

**CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK**

2024-2025

This handbook is reviewed and updated annually

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**Introduction**

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

# Candidate and Centre Details

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| **Candidate Name**  Candidates are registered using legal names, not preferred names and should be the same as birth certificates/deed poll documents and passports, unless instructed otherwise. Candidates’ legal names will not be shared on the day of the exams or be known to anyone else.  **Candidate Number**  Each candidate has a four-digit candidate number. This is the number you will enter on examination papers. (example: 1021)  **Centre Name:** Venn Boulevard Centre  **Centre Number:** 44194 |

# Exam Timetable

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| When you receive your statement of entries, please check that all levels of entry and exam information is correct. Check your date of birth and spelling of names are accurate. If you discover any errors, please contact Ms Parker (Examinations Officer) immediately [bv-exams@vennacademy.org](mailto:bv-exams@vennacademy.org) or let your tutor know. This is important as these details appear on your certificates, and it may be difficult to change them once certificates are awarded.  Please ensure you are familiar with the JCQ Information for Candidates documents – written examinations, social media and exam room posters – Warning to candidates, Unauthorised items. |

Purpose of this handbook

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| * To support/complement candidate briefings/assemblies * To inform candidates about malpractice in examinations/assessments * To inform candidates about the use of their personal data and copyright * To ensure candidates are provided with all relevant information about their exams and assessments in advance of any exams/assessments being taken * To ensure copies of relevant JCQ information for candidates’ documents and exam room posters are provided in advance of any exams/assessments being taken * To answer questions candidates may have etc. * To inform candidates of/signpost candidates (and where relevant parents/carers) to any exams-related policies/procedures they need to be made aware of |

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# Malpractice

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| Malpractice, as defined by the JCQ, is:  “any act, default or practice which is a breach of the Regulations or which:   * *compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result of certificate;*   ***and/or***   * *damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer employee or agent of any awarding body or centre”* * Examples of malpractice include, but are not limited to: plagiarism (copying); communication with other candidates; possession of unauthorised materials e.g. electronic or web-enabled devices (such as mobile phones or smart watches), notes, books, etc; failure to follow the instructions of the invigilator/s; disruptive behaviour in the exam room * Centres have an obligation to report any incident of suspected malpractice to the relevant awarding body * Consequences of malpractice include: an official warning; loss of all marks for a section; loss of all marks for a unit; loss of all marks for a component; disqualification from the whole qualification; disqualification from all qualifications in that series; candidate debarral (where a candidate is not permitted to sit any exams for a set period of time).   **Things not to do on social media:**  • Buy/ask for/share exam or assessment content  • Pass on rumours of what’s in exams or assessments  • Share your work  • Work with others so that your assessment is not your own independent work  and/or non-examination assessments and coursework, as example:  **Research and using references**  ...Where computer-generated content has been used (such as an AI Chatbot), your reference **must** show the name of the AI bot used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2025. You **must** submit a copy of the computer-generated content with your work for reference and authentication purposes.  **If you copy the words, ideas or outputs of others and do not show your sources in references and a bibliography, this will be considered as cheating**.  **Plagiarism**  Plagiarism involves taking someone else’s words, thoughts, ideas or outputs and trying to pass them off as your own. **It is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously**... |

# Personal data

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| * Any person involved in completing examinations/assessments where malpractice is suspected, or alleged, personal data about them will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved. Personal data about them may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies... * The centre will provide relevant personal data including name, date of birth, gender to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications. * Materials which are submitted by candidates for assessment may include any form of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programmes and data (“Student Materials”). Awarding bodies may use the Student Materials to evaluate candidates’ performance in the relevant assessment. They may also use the Student Materials for other purposes as outlined in their privacy policies and in accordance with their terms. Candidates should be directed to the relevant awarding body’s privacy notice if they require further information about how their Student Materials may be used by the awarding body. |

# Coursework assessments/non-examination assessments

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| Some subjects have an element of coursework/controlled assessment and non-examination assessment included in them. It is the candidate’s responsibility to read and understand Information for candidates – coursework and non-examination assessments. AI stands for artificial intelligence and using it is like having a computer that thinks.  AI tools like ChatGPT or Snapchat My AI can write text, make art and create music by learning from data from the internet, they can also make things up and be biased. AI misuse is when you take something made using AI and say it’s your own work. AI tools are not allowed during exams. The misuse of AI could lose candidates marks for assessments or even disqualification from the subject.  Subject teachers will advise candidates when assessments take place. Depending on the type of assessment, it will be marked by the subject teacher and then moderated by the awarding body, or it will be sent to the awarding body for marking. Subject teachers will advise candidates of marks before work is sent to the awarding body and appeals should be directed to the subject teacher in the first instance. |

# Contingency sessions - Summer 2025

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| The Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) have declared that Wednesday 25th June 2025 and the afternoon of Wednesday 11th June will be the contingency days for Summer 2025 examinations. The JCQ states: “The designation of a ‘contingency day’ within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies’ contingency planning for examinations”. **This means that all candidates must be available to sit exams from the date of their first exam until 25th June 2025.**  This decision is not a school decision and does apply to all candidates in all schools. |

