Summer 2026 Exams

Highams Park School

INTRODUCTION

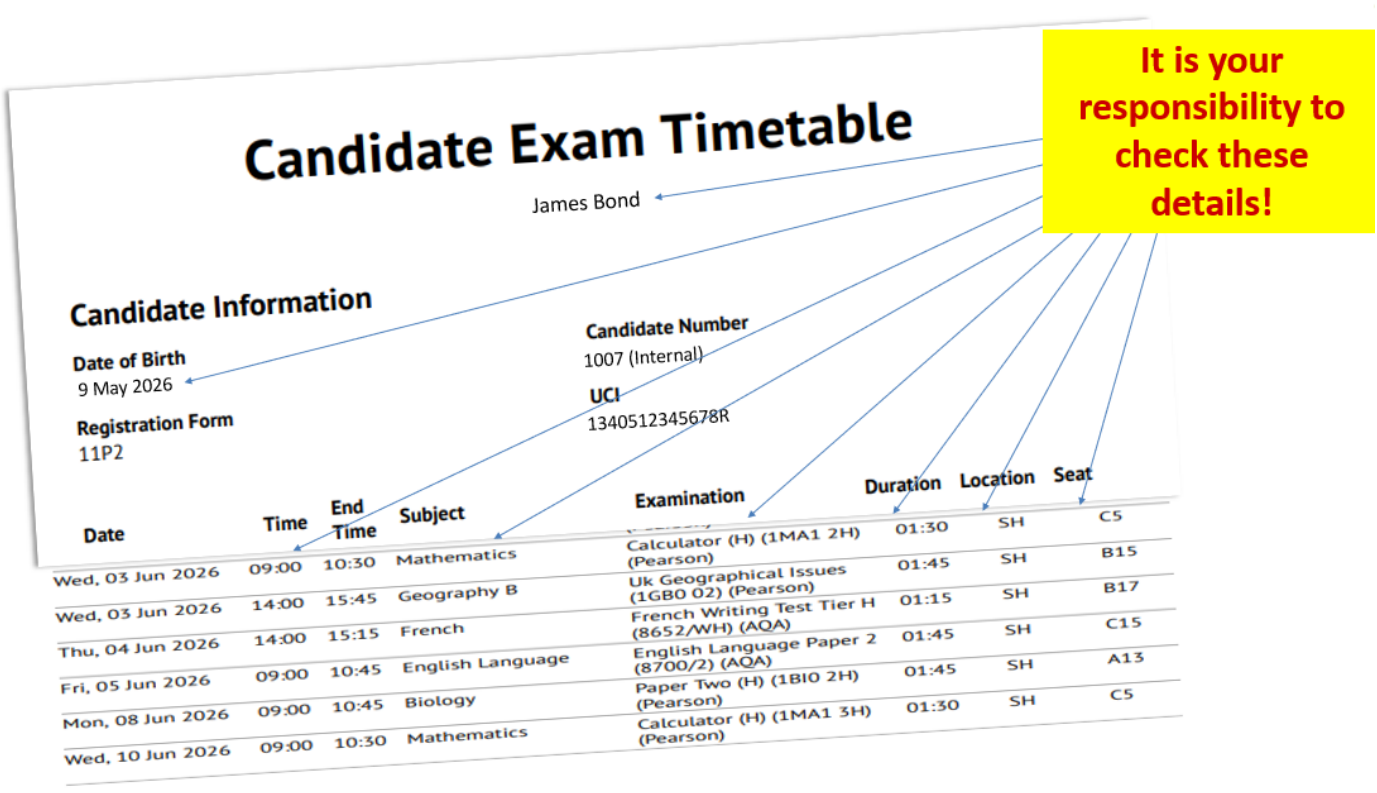
These instructions are provided to guide and prepare you for your upcoming exam period. It is your responsibility to read this booklet carefully to ensure you understand what is expected of you and how the examination process is run. A copy can also be found on the school website along with various important JCQ notices.

If you can't find the information you need in this booklet, form tutor, Head of Year or a member of the Exams team: it is very important that you understand examination information, otherwise you could be breaking rules without even realising you are doing so.

BEFORE THE EXAMINATIONS

TIMETABLE

Paper versions of the personalised timetable for your GCSE examinations which will include details on the venue, length of the exam and your seat location, have been distributed. These can also be displayed via the Arbor Portal. It is your responsibility to check the details of your timetable and let the exams office know **immediately** if there are any issues. If you have any clashes (two exams scheduled together) you will have to sit your examinations at different times and if you are affected, you will be contacted by the Exams team before the examination window starts and be given details about what will happen and what you will need to do on the day. If you have questions regarding access arrangements please click on the following link:



Here is an example of a candidate timetable.

