



St Laurence School

# Exams Handbook

## 2025/26

This document is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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| Approved/reviewed by |  |
|                      |  |
| Date of next review  |  |

## Introduction

St Laurence is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the exam and assessment process in place in the centre and are made aware of the required JCQ/ awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

As well as this guide we have further information on our school website in the Examinations section Your House Team, Tutors, Teachers and the Examinations Team are all available to help you with any questions or concerns before, during and after your exams.

## Purpose of the Candidate Exam Guide

It is the aim of St Laurence to make the examination experience as stress-free and successful as possible for all candidates.

Hopefully, this booklet will prove informative and helpful for you and your parents/carers. Please read it carefully and show it to your parents/carers so that they are also aware of the examination regulations and the procedures to follow in the event of any problems occurring.

The awarding bodies (or examination boards) set down **strict** criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations and St Laurence is required to follow them precisely. You should therefore pay particular attention to the Information for Candidates which is shared on Class Charts and is available on the school website.

Some of the questions you may have are answered at the back of this booklet. **If there is anything you do not understand or any question that has not been addressed, PLEASE ASK.**

If you or your parents/carers have any queries or need help or advice at any time before, during or after the examinations please contact:

### Exams Team

Exams Officer– **Mrs Jones**

Exams Assistant – **Mrs Brown**

Email – [exams@st-laurence.com](mailto:exams@st-laurence.com)

Telephone - **01225 309529**

# GOOD LUCK



## IMPORTANT Exam Contingency Days - Summer 2026

The awarding bodies have designated Wednesday 24 June (all day) 2026 as a 'contingency day' for examinations.

The designation of a 'contingency day' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations in the United Kingdom. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

Candidates must therefore remain available until **Wednesday 24 June 2026** should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

## EXAM RESULTS DATES - Summer 2026

**A Level & Level 3 – Thursday, 13 August**

**GCSE & Level 2 – Thursday, 20 August**

## BEFORE THE EXAMINATIONS

PLEASE CHECK THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

### Examination Boards

- The School uses the following Examination Boards: AQA, Edexcel/Pearson, OCR and WJEC/Eduqas.

### Candidate Number

- Each candidate has a four-digit candidate number. This is the number you will enter on examination papers. It will appear next to your name on your examination timetable and on your examination desk card.

### UCI

- In addition to a candidate number, each candidate must have a Unique Candidate Identifier (12 numbers and 1 letter) which is shown on the top of statements of entry and the individual timetables. This number will begin with the Centre Number (66601) unless you have transferred from another school that had already issued your UCI. Your UCI is used for administration purposes and it is not necessary for you to remember it. You will need this number for sixth form applications so it is useful to keep a note of it.

### Timetables

- You will receive an individual timetable via your school email showing your own specific examinations with details of date, time, and duration of exam shortly before Easter. **Check it carefully.** If you think something is wrong, see the Examinations Team **immediately**.
- A few candidates may have a clash where two subjects are timetabled at the same time. The school will make special timetable arrangements for these candidates only. Usually, one examination will follow the other with a supervised break in between. Clash information will be shared along with your timetable, but please see the Exams Team if you are unsure what to do.

## Equipment

- Make sure you have all the correct equipment before your examinations. St Laurence cannot Guarantee to provide you with any equipment for your exams.

## Seating Plans

- All information relating to exam rooms and exam seating plans will be displayed daily on the exam notice board and on Student Portal. Please take the time to check the seating plans before each exam

## DURING THE EXAMINATIONS

### Examination Regulations

- A copy of the “Information for Candidates”, which is issued jointly by all the Examining Boards, is available on the school website and will be issued individually along with your exam timetable. All candidates must read this carefully and note that to break any of the examination rules or regulations could lead to disqualification from all subjects. The school **must** report any breach of regulations to the Awarding Body.

### Examination Attendance

Candidates are responsible for checking their own timetable and arriving at school on the correct day and time, properly equipped and dressed in full school uniform. Candidates must arrive 15 minutes prior to the start time of their examination. Please wait quietly under the main DT canopy room until you are directed to the Sports Hall by the teachers on duty. If you have an exam access arrangement which means you normally sit your exam in an alternative location, please line up under the canopy by reception. An invigilator will collect you from there and take you to your exam room.



