

# Exams Guide

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Exams Guidance Document

The web version is the up to date version and supersedes other versions V.ARNG

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## About Swansea College

Swansea College is a small, Independent College based in the centre of Swansea. We provide GCSE, A level and English language and foundation courses. As well as our fully immersed school and Sixth form, we offer bespoke and intensive exam preparation courses for most subjects.

We are a registered exam centre for WJEC, Pearson Edexcel, AQA, CCEA, Cambridge admissions tests, Cambridge International and Trinity College of London.

### Contact details

18 Mansel St, Swansea, SA1 5SG

Tel: 01792 535000

Exams officer and General Exam Enquiries: [exams@swanseacollege.com](mailto:exams@swanseacollege.com)

General Enquiries: [admin@swanseacollege.com](mailto:admin@swanseacollege.com)

Website: [www.swanseacollege.com](http://www.swanseacollege.com)

### What we offer

As an exam centre, we can accept external candidates for GCSE, iGCSE, and A-level exams. We offer Maths and English GCSEs (AQA, Edexcel, and WJEC) in November and iGCSEs (Edexcel) in January. GCSEs, iGCSEs, and A-Levels can be written in the summer. We also offer Cambridge International exams in October/November and in the Summer.

You can also take a specific range of Science exams including the practical assessment and Modern Foreign Languages here, as well as the Oracy assessment for WJEC GCSE English.

We can also provide arrangements for exams with coursework such as History and Welsh Baccalaureate.

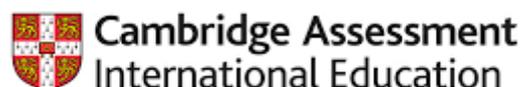
### About the exam system

In the UK, qualifications are provided by a number of awarding bodies, also known as exam boards.

Wales	England	Scotland	N.Ireland
AQA	AQA	SQA**	CCEA
Edexcel*	Edexcel*		ICCAE
WJEC	WJEC as Eduqas		
OCR	OCR		
Cambridge Int	Cambridge Int		

\*also known as Pearson Edexcel

\*\* SQA do not offer exam-only subjects



For Wales, the most popular boards are WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee), Pearson Edexcel and AQA.

## Terminology

GCSE	<b>General Certificate in Secondary Education</b>
	<p>These are the standard leaving exams (age 16) for UK schools. Some GCSEs e.g. Mathematics can be taken as Exam Only subjects, others involve assessed coursework and are therefore not suitable for external candidates.</p> <p>GCSEs are offered by AQA, Edexcel, WJEC and OCR.</p>
iGCSE	<b>International General Certificate in Secondary Education</b>
	<p>Equivalent to GCSEs, these were developed for overseas students who wanted a UK-style education but were not able to take British GCSEs. iGCSE is a brand name trademarked by CIE (Cambridge International Examinations). iGCSEs are offered by Edexcel and CIE.</p> <p>These are popular with external candidates as they usually don't involve assessed coursework but are Exam Only.</p> <p>Please note: Sciences and Languages may involve assessed components e.g. orals and practical's.</p>
A Level/GCE	<b>Advanced Level/General Certificate of Education</b>
	<p>A levels/GCSEs are offered by AQA, Edexcel, WJEC and OCR.</p> <p>There are two main types of A Levels, Linear and Modular/Unitised. Linear A Level course have exams taken in one year (all at once), while Modular/Unitised exams may be taken in two stages.</p> <p>See the exam board specifications for details.</p>
AS level	<p>Offered as a qualification in its own right, these are usually taken after one year of study at A level standard. AS levels are not available for all subjects.</p>
A2 level	<p>This refers to exams and coursework usually taken after two years of study. These can be combined with AS level to form an A level qualification.</p>
External Candidate	<p>Also known as a private candidate, these are exam candidates who have not studied at the centre where the exam will take place.</p>
Awarding Body	<p>Another name for Exam Board. These terms are used interchangeably.</p>
Specifications	<p>A detailed description of each qualification, including the number and duration of each exam, the Subject and Paper codes and the Areas of</p>

	<p>Assessment.</p> <p>These can be found and downloaded free from the exam board's websites.</p>
SAMs and Past Papers	<p>Specimen Assessment Materials. These are practice tests and are particularly useful for new exam specifications where no past papers are available.</p> <p>These can be found and downloaded free from the exam board's websites.</p>

## Advice for Private Candidates

1.1 We help private candidates as much as possible, but it is your responsibility to see that all administrative and coursework requirements are met. Courses and examination boards differ in their requirements and you know your own personal requirements better than we do.

1.2 Some things to look out for:

- make sure that you know the starting date for new specifications and when old specifications cease to be available.
- make sure that the exam you want to take (including practical's and coursework units) is available to private candidates.
- make sure you have a qualified tutor or online learning provider who can provide mock assessments and a predicted grade
- make sure that the exam you want to take is available at the time you want to take it.
- make sure that you are able to satisfy the regulations for the supervision of controlled assessment tests and practical's.
- make sure you provide us with any previous results if you are resitting
- make sure that you are following the new 40% rule for unitised GCSE examinations

1.3 As a private candidate, it is your responsibility to ensure that your entries are filled in correctly. Swansea College cannot be held responsible for the entries you submit. We recommend that you check your statement of entries to ensure that they reflect accurately the exams you want to be entered for. Failure to notify us about errors in your statement of entries one week following receipt of the state of entry may incur an additional charge for amendments.