ABOUT THE EXAMINATIONS

LOCATION OF EXAMINATIONS

Most examinations will take place in the Sports Hall or the Youth Centre, but smaller venues may be used for subjects with less candidates. Always check your exams timetable to ensure you know where you should be for each exam. Sometimes different rooms may be used for pupils with approved special access arrangements. Checking seat numbers at the start of every exam wastes time and please ensure you know your exam venue and seat location prior to the exam starting to avoid any delays.

TIME OF EXAMINATIONS

Morning exams will begin promptly at **9.00am** and **2pm.** You need to be there 15 minutes before each exam and sat down in silence 5 minutes before, ready for the video. This means that:

Morning Exams: 9am
Be at the venue **by 8.45am – DO NOT GO TO FORM**
Video begins at 8.55am

Afternoon Exams - 2pm
Be at the venue **by 1.45pm**
Video begins at 1.55pm

ENTERING THE EXAM HALL

Please ensure that you hand in mobile phones, all watches, headphones to the invigilators and that any revision notes etc are left in your bag. Anyone found with any unauthorised items, whether they are intended to be used or not, will be notified to the exam board, who may disqualify you from the paper or subject. Watches should not be worn during the exam. **DON'T TAKE THE RISK!**

CANDIDATE AND CENTRE NUMBERS

Candidate numbers (sometimes known as exam numbers) are used for all external examinations. Your candidate number is shown on your personal timetable and is also shown on the exam seating plan. Your ID card shows your candidate number and the school centre number (13405) and you should put it on your desk for every examination. Please do not write or deface these cards as they will be used by the invigilation team to verify your identity.

EQUIPMENT

You have all been given a pencil case and it is your responsibly to bring this to every exam. The equipment should be in a **transparent** pencil case. Calculator instructions, boxes and lids are not permitted in the exam room and must be left in your bag. Calculators that have a memory / data storage facility must be cleared, and remain cleared, for all of your examinations. You should ensure that you bring the following equipment to every examination:

- **at least two black pens**
- **a HB pencil**
- **a ruler**
- **an eraser and a pencil sharpener are also recommended**
- **Maths set (calculator, protractor, pair of compasses)**

Please note that spare equipment is limited; please ensure you prepare your equipment the night before your exams to ensure you have everything you need.
You may take water into all examinations, but it must be in a **clear bottle** with the label removed. No other food, sweets or drinks will be allowed unless specific permission has been granted in advance (e.g. for medical reasons).

You must not have any items on your desk other than those required for the examination. If you require tissues, then these must not be in a packet and placed on your desk for invigilators to check.

We are aware of the potential that the building project is ongoing and for students in the Youth Centre, there is a concern that there will be some excessive noise. To counter this, we have acquired ear plugs for those students who have exams in the Youth Centre, which they can collect on the day of their exams.

DURING THE EXAMINATIONS

REGULATIONS

Make sure you have read the **JCQ Notices** carefully before your exam season starts. **Please remember that any breach of these regulations during an examination could lead to disqualification from one, or all, of your exams.** The school is required to report any breaches of regulations to the relevant Awarding Body (Exam Board).

IDENTIFICATION

Although, in most cases, your identity will be confirmed by school staff, it is vitally important that you have your ID card on your desk. This can ensure that any paperwork the invigilators need to complete can be done so without interruption.

CONDUCT

Do not speak to or communicate in any way with other pupils in the examination room from the time you enter until the time you leave. Communicating with other pupils (which includes turning round to attract another pupil's attention) counts as potential malpractice and must be reported.

FULL SCHOOL UNIFORM must be worn in all examinations

LISTEN to the instructions and notices read out at the start of the examination. You will hear these at the start of every examination. You must listen carefully every time, as there could possibly be an amendment to your examination paper that you need to know about.

READ all of the instructions, information and advice on the front of every examination paper

CHECK that you have been given the correct question paper for your subject and tier.

ALWAYS PUT UP YOUR HAND to ask an invigilator if you are unsure about your paper or any instructions you have been given. A mistake is always much harder to rectify once you have completed the paper. Invigilators can contact the Exams Officer at any time if you have a problem that cannot be resolved within the examination room.

IF YOU THINK THERE IS AN ERROR on the paper, raise your hand and inform an invigilator. Continue with the paper and return to the question once your query has been investigated and further instructions have been given to you. It is rare for there to be an error in an examination question, but you should always ask. Invigilators are not allowed to explain questions or the meaning of words to you. Do not spend a disproportionate amount of time on a question.

ROUGH WORK (including calculations) should be written in your answer book; there are spare pages printed at the back of most exam booklets to support this. You can request extra paper if required but this must be submitted with your exam paper. Draw a line through any writing you do not wish to be marked. Rough work for multiple choice papers may be done on the question paper.

