possibly all your examinations – **THESE ARE THE EXAMINATION BOARD RULES**. There are posters to this effect displayed outside every examination room.
2. For morning examinations you should assemble outside the venue 20 minutes before the scheduled start of the examination. This time is shown on your timetable. Public examinations (GCSEs and A levels) start at 9.00am.
3. For afternoon examinations you should also assemble outside the venue at least 20 minutes before the start time of the examination. For Public examinations (GCSE/A levels) the start time for afternoon examinations is 1.30pm.
4. The start times for mock examinations will vary. Please check your timetable and/or the examinations notice board for the correct start times.
5. You must be punctual for your examinations. If you are late, the Examining Body reserves the right to refuse your paper.
6. For examinations lasting one hour or less you must stay in the room until either 10am or 2.30pm. You will not be allowed to leave any earlier. This is an Examination Board rule.

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7. You must be silent. You must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once they have entered the examination room. If they do, this must be reported to the relevant awarding body. There is a Notice to Candidates poster displayed outside every examination room and you must abide by the rules set by the Examining Bodies.
8. You must only bring into the examination room those articles, instruments or materials which are permitted for the subject being examined. You must not borrow from other students during the examination. All equipment you bring must be in a clear plastic bag or clear pencil case.
9. All wristwatches must be handed in before the examination.
10. You must write in black ink or ball pen. Gel pens may not be used. Highlighter pens may be used to highlight questions on the question paper but must not be used in your answers.
11. You must put your legal name on your examination paper. This is the name shown on your candidate card on your desk.
12. You must write legibly. This is your responsibility.
13. Correcting fluid/correcting pens must not be used.
14. All work, including rough work, must be done on the stationary provided by the examination board, unless instructions are given to the contrary on the question paper. Any rough work should be neatly crossed out, but not obliterated, as it is sent to the examiner.
15. Where calculators are allowed, it is your responsibility to ensure that they are in working order. Calculators with any of the following facilities are prohibited: data banks, dictionaries, language translators, retrieval of text or formulae, built-in display of symbolic algebra manipulations, symbolic differentiation or integration, capability of remote communication with other machines. Calculators with graphic displays and programmable calculators are permitted if they conform to the above restrictions. No prepared programmes may be taken into the examination room so any such programmes must be cleared beforehand. This is your responsibility. Retrieval of information during the examination is an infringement of the regulations. For examinations where calculators are not permitted you will be asked to hand your calculator in before the examination. Calculator cases must always be removed and placed under your seat.
16. You may not eat or chew in the examination room. You may bring a small (500ml) bottle of still water in a transparent, unlabelled bottle. Invigilators will remove labels left on bottles.
17. You are forbidden to communicate in any way with, seek assistance from, or give assistance to another candidate while they are in the examination room. You must sit facing the front at all times.

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18. You must not open the question paper until the examination begins. If they do, this must be reported to the relevant awarding body.
19. You must not begin work on an examination paper until the invigilator tells you to do so. You MUST stop writing when instructed to do so. You must remain seated and silent while papers are collected by the invigilators. You may not talk until you are outside, and well away from, the examination room.
20. If you wish to attract the invigilator's attention, raise your hand. Do not, under any circumstances, call out. You may not leave your seat without permission.
21. If you finish an examination early you should use the remaining time to check your work. You will not be permitted to leave the examination room before the stated time for the end of your paper and until all papers have been collected.
22. Question papers may not be removed from the examination room.
23. If you miss an external examination paper, you will not be able to sit the paper later. If you are too unwell to sit an examination, evidence (medical or otherwise) must be provided to the Examination's Officer as soon as possible after the examination. Ideally, if you are unwell, you should see a doctor to confirm the cause of your illness.
24. You must attend each examination in full school uniform. In extreme cases, you may be sent home to change or you may not be allowed to sit the examination.
25. Any malpractice/misconduct will be reported to the Examination Boards and will be dealt with severely. It may even result in you being disqualified from all further examinations.
26. Do not draw or write offensive words/comments on your examination papers. If you do, the Examination Boards may refuse to accept your paper.
27. Do not write on or deface the examination desks. This is regarded as vandalism and you will be asked to clean the desk and/or pay for any damage.
28. Do not write on your hands before or during an examination. Random hand checks are carried out before examinations and you may be sent to clean your hands.

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Before your examinations

Before your examinations you will be given a timetable. You must check this very carefully. The things to check are:

1. Your personal details; is your name spelt correctly? Is it your full legal name? Is your date of birth correct? These are the details that will appear on your examination certificates.
2. The examination units you are taking and especially the level: foundation/higher if applicable.

If anything is incorrect you must let the Examinations Officer know immediately. Check your examination entry with your teacher because if you are entered for the wrong examination you will be given the wrong paper. Remember the Examinations Officer relies on you and your teacher requesting the correct examination.

When you receive your timetable please check it carefully to make sure you know when your examinations are. Put it somewhere safe and keep a copy at home so you and your family can see it and know when your examinations are. A useful tip is to take a picture on your phone of your timetable so you always have it with you (apart from when you are in an examination of course!).

During your examinations

Your examination card containing your legal name, photo, candidate number and centre number will be placed on a desk. This is so that you can be identified by examination staff and is a requirement of the Examination Boards. Please do not deface this card. This card will be used for all your exams for possibly several academic years. You will be called into the examination room row by row and will need to find your seat and sit down in silence.

At the start of the examination you will be told how to complete the details on the front of the examination paper or answer book. You will need to write your full, legal, name as it appears on your candidate card, your candidate number and the Bishop's Stortford High School Centre Number: 17201.