1.4 It is the responsibility of the candidate to find a suitable tutor or online learning provider. Swansea College strongly recommends having a qualified tutor or online learning provider to provide mock assessments, letters of reference, and predicted grades.

1.5 Candidates with coursework should be advised that they are responsible for ensuring their work meets all requirements. Candidates are responsible for handing in their work on time.

1.6 Swansea College cannot be held responsible for the provision of any equipment. The candidate is expected to bring all necessary materials to the examination (e.g. Calculators, Pens, and Pencils etc.). Please read exam board guidelines for more details.

1.7 It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that the examination that they are sitting matches the one they are entered for.

1.8 A candidate may withdraw from an examination by giving notice to us in writing on or before the deadline for the exam entries. Refunds will be paid after a deduction for administrative costs. There are no refunds available for late entries or for withdrawals after entry deadlines have closed.

1.9 It is the responsibility of the candidate to arrive for their examination on time. Candidates arriving late for an examination will be allowed to sit the examination, however the relevant awarding bodies will determine if the mark is allowed to stand. Candidates should arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of their exam.

2.0 If a candidate has a clash on their exam timetable with another examination (either at Swansea College or another exam centre) appropriate measures must be implemented to retain the 'security' of the examination. Please contact the Exams Office for more information.

2.1 Normally all exams will be held at Swansea College, 18 Mansel St, Swansea SA1 5SG. However, on occasion we may use an alternative site for examinations. You will be given notice if this applies to you. If unsure, please check with the Exams Officer.

2.2 It is the candidate's responsibility to collect their certificates. These are generally available three months following the results. Swansea College can post certificates if requested, however, Swansea College does not assume responsibility for certificates which have been posted and subsequently get lost in the post. Candidates must provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Swansea College in order for their certificates to be posted.

2.3 School/college candidates have a lot of the exam administration carried out for them. Private candidates must find out about controlled tests, ISAs, oral tests, pre-release material, exam timetables, dates for submission of coursework, candidate authentication forms and so on. The exam boards' websites have a lot of useful information which you are strongly advised to read.

We recommend that you familiarise yourself with guidelines for each of the relevant exam boards and JCQ:

[AQA](#) |

[Edexcel](#) |

[WJEC](#) |

[JCQ](#)

[Cambridge International](#)

## **Non-Examination Assessments**

Non-Examination Assessments option is available for most exams. These generally involve multiple meetings with centre staff, a supervised work period, controlled assessments and a mock assessment.

The process varies between exams. In general: Students meet with centre staff to go over the requirements of assessment. Students should come prepared and have a good understanding of the subject specification. After receiving approval from the subject tutor and exam board if applicable, students may begin writing their first draft. During the second meeting, students will review the required structure for their exam and have a supervised work period; this is to be able to verify your work. A review will be completed where students will be expected to talk about their work, explain their topic, and discuss the assignment. Students then submit their final draft for assessment. It is the candidate's responsibility for turning in work on time.

Please note, centre staff cannot assist with the actual content of the assessment as this would fall under tutoring and students must complete this without coaching from the markers. All candidates are advised to have a tutor or online-learning provider.

## **Practical Assessments**

Practical Assessments may be available for Science and Computer Science exams. Please contact the college for more details.

## **Access Arrangements**

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Swansea College will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with access needs. Please contact the exams officer for details.

Candidates may be able to apply for extra time when taking an exam (usually 25%) or may require the use of a scribe or a computer. This will be decided by JCQ and based on evidence supplied ahead of time.

The College must follow JCQ's guidelines for Access Arrangements. Candidates must come to the college for at least one observation and meet with our SENCo. Candidates must then be assessed by Swansea College's Assessor. Any assessments carried out must be completed after meeting with the SENCo. In addition, in accordance with JCQ's guidelines, assessments done prior to consultation with the centre cannot be used to process access arrangements. External reports made prior to consultation with the college will not be accepted as an assessment. Any questions about Access Arrangements should be directed to the Exams Office.

## **Off-site exams**

Sometimes, often for medical reasons, candidates are not able to attend an exam centre. In these instances, we can arrange for an off-site exam. This can take place at home or in a hospital.

Candidates must provide written evidence from a hospital or doctor that they are unable to take the exam at the usual centre. Off-site exams will incur extra charges. Please contact us for further details.

## **Special Consideration**

If something untoward happens that prevents you from doing your best, or even from attending an exam, we can apply for Special Consideration on your behalf. This may include sudden bereavement, illness or injury.

You will need to provide a statement of what has happened and how it affected you.

You will need to provide written evidence (e.g. a GP's letter) that we can submit to the exam board. Please note that whether any Special Consideration is given is at the exam board's discretion, not the colleges. Additional fees may apply.

## Applying to take an exam with Swansea College

First, decide which exams you want to take. You can check the exam board websites for details of the levels and subjects they offer. Make a note of the subject codes and papers you need.

