



**BEING ONE
OF OURS**

Our Lady's Catholic High School

A Guide to External Examinations 2025

Dates of GCSE/BTEC/Cambridge National Certificate Examinations

Examinations begin on Tuesday 06 May and will finish on Wednesday 18 June. All pupils who are taking examinations **must** be available throughout this period, up to and including **Wednesday 25 June**.

Please ensure you understand the following information provided by the Examination Boards regarding contingency plans:

"The awarding bodies have designated **Wednesday 25 June 2025** as the 'contingency day' for examinations. The afternoon of Wednesday 11 June has been designated as a 'contingency afternoon' for examinations. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document *Exam System Contingency Plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland* – [Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91222/Exam_System_Contingency_Plan_England_Wales_and_Northern_Ireland.pdf)

The designation of 'contingency days' 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 remain available up to and including Wednesday 25 June 2025 should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

Uniform for Examinations

Examinations are the culmination of five years of secondary school experience. We expect pupils to come dressed according to the rules that as a school we have had in place for their time with us. Therefore, pupils must wear **full school uniform** for all examinations – that includes ties, shoes and jumpers.

Jewellery and incorrect earrings will be removed before entry to the examination room and will be retained until a parent can collect them from the school office as per our normal procedures.

Make-up and fake tan are not allowed. Any pupil who is wearing this, will be made to remove it before an examination starts. This will mean that the pupils are not in the correct frame of mind on entry to the examination, please help by ensuring that the pupils leave home without make-up or fake tan on.

Incorrect haircuts or hair colour will result in the pupil having to sit the examination at an alternative centre. Please ensure that you do not allow the pupils to get haircuts that do not abide by our school policies. We want the pupils to be as ready as possible for the examinations and this will undoubtedly disrupt their preparations.

Conduct of Examinations

1. Examinations will commence promptly. Morning sessions will start at 09:00 and afternoon sessions will start at 13:00. **Check the starting time carefully.** If you are late, your work may not be accepted.
2. Before morning examinations, line up outside the Sports' Hall in forms to be registered. For an afternoon session, be ready 15 minutes before the starting time.

Examinations in the Sports' Hall – line up in forms and enter in silence.

Examinations in alternative rooms – wait quietly outside the room until required.

3. **You will not be allowed to take an examination unless you are wearing full school uniform correctly.**
4. You are not allowed to bring into the examination room any material or equipment not authorised by the Examination Board.
5. Mobile phones, Smartwatches, Smartglasses, watches, iPod, AirPods/earbuds/headphones are not permitted in the examination room. They **MUST NOT** be carried on your person. If you are found to be carrying or wearing any of the above items, you will be reported to the Examination Board and your paper will be cancelled.
6. Calculators are required for certain examinations – check with your subject teacher.
7. You should bring to the examination a full and proper set of equipment in a clear pencil case or clear plastic bag:
 - a) 2 black pens, 1 HB pencil, 30cm ruler
 - b) Calculator
 - c) Maths equipment: compass, protractor, set square
 - d) Eraser, pencil sharpener
 - e) You are **not allowed** to use Tippex or any other colour of pen
 - f) Highlighters may be used to highlight part of the text – they **must not** be used to highlight any of your answers
 - g) You may not borrow anything from another candidate during the examination
8. You may bring a **small** bottle of water into the examination. The water must be in a clear plastic bottle with the label removed. Coloured bottles are not allowed. School cannot take any responsibility for any damage to examination papers caused by water spillage.
9. No eating or chewing is allowed. The examination desks are provided to ensure you have the best chance to achieve. They are to be kept clean. The seat numbers or desk surface should not be defaced in any way.
10. **Total silence** is required in the examination room at **all** times. You must remain silent from the moment you step into the examination room until you have left the examination room at the end of the examination.
11. You are forbidden to communicate in any way with other candidates (pupils).
12. If you try to use any unfair practice, or break the rules in any way, we are required to report you to the Examination Board. You could be disqualified from all of your subjects. Anyone attempting unfair practices can expect cancellation of examination entries and the charges that this will incur, as well as possible exclusion from GCSE/AS level examinations for a period of up to 5 years.