DO NOT DOODLE, draw graffiti, or write comments on any of your exam materials: your paper could be rejected by the Awarding Body. If you finish an exam within the allocated time, you will **not** be allowed to leave the room early. If you think you have finished, check over your paper then sit quietly; there will still be others working around you.

TOILET / ILLNESS

Please make sure you go to the toilet **before** every examination. If it is **absolutely necessary** to use the toilet during the examination, you will be escorted there by an invigilator. Any such break will be included in your exam time so always make sure you are comfortable before the start. Please note that you will not be allowed to go to the toilet for exams less than 1 hour 45 minutes unless you have a toilet card.

Anyone with a specific medical condition or long term illness should have reported this well in advance so the school can make the necessary arrangements and seek approval for any appropriate special arrangements with the Awarding Body.

If you feel unwell on the day or need to leave the examination room for any other reason, raise your hand and inform an invigilator – you will need to be escorted. **You will not be able to re-enter the examination room while the exam is in progress unless you have been accompanied at all times by an invigilator.**

FIRE ALARM

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, stop working immediately and await further instructions. You must follow the instructions of the Invigilators and school staff. Evacuation may or may not be required, but you will be expected to remain under exam conditions so please **remain silent**. The assembly point for pupils in the Sports Hall is through the double doors behind the sports centre. Pupils in other venues will be escorted to the nearest evacuation point (bottom playground grass area) with the invigilator. In all cases, pupils must not communicate with any other pupils, including those from other year groups.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION / ABSENCE FROM EXAMINATIONS

If you experience any difficulties during the examination period (e.g. illness, injury, personal problems, bereavement) you MUST inform a member of school staff at the earliest possible opportunity so we can help, support and advise you. It may be possible for the Exams Officer to apply for 'Special Consideration' which means informing the Awarding Body about the incident and possible disadvantage by something that is not your fault, or out of your control. Evidence, such as a doctor's note, will usually be required.

It is essential that you attend all your examinations at the times stated on your personal examination timetable. Official GCSE Examinations are scheduled by JCQ and Exam Boards and they are not able to be rescheduled. If you miss an examination the school cannot let you take it on a different day.

If you are going to be late for an examination for reasons out of your control (e.g. a cancelled train, transport problems, etc.) then you must telephone school as soon as you are aware of the problem. We are required to let the Awarding bodies know which candidates arrive very late.

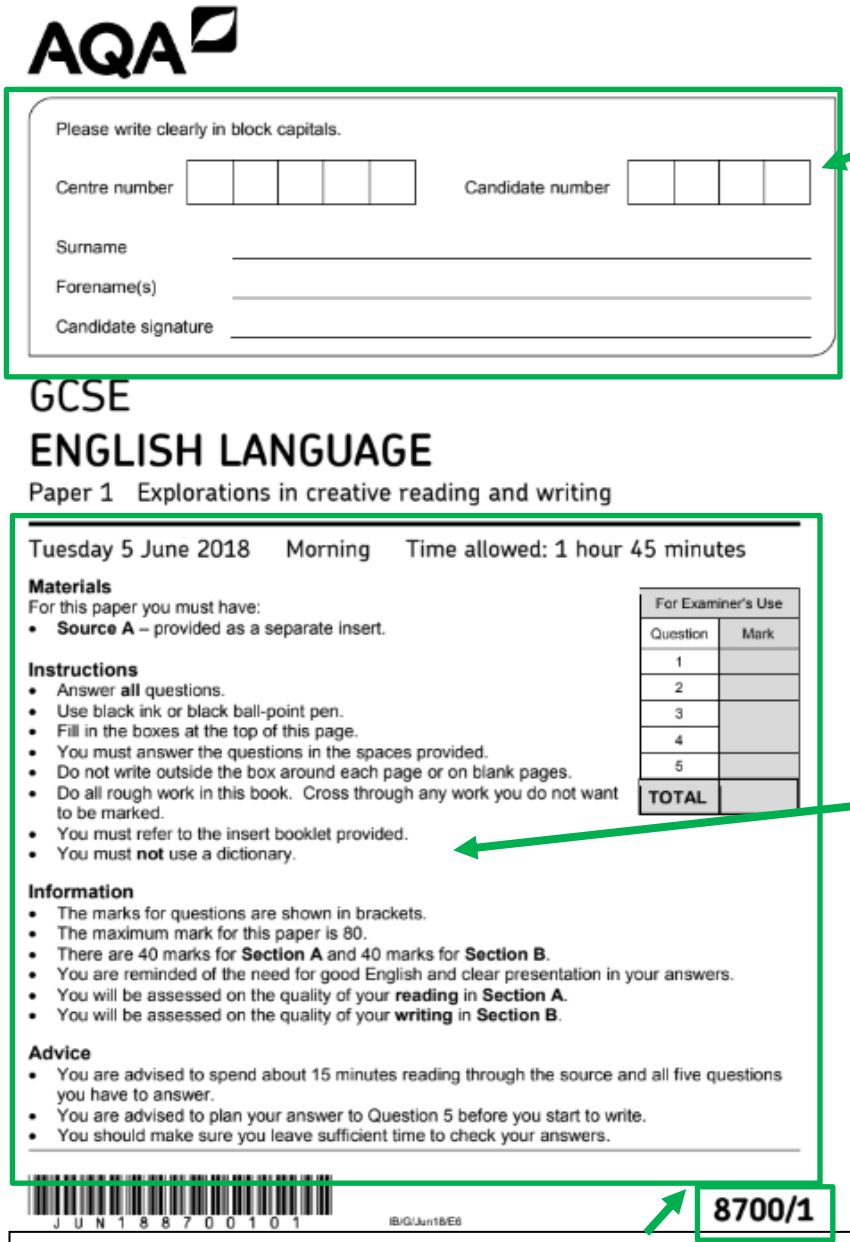
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