Complete our online External Candidate Application Form and submit it to us. You will need to complete a separate section for each exam that you want to take. There is room for up to eight subjects on the form. If you need more than eight, please complete another form. You must do this in order for us to process your entry. You can access [our online application form](#) here or via our website.

Don't forget to check the exam board's website(s) to be aware of prohibited combinations.

We will use the details you provide us with to create an External Exam Candidate Agreement and return it to you by email to check and confirm the details. If everything is correct, we will then send you an invoice for the exam fees.

We will also send you an invoice by email. You can pay this by BACS bank transfer. We do not accept payment over the phone.

Once payment is received, we will then enter you for the exams you requested, once the exam board has processed your entry, send you an entry confirmation report by email. Depending on your exam board, this will include the time and dates for each paper. It may take several days for the exam boards to process and produce the entry confirmation report.

Approximately 2-3 weeks before your exam, you will receive a personal timetable from the College. Exam dates are available on the exam board website.

Close to your exam, we will also send you a copy of our latest exam newsletter, which contains information about exam rules, what to do in case of illness and other useful information.

You can access our [online application form](#) here or via our website.

Please note, if there are clashes i.e. two exams taking place at the same time, it is possible for you to take both, but you will have to be supervised between exam sessions. There will be an extra charge for this.

## Key dates

Key dates and exam entry deadlines are available on our website. We also advise checking the website of the awarding bodies as timetables will be posted there.

Candidates are advised they must be available for exams up to the exam contingency day. This date varies from year to year but is available on the Exam board's website.

With speaking examinations and other dates that the college sets, candidates are advised to let the college know of any conflicts but should be aware that we may not be able to accommodate personal preferences.

## Exam results day

Exam results will be emailed at 8 am on Results Day to the email address provided on the application form.

Our aim is to hand out results as speedily as possible. Please avoid telephone enquires expect in exceptional circumstances as we cannot discuss results over the phone. Request for scripts must be made in writing, by sending an email; a letter signed and dated by the candidate.

## Post results service

A number of post-result services are available. These can include checking and re-marking papers and requesting a copy of your completed exam paper i.e. Script. There are costs involved, as well as deadlines for submission.

Post service results must be made in writing, by sending an email; a letter signed and dated by the candidate.

## Certificates

Certificates will arrive to the College 12 weeks after results day. When we are in receipt of the exam certificates, an email will be sent to notify all candidates.

It is your responsibility to pick up your certificates. Certificates will not be handed to a 3rd party unless we have received written authorisation in the form of an email or letter from the candidate giving us permission to release them. This includes parents and guardians. The 3rd party must have photo ID present and match the name on the authorisation letter/email.

If you need us to post your certificates you must provide an A4 Stamped Addressed Envelope, the envelope must be card.

The postage must be at least signed for or special delivery, Swansea College will not liable for any certificates lost in the post.

We can provide proof of posting if necessary. We only hold exam certificates for up to 12 months from when we receive them, after that they will then be destroyed. Following this

you will then need to contact the relevant exam board for a copy of your certificate.

## Terms and Conditions of Swansea College

### The College undertakes to:

1. Under the terms of this contract, once the Application Form is completed in full by the Candidate and payment is received, the College will make an exam entry and arrange for the Candidate to take the examination at the College on the date and time set by the Awarding Organisation. Entries will not be processed without payment.
2. The College will enter the Candidate for the exams in the series indicated on the application form subject to Awarding Organisation availability.
3. The College will issue the Candidate a personal examination timetable listing the exam dates and start times.
4. Any Certificate issued by the Awarding Organisation to the College will be sent to the Candidate by if the Candidate provides a stamped addressed envelope. Otherwise, the candidate may collect the certificate when available free of charge.
5. The College welcomes candidates requiring special access arrangements and within the resources available to the College will endeavour to support any candidate subject to the normal regulations of the Awarding Organisation and/or JCQ.
6. The College will communicate with the candidate via email to the address given on the application form.
7. The College will defer to the guidance of the awarding bodies and JCQ, ensuring all regulations and policies are met or exceeded.

### Fees and payments

1. The fee payable is stated on the invoice sent to the candidate.
2. The Candidate must pay the fee in full before an entry will be made.
3. All fees must be received by the closing date as given on the website. If fees are not received by the closing deadlines, an updated invoice will be sent, this will include late fees.
4. Payment should be made by bank transfer.
5. Fees are non-refundable subject to the Cancellation terms below.

### Cancellation

1. The Candidate may cancel this agreement at any time providing that it is done in writing.
2. All exam application fees are non-refundable.
3. The College may cancel this Contract if the Candidate is unable to meet their obligations under the terms of this agreement.

## General Conditions

1. The Candidate is responsible for providing the College with all accurate information as requested by the Awarding Body and for notifying the College of any change to the information.
2. The Candidate is responsible for complying with all the rules and regulations of the Awarding Body and/or Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Details can be found on their website [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)
3. The candidate is responsible for ensuring they have read and understood the Awarding Body's specification for their chosen test.
4. The candidate will provide to the College with photographic evidence of identity in a form approved by the United Kingdom government