# On-screen tests

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| If you are following a course with on-screen tests (such as NCFE Digital Functional Skills) you should refer to the JCQ information for candidates – onscreen tests. |

# Exam Clashes

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| An exam clash is when you have two exams scheduled for the same time. If this happens, you will be given a short-supervised break in the exam room before sitting the next examination. You will be given further details if this applies to you. |

# Where you will take your exams

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| Exams will take place in the classrooms with only a small number of students. You will be told where you will be the day before your exam by your tutor. |

# What time your exams will start and finish

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| The start times of Venn Boulevard Centre are:   * 09:30 for morning exams * 13:00 for afternoon exams   *Please note, this is exercising the right to vary JCQ start times by 30 minutes. The published start times are: 09:00 for morning examinations and 13:30 for afternoon examinations.*  You need to arrive at least 10 minutes before the examination is due to start. You must remain seated and in silence until the end of the examination. |

# Exam Invigilation

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| Exams are supervised by a team of invigilators. Teachers and support staff from Venn Boulevard Centre and The Sullivan Centre will act as invigilators. It is important to know that invigilators must follow strict rules and regulations when conducting exams as directed by JCQ awarding bodies etc. They cannot discuss the examination paper with candidates or explain the questions during the examination. |

# Exam room conditions

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| Candidates must not enter the room once it has been set up as the exam room until told to do so by the Exams officer, Head of Centre or Executive Head.  An exam briefing will be given before the examination begins:   * You are under formal exam conditions from the moment you enter the exam room until you are given permission to leave * Candidates must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times in the exam room * Candidates must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once you have entered the exam room If this occurs, it will be reported to the relevant awarding body. * Candidates must not open the question paper until the examination begins. If you do, it must be reported to the relevant awarding body. * Any unauthorised materials: iPods, mobile phones etc taken into the exam room, should be handed in after the briefing. * You should write clearly and legibly. * The centre name is Venn Boulevard Centre and Centre number is 44194. This will be displayed at the front of the exam room. * The Exam board, subject title, tier, paper number, date of exam and the starting and finishing times will be displayed. * The centre will inform candidates to complete details on their answer booklet and announce any additional information. * The centre will clearly state when candidates can start their exam and how much time there is to complete. * The centre will state when the exam is over. * Candidates must remain seated until all papers have been collected. * You should leave the exam room in silence. |

# Where you will sit in the exam room

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| * There will be a seating plan, and your tutor will let you know where you will sit. * Once you enter the exam room you are under strict exam conditions *(JCQ Warning to Candidates)* * If you require assistance, put your hand up and an invigilator will attend to you. Do not disturb or communicate to any other candidate. |

# How your identity is confirmed in the exam room

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| As the staff know you, you do not need to bring in any identification. |

# Equipment required in the exam

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| * All authorised material required in the examination including calculators will be provided by the centre. You will be familiar with the equipment as you will have already used them in lessons. * Only authorised material, including calculators, will be provided. There are specific JCQ awarding body instructions regarding the use of calculators in exams. |

# What you should not bring into the exam room

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| The following items are unauthorised and not allowed in the examination room: iPods, mobile phones, MP3/4 Players, watches, AirPods and Earphones/Earbuds, any potential technological/web enabled sources of information and notes/papers.  Note that blank paper, calculator cases and calculator instructions booklets are not permitted.  Failure to comply is considered malpractice, and a report must be made to the awarding body. |

# Food and drink in exam rooms

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| * All clear/transparent plastic bottle of water is allowed into the exam room, all labels must be removed. * No food will be allowed into the room unless there is a medical need which has been discussed before the examination. If necessary, all packaging should be removed, and the food should be in a transparent container. |

# What you should wear for your exams

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| You will wear your normal uniform to examinations. |

# Where your personal belongings will be stored during your exam

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| You will hand in your mobile phone as usual to the main office. Any coats/ jackets can be stored at the back/front of the exam room. |

# What to do if you arrive late for your exam

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| Make sure you know when your exams are and if they are in the morning or afternoon.   * A register is taken at the start of every exam. If you are running late, let the office know. * If you find you are running late, don’t panic. When you arrive at school, report to the main office and they will contact the Exams Officer, Ms Parker. * If you arrive for your exam within an hour of the published start times, you will be allowed to take your seat and begin your exam. You will be given the full time to complete your exam. * If you are going to be very late for your exam – that is, more than hour after the published start times, you must let us know. You will be allowed to sit the exam with the full amount of time. However, you should be aware that the exam board may not accept your completed paper. |

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# What to do if you are unwell on the day of your exam

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| If you feel unwell on the day of the exam:   * Contact the centre so we can help you as best we can when you arrive. * If you feel unwell during the exam, let the invigilator know so they can take any measures possible to help you. * If you miss the exam because you are unwell, you must contact the centre immediately. You will be marked as absent; however, Venn Boulevard Centre may support an application for special consideration. In such cases, medical or other appropriate evidence will be required. It is advisable for candidates to attend an exam even if they do not feel 100%, as special consideration usually only awards an additional 1-3% of marks on top of what the candidates achieves. * Candidates will only be eligible for special consideration in certain circumstances which include: * Temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the assessment (medical evidence must be obtained by the candidate/parent on the day) * Bereavement at the time of the assessment (where whole groups are affected, normally only those most closely involved will be eligible) * Domestic crisis arising at the time of the assessment. * Participation in sporting events, training camps or other events at an international level at the time of the assessment, e.g. representing their country at an international level in chess or football. |