The board at the front of the examination room will show details of all the papers/subjects taking place and the start and finish times of each. There will also be a clock at the front of the examination room. Please let an invigilator know if you cannot see the clock clearly.

If you require assistance during the examination, raise your hand and speak to an invigilator. Invigilators cannot comment on questions, provide answers or read anything to you other than the instructions on the front of the paper. Keep an eye on the clock.

At the end of the examination

At the end of the examination the invigilator will tell you to stop writing. You must stop writing when you are told to do so. If you continue to write after the examination has finished this constitutes malpractice and you will be reported. Wait for the invigilator to dismiss you – normally row by row. Once you have been dismissed from the examination, if you have been granted study leave you may leave school once you have signed out. Remember that other students in school are working and keep the noise down around classrooms, and particularly other areas where examinations may still be continuing.

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Frequently asked questions

What if I forget to go to an examination?

You can only take an examination at the time dictated by the examination board, so if you forget to go you have missed the examination. If you are absent at the start of an examination for which you have been entered, every effort will be made by the school to get you into school in time to take the examination:- this may include contacting you directly by telephone, contacting your parents/carers and in extreme circumstances, collecting you and bringing you into school.

What if I am late for an examination?

If you arrive within 30 minutes of the start time of an examination you can still take the examination. You are entitled to the full time allowed for that examination. If you arrive between 30 minutes and one hour after the start of an examination, you will still be permitted to sit the examination but proof of supervision between the examination start time and the time you arrive in school may be required. If you arrive more than 1 hour after the scheduled start time of the examination you may still take the paper but the examination boards may not accept it or mark it.

What if I am ill?

If you are slightly ill you should still try to sit the examination. You should tell the Examinations Officer before the start of the examination that you are feeling unwell.

If you are very unwell and are unable to come into school, your parent/carer should telephone the school by 8.30 in the morning at the latest. If you are so ill that you cannot sit the examination, a letter from your doctor will be required, accompanied by a letter from your parent/carer explaining the situation. This must be given to the Examinations Officer as soon as possible after the examination.

If you have missed an examination due to genuine illness, the Examinations Officer will apply for special consideration and the Examination Board may award a grade based on coursework and any other examinations taken in that subject, but only if at least 25% of the overall award has been completed.

What if I feel ill during an examination?

If you feel unwell during an examination, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to come to you. You can leave the examination room under supervision and return when you have recovered. You will be allowed any time you have missed while out of the room. If there is only one invigilator in the examination room, you may have to wait while they contact someone to come and take you out of the room.

Remember, if you have a cold or hay fever, bring plenty of tissues with you.

If you need to take essential medication during an examination, please let the Examinations Officer know in advance.

What if a fire alarm sounds?

If a full fire alarm sounds during an examination you will be told to stop writing and put your pen down. A note will be made of the time of the alarm. You need to remain sitting in silence and wait for instructions.

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If the examination room needs to be evacuated you will be dismissed row by row to follow an invigilator to the examinations assembly point. You must remain in silence throughout the evacuation. A register will be called to make sure all students are safely evacuated. On return to the examination room, the examination will be resumed and the full amount of time will be allowed. The Examination Board will be informed of the disruption that occurred during the examination.

What if I need to go to the toilet during the examination?

If you need to go to the toilet during the examination, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to come to you. Someone will then accompany you to the toilet. If there is only one invigilator in the examination room they will need to call somebody to accompany you to the toilet.

Remember – going to the toilet not only disturbs other people in the room, it also breaks your concentration so try to go before your examination.

What if I have two or more examinations scheduled at the same time?

If you have more than one examination at the same time, arrangements will be made for you to sit your examinations either one after the other, or in a different session. There are strict regulations governing examination clashes. If you have more than 3 hours of examinations in any one morning or afternoon session then the second examination will be held in an earlier or later session but on the same day. You will have to be supervised at all times between examinations and during lunchtimes. You will not be allowed contact with other students and will not be permitted to have your mobile phone or electronic items during this time.

How do I get my results for the summer 2026 series?

Thursday 13th August 2026 [GCE results day](#)

Thursday 20th August 2026 [GCSE results day](#)

If you are collecting your results, all results will be provided in one envelope. If you require your results to be posted to you, please provide the Examinations Officer with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. We do not provide results to a friend or relative unless you have provided the Examinations Officer with a signed note giving permission for that person to take your results on your behalf. This must be handed in before Results Day.

Your examination certificates will be available in December. You must sign to say you have received your certificates.

If you are concerned about any aspect of your results you should see the Examinations Officer or your subject teacher. You can request any or all of the following:

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Access to scripts – an opportunity to see a copy of your examination script

Review of marking – your paper will be reviewed by an examiner to make sure that the mark scheme has been correctly applied. Remember the mark can be adjusted (either up or down) or may stay the same after a review.

Clerical check – a check by the examiners to ensure marks have been added correctly.

Appeal – if, after a review of marking has been returned you feel the mark scheme has not been correctly applied, the school may appeal on your behalf.

All Post Results Services must be paid for by the candidate. All services can only be applied for after receiving written permission and fees from the candidate. Services must be applied for by the school. Awarding Bodies do not accept applications from candidates or parents/carers.

And finally

Your achievements in these examinations represent all the hard work you have put in so far. This is your chance to give these examinations your full attention and focus on doing the very best you can. The Examinations team are here to enforce examination board regulations and to give every student a fair chance of fulfilling their potential.

Examination Board rules are strict and must be followed exactly. Any misconduct must be reported to the Examination Board and will always be dealt with severely.

Keep this booklet in a safe place so that you can refer to it when you need to.

You or your parent/carer can contact Ms Lily Chan, Examinations Officer by email on: exams@tbshs.org

Good luck with your examinations.