13. **Candidate Name:** it is essential that you enter your legal name correctly on the front of your examination paper.
14. **Candidate Number:** Learn your candidate number and make sure you put it on the front of every examination paper.
15. **Certificate Name:** You will receive your certificates with your legal name on. It is important that you have checked your statement of entry with your Form Tutor.

Examination Timetable & Seat Numbers

Check your examination timetable carefully. Check on the seating plans before each examination to understand which room the examination is taking place in and what your seat number is. Seating plans will be displayed in the common room windows and the Sports' Hall windows.

Absence from Examinations

If you are absent from an examination, you must provide a medical certificate within 3 days. Otherwise, you will have to pay for the examination – this is approximately £50.00 per subject. In certain circumstances, when one part of an examination is missed through illness, the Examination Board may award a grade providing medical evidence is provided.

Emergency Evacuation

We hope that no fire alarms go off during the examinations, but if this does happen, these instructions must be followed in **complete silence**:

1. When the alarm sounds, do not panic. Do not attempt to finish the sentence you are writing.
2. You will be asked to leave the room in silence and in the order that you are sitting. Leave all equipment in the exam room.
3. When you leave the room, you **must** be at least one metre away from the person in front and behind you.
4. You will be told where to line up – this will be separate from the rest of the school.
5. When you return to the examination room, do not start writing until you are instructed to do so. You will be allowed the correct time to complete the examination.

Listen carefully to instructions and do not panic.

In the Examination

1. When you are seated at your desk, DO NOT turn the exam paper over until you are instructed to do so.

2. Listen carefully to everything the invigilator or Exams Officer says. They have important instructions to give you.
3. If you do not understand the instructions, put your hand up and ask.
4. Write your full name and your candidate number on the first page.
5. Do not write in the margins of the examination paper.
6. Do not use obscene language or graffiti. This will result in the cancellation of your paper.
7. Make sure you know how many questions you have to answer and whether the paper has sections (these details will be shown on the front sheet of the question paper).
8. Read through the whole of a question before starting to answer.
9. Make sure you answer compulsory questions and the correct number of questions overall.
10. Underline or highlight the key words in the question to help you keep to the point in your answer.
11. Do not waste time by repeating the question in your answer.
12. If you feel your answer is incomplete, leave sufficient space below, so that you can come back to it later and keep it all together.
13. With structured questions, answer all the parts – each part carries marks – do not leave any blank spaces.
14. Write down the answers the examiner has asked for, not all the things you can possibly tell the examiner on the subject. For example, if you are asked to list three items, list three – you will not get extra marks for listing more.
15. Help the examiner by numbering your answers clearly. Show all your working on your answer book. If you make a mistake, cross it through with a single line.
16. Make your sketches and drawings a good size. Label them clearly and include all essential points.
17. If you start to run out of time, write short accurate notes instead of sentences.
18. If you have time, read through your answers. Don't forget you will lose marks for inaccurate spelling, grammar and punctuation. **Check carefully.**

Examination Results

Examination results are expected in school on Thursday 21 August 2025. It is school policy that results should be obtained in person from 10am in school. If pupils are going to be away on holiday, their results can be emailed to their school email address but only by requesting this in advance, **no later than Friday 18 July 2025** to Mrs Gavell jga@olchs.lancs.sch.uk.

Collection of Coursework

Coursework which has been submitted for examinations may not be collected until after 31 October 2025. If you need your coursework, you must contact your subject teacher and collect it in November or December 2025. It cannot be kept indefinitely.

Presentation of Certificates

Examination certificates will be presented in November 2025 at our Presentation Evening. You will receive an invitation via your parental email. If you are unable to attend, you will be able to collect your certificates in person after Presentation Evening. We do not post certificates home, as they are legal documents and need your signature on collection. We will keep certificates for a period of three years after which they will be returned to the Examination Board.

Good luck Year 11!