# What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from your exam

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| If you are absent from any exam without a satisfactory reason, you will receive a grade based on those elements of the exam which have been marked. Venn Boulevard Centre has no responsibility to reorganise the exam. Note that the centre will try to locate you so you can sit the exam. |

# What happens in the event of an emergency in the exam room

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| * In the event of an emergency, the invigilator will ask you to stop writing, close your answer booklet and put your pen down. * If necessary, the invigilator will evacuate the room. * If not necessary, the invigilator will await instructions from SLT.   **False alarm:**   * You will be given a few minutes to compose yourself and get ready to start. * The amount of time lost will be added onto your exam time. The new finish time will be clearly displayed at the front of the room.   **If evacuation is necessary:**   * You will leave the room in complete silence. You must not communicate with any candidate during this time as this may compromise exam security and will mean that the exam may have to be abandoned, or you will be disqualified from the exam due to malpractice. * Once you have returned to the exam room, your new finish time will be recalculated, and you will be given time to compose yourself before the exam is re-started. |

# Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

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| * Access arrangements are provided to candidates based on their history of need, assessment, and normal way of working. If a candidate is entitled to any access arrangements, this information will be communicated prior to their exams. Invigilators will have details of all assigned access arrangements and cannot offer any special arrangements that are not on their list. * You will be asked to sign a data protection notice to enable application of certain access arrangements. * Depending on your specific access arrangement your exams may take place in a different room. |

# Results

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| * Provisional results for GCSE and Level 2 qualifications will be issued on Thursday 21st August 2025 * The time that the school will be open will be confirmed nearer the time * Teaching staff will be available on results day if you have any queries or concerns * If you cannot collect your results these will be posted to you. |

# Post-results services

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| The following post-results services are available: clerical re-check; review of marking; priority review of marking (only available if a college or university place is dependent on the outcome); copy of script to support review of marking; copy of script to support teaching and learning   * It is important that you discuss any review options with your subject teacher before applying as marks can go up or down. * The deadlines for applications are final as scripts are destroyed after a certain time so these services must be applied for immediately after receiving your results. * There is a fee for all Post Results Services |

# Certificates

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| * Certificates from the previous academic year will be available for collection end of November / early December. * GCSE certificates arrive in school in the autumn after the half-term holiday. * They are available to be collected from this time. * Students remaining at the centre will receive their certificates during collective assembly. * Past students should contact main reception with their details (name, date of birth, and candidate number) and certificates will be made available at main reception for collection * If you are unable to collect your certificates yourself, you can either provide the Exams Officer with the details of someone who can collect them on your behalf (they must confirm their identity when collecting them and provide photo ID). |

# Internal appeals procedure

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| Venn Boulevard Centre has an Internal Appeals Procedure (Exams) in place, which is available upon request by emailing [bv-exams@vennboulevardacademy.org](mailto:bv-exams@vennboulevardacademy.org) |

# Complaints policy

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| Venn Boulevard Centre has an Complaints Policy (Exams) in place, which is available upon request by emailing [bv-exams@vennboulevardacademy.org](mailto:bv-exams@vennboulevardacademy.org) |

# JCQ Information to Candidates

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| The documents listed below provides Information to Candidates which **must be read** before taking any externally assessed examinations:   * [IFC-Coursework\_Assessments\_2024\_FINAL](https://vennboulevardcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/IFC-Coursework_Assessments_2024_FINAL.pdf)[Privacy Notice](https://vennboulevardcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Privacy-Notice.pdf) * [IFC-NE\_Assessments\_2024\_FINAL](https://vennboulevardcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/IFC-NE_Assessments_2024_FINAL.pdf) * [IFC-On-Screen\_Examinations\_2024\_FINAL](https://vennboulevardcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/IFC-On-Screen_Examinations_2024_FINAL.pdf) * [IFC-Written\_Examinations\_2024\_FINAL](https://vennboulevardcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/IFC-Written_Examinations_2024_FINAL.pdf) * [JCQ-Social-Media-Infographic-v6](https://vennboulevardcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/JCQ-Social-Media-Infographic-v6.pdf) * [Preparing-to-sit-your-exams-2024\_25](https://vennboulevardcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Preparing-to-sit-your-exams-2024_25.pdf) * [Assessment Policy for BTEC 2024-25](https://vennboulevardcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Assessment-Policy-for-BTEC-2024-25.docx)   The documents are available on Venn Boulevard Centre website. |

JCQ *Unauthorised items* poster

A screenshot of a phone and watch

Description automatically generated

JCQ *Warning to candidates* poster

A screenshot of a warning

Description automatically generated

JCQ AI poster for students

A poster of a person using a computer

Description automatically generated