https://www.highamsparkschool.co.uk/docs/Exams/Frequently_asked_questions.pdf

A GUIDE TO EXAM PAPERS

They are four main exam boards used by Highams Park School: AQA, Pearson Edexcel, WJEC Eduqas and OCR. The formatting of exam papers with each of these boards can vary, however all exam boards and answer booklets will ask for the following information: **Your Surname and Forename, Candidate/Exam Number, the Centre Number and a signature to agree that all work in the booklet is your own**

Below is an example of an AQA Paper



AQA

Please write clearly in block capitals.

Centre number | | | | | | Candidate number | | | | |

Surname

Forename(s)

Candidate signature

GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 1 Explorations in creative reading and writing

Tuesday 5 June 2018 Morning Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:
- **Source A** – provided as a separate insert.

Instructions
- Answer **all** questions.
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Fill in the boxes at the top of this page.
- You must answer the questions in the spaces provided.
- Do not write outside the box around each page or on blank pages.
- Do all rough work in this book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- You must refer to the insert booklet provided.
- You must **not** use a dictionary.

For Examiner's Use	
Question	Mark
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
TOTAL	

Information
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- There are 40 marks for **Section A** and 40 marks for **Section B**.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your **reading** in **Section A**.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your **writing** in **Section B**.

Advice
- You are advised to spend about 15 minutes reading through the source and all five questions you have to answer.
- You are advised to plan your answer to Question 5 before you start to write.
- You should make sure you leave sufficient time to check your answers.

J U N 1 8 8 7 0 0 1 0 1

IB/G/Jun18/E6

8700/1

Make sure you fill out all of these areas for an official GCSE Exam. In mock exams, you may be asked for your exam number only to assist teachers with blind marking

Make sure you read all of the instructions, information and advice on the front of your paper. Make sure you have the materials and no unauthorised materials on you before the exam begins

Each exam has a specific code. If you are completing your exam in an answer book, you will need to make sure this code is on your answer paper. The code for each exam will always be displayed on the notice board inside each exam hall. However, if you are not sure which code to use, please ask an invigilator.

AFTER THE EXAMINATIONS

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

GCSE results day is **Thursday 20th August 2026.** No results will be given out over the telephone **under any circumstances**. Results will be emailed out to your school pupil's email account. Further information regarding collecting results on the 20th August will be published closer to the time.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is very important that you notify the school in writing **as soon as possible** after the end of the school year if you change your home address during the summer holiday. Please also ensure that your contact telephone numbers and email addresses are up to date in case we need to contact you during the summer break.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS

When you collect your results, you will receive information about the services and support available to you. These services (such as requesting scripts and applying for a review of marking) must be applied for before the deadlines implemented nationally by the exam regulator.

CERTIFICATES

Certificates are usually ready for collection in December. You will be sent an email to tell you when you may collect your certificates from the school. We are required by the Awarding Body to destroy uncollected certificates. We will retain uncollected certificates for **one year**. It is therefore very important that you collect your certificates as soon as possible. You will have to make applications and pay high fees to the Awarding Body directly to get copies at a later date. A friend or relative may also collect these on your behalf, but the Exams Officer must be notified of this in advance. You will be given specific instructions in the email sent to you in December 2026.

WHO DO WE CONTACT IF WE HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT EXAMS?

If you have any queries, please contact the school's exams office, who will be happy to help.

Mrs H Morris – Exams Officer

Mrs A Brockway – Assistant Exams Officer

Direct Line – 0208 501 9438

Email – exams@highamsparkschool.co.uk

AND FINALLY…