- Candidates who arrive late for an examination may still be admitted into the exam room but if you are more than one hour late, we will need to report this to the awarding body and it will be at their discretion whether to accept your exam paper or not.
- Full school uniform must be worn by all attending school for examinations. No coats or hoodies are allowed in the exam rooms.
- All items of equipment, pens, pencils, mathematical instruments should be visible to the invigilators at all times. **You must either use a FULLY transparent pencil case or clear plastic bag.**
- Pens should be **black** ink or ballpoint. No erasable pens are allowed. Highlighters or gel pens may be used on the question paper but must not be used in any answers.
- For Mathematics and Science exams, students should make sure their calculators conform to the examination regulations. If in doubt, check with your teacher. **Remove any covers or instructions** and make sure it's in working order before entering the exam room.

## Candidates must not be in possession of the following items:

- mobile phones
- earpods or earphones
- technological or web/bluetooth enabled devices
- watches (either digital, analogue or smart watches)

This means that:

- all unauthorised items must be left outside of the examination room
- any pencil cases taken into the examination room must be totally clear/see-through
- any unauthorised items that have been taken into the examination room must be handed to the invigilator prior to the examination starting

## Do not attempt to communicate with or distract other candidates.



You are under examinations conditions from the moment you enter the exam room and must be **SILENT** until you have left the examination room

Examination regulations are very strict regarding items that may be taken into the examination room (see FAQs at the end of this booklet). If you break these rules, you will be **disqualified** from the examination.

**Mobile telephones** – Under no circumstances are mobile telephones allowed into the exam room. They must be turned off and either left in your bag outside the exam room or not brought into school at all. If a mobile phone (or any other type of electronic communication or storage device) is found in your possession during an examination (even if it is turned off) it will be taken from you and a report of malpractice submitted to the appropriate exam board. This could lead to a full disqualification in the subject. Mobile phones for monitoring medical conditions are exempt from this.

- Water in a completely see through and clear plastic bottle with **no label or writing** is the only drink allowed in the exam room. Clear water bottles with writing, patterns or logos will not be allowed into the exam room.
- Please do not write on examination desks. This is regarded as vandalism, and you will be asked to pay for any damage.
- Do not draw graffiti or write offensive comments on examination papers – if you do the examination board may **refuse** to accept your paper.
- Listen carefully to instructions and notices read out by the invigilators – there may be amendments to the exam paper that you need to know about
- Check you have the correct question paper – check the subject, paper and tier of entry. It is your responsibility to do so.
- Read all instructions carefully and number your answers clearly.
- Candidates must stay in the examination room for the duration of the exam. You will not be allowed to

leave an examination room early. If you have finished the paper use any time remaining to check over your answers and that you have completed your details correctly.

- Remember that you can **request extra paper** if you have run out of room to complete your answers. This cannot be requested at the beginning of the exam to use for exam planning. Any planning must be completed in the original exam booklet.
- At the end of the examination all work must be handed in – remember to cross out any planning or rough work and make it clear if you have answered the question in another place. If you have used more than one answer booklet or loose sheets of paper, please insert them into your answer booklet in the correct order. Make sure all your details are completed and that answers are numbered clearly and correctly.
- Invigilators will collect your exam papers before you leave the room. **Absolute silence must be maintained during this time.** Remember you are still under examination conditions until you have **left the room** and exam rules still apply.
- Question papers, answer booklets and additional paper must NOT be taken from the exam room.
- Remain seated in silence until told to leave the examination room. Please leave the room in silence and show consideration for other candidates who may still be working.

## Fire Alarms

If the **fire alarm** sounds during an examination, please stop working and await instructions from the invigilator. If you need to evacuate the room, you will be asked to leave **in silence** through the exit doors according to where you are sitting. You will be escorted to a designated assembly point and a register will be taken. Leave everything on your desk. **You must not attempt to communicate with anyone else during the evacuation.** When you return to the exam room do not start writing until the invigilator tells you to do so. You will be allowed the full working time for the examination and a report will be sent to the awarding body detailing the incident.

## INVIGILATORS

- The school employs external invigilators to conduct the examinations. Students are expected to behave in a **respectful manner** towards all invigilators and follow their instructions at all times.
- Duty teachers and a member of the school leadership team will normally be present outside the exam room at the start of an examination only.
- Invigilators are in the examination rooms to supervise the conduct of the examination. They will distribute and collect the examination papers, tell candidates when to start and finish the examination, hand out extra writing paper if required and deal with any problems that occur during the examination, for example if a candidate is feeling ill.
- Please note that invigilators **cannot** discuss the examination paper with you or explain the questions.
- Pupils who are disruptive or behave in an unacceptable manner will be removed from the examination room by invigilators, exams officer or members of the school leadership team.

## ABSENCE FROM EXAMINATIONS

- If you experience difficulties during the examination period (e.g. illness, injury, domestic crisis) please inform school at the earliest possible point so we can help or advise you.
  - **Please call 01225 309500 as soon as possible to leave a message for the Exams Team if you think you will be unable to attend an exam on any day**
- Only in 'exceptional circumstances' are candidates allowed special consideration for absence from any part of an examination. It is essential that medical or other appropriate evidence is obtained on the day by the candidate/parent and given to the Exams Team without delay in all cases where an application is to be made for special consideration. A self-certification form (JCQ/ME Form 14) can be obtained from the Exams Team which can be countersigned by your doctor or nurse.
- Parents and candidates are reminded that the school will require payment of entry fees should a candidate fail to attend an examination without good reason and without informing the school.
- Please note that misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Q. What do I do if there's a clash on my timetable?

- The timetabling of exams is organised by the Exam Boards. The school will re-schedule papers internally (on the same day wherever possible) where there is a clash of subjects. Candidates will normally sit one paper and then have a break during which they will be supervised and must not have any communication with other candidates. They will then sit the second subject paper. It may be necessary for you to bring a packed lunch if you have clash exams timetabled in the morning and afternoon as you will have to remain in isolation until both examinations are completed. If in doubt consult the Exams Team.

### Q. What do I do if I think I have the wrong paper?

- Invigilators will ask you to check before the exam starts. If you think something is wrong put your hand up and tell the invigilators immediately.

### Q. What do I do if I forget the school Centre Number?

- The Centre Number is **66601**. It will be clearly displayed in the examination rooms.

### Q. What do I do if I have an accident or am ill before the exam?

- Inform the school at the earliest possible point by calling **01225 309500** so we can help or advise you. In the case of an accident that means you are unable to write it may be possible to provide you with a scribe to write your answers, but we will need as much prior notice as possible. You may need to obtain medical evidence (from your GP or hospital) if you wish the school to make an appeal for Special Consideration on your behalf (see below).

#### Q. What is an Appeal for Special Consideration?

- Special Consideration is an adjustment to the marks or grades of a candidate who is eligible for consideration. The allowance for Special Consideration is from 0% (consideration given but addition of marks considered inappropriate) to 5% (reserved for exceptional cases). Parents should be aware that any adjustment is likely to be small and no feedback of marks awarded is ever provided by the exam boards. Candidates will only be eligible for Special Consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but only if performance in the examination or in the production of coursework is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. Examples of such circumstances may be illness, accident or injury, bereavement at the time of the assessment. The Exams Team must be informed immediately so that the necessary paperwork can be completed (within 7 days of the last exam session for each subject) and the candidate will be required to provide evidence to support such an application.

#### Q. What do I do if I feel ill before or during the exam?

- Wherever possible you should sit your exam as timetabled. Once you arrive at school, please let the Exams Team know that you are feeling unwell, and you will be accommodated accordingly. If appropriate the school will apply for special consideration for that exam.
- If you feel ill during your exam raise your hand and an invigilator will assist you. You should inform an invigilator if you feel ill before or during an exam and you feel this may have affected your performance.

#### Q. If I am late can I still sit the examination?

- Provided you are not more than 1 hour late, it will still be possible for you to sit the examination. You should get to school as quickly as possible and report to Reception. A member of staff will escort you to the exam room. You must not enter an examination room without permission after an examination has begun.
- You should also be aware that if you start the exam more than 1 hour after the published starting time, the school must inform the exam board and it is possible that the Board may decide not to accept your work. Please ensure that you allow enough time to get to school so that if you are delayed (e.g. through transport problems) you will still arrive on time.

#### Q. If I miss the examination can I take it on another day?

- No. Timetables are regulated by the exam boards, and you must attend on the given date and time.

#### Q. Do I have to wear school uniform?

- Yes. Normal school regulations apply to uniform, hair, jewellery, make-up, etc.

#### Q. What equipment should I bring for my exams?

- For most exams you should bring at least 2 pens (**black ink only**).
- For some exams you will need a calculator, a 30cm ruler (marked with cm and mm), pencil sharpener and rubber, compasses, protractor, coloured pencil crayons (not gel pens).
- **You are responsible for providing your own equipment for examinations.** You must not attempt to borrow equipment from another candidate during the examination.



#### Q. What items are not allowed into the examination room?

- Only material that is listed on question papers is permitted in the examination room and students who are found to have any material with them that is not allowed will be reported to the appropriate examinations board. In such circumstances, a student would normally be disqualified from the paper, or the subject concerned.
- Bags and coats and any other items not permitted under examination regulations they must be left outside prior to entering the examination room or as directed by the invigilator if you are in a smaller room. Do not bring any valuables into school with you when you attend an examination.
- No food is allowed in the exam room unless it is for medical reasons. Water in a clear plastic bottle with no label or writing is the only drink allowed in the exam room
- Mobile telephones, watches and other devices must not be brought into the exam room even if they are turned off.

#### Q. Why can't I bring my mobile telephone into the exam room?

- See [Exam Room Posters - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#). Being in possession of a mobile phone (or any other electronic communication device, e.g. iPod, headphones) is regarded as cheating

**Possession of a mobile phone in an exam room once the exam has started almost always results in disqualification of that paper and possibly from the whole award, even if it is switched off.**

and is subject to severe penalty from the awarding bodies:

#### Q. Can I wear a watch in my exam?

- No. You must not bring any type of watch into an exam.
- See [Exam Room Posters - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

#### Q. How do I know how long the exam is?

- The length of the examination is shown in minutes on your individual timetable under the heading 'duration'. Invigilators will tell you when to start and finish the exam. They will write the finish time of the exam on a board at the front of the exam room. There will be a clock in all examination rooms.

#### Q. Can I leave the exam early?

- It is a requirement of the exam boards that you must stay in the examination room for at least one hour after the published start time of the exam (or for the duration of the exam if it is less than one hour). However, it is not the school's policy to allow candidates to leave the exam room early, as this is disruptive to other candidates. You must stay for the duration of the exam. If you finish early, you must remain in exam conditions at all times.
- A candidate may not leave the examination room without the permission of the invigilators.

**Q. What do I do if the fire alarm goes?**

- The examination invigilators will tell you what to do. If you have to evacuate the room leave everything on your desk and leave the room in silence. You must not attempt to communicate with any other candidates during the evacuation.

**Q. Can I go to the toilet during the exam?**

- You must endeavour to sit your exam without leaving at any point, unless for confirmed medical reasons that the school is aware of. You will only be allowed to go to the toilet if it is absolutely necessary.
- You will need to raise your hand to ask an invigilator, who will escort you. This can be extremely disruptive, so please try to avoid this by going prior to the exam. You will not be allowed any extra time.

**Q. When do I get my exam results?**

- Your exam results will be available in August.
  - A Level – Thu, 13 August 2026
  - GCSE – Thu, 20 August 2026
- A Level results will be shared via the Student Portal and GCSE students will be invited to attend school to collect their results

**Q. Can someone else collect my results?**

- You must collect your results in person. If you are unable to do so, you must write a letter confirming who is going to collect them, sign it and give it to the Exams Team before results day.
- If you want them to be posted out to you, you must provide the Exams Team with a stamped addressed envelope.

**Q. When do I get my exam certificates?**

- You will be invited to collect your certificates by the Exam Team during December & January. You should collect your certificates in person wherever possible, but if you are unable to do this you can nominate another person to collect them on your behalf. You must send written or emailed permission to the Exams Team before this can happen.

**Q. Do I need to collect my certificates?**

- The school will keep your certificates for 12 months after your exams. If these are not collected, they are securely destroyed. It will cost you £50–£60 to replace each certificate, if you do not collect them.
- These certificates are important and you will need them in the future, as proof of your exam results for colleges, universities or employers.

## Links to Important JCQ Exam Information

[IFC-NE Assessments 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)

[IFC-Written Examinations 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)

[JCQ Social Media Infographic v4](#)

[JCQ-Preparing-to-sit-your-exams -2025\\_2026.pdf](#)

[JCQ-ICE-Warning-to-candidates-2025.pdf](#)

[2025 Unauthorised-Items-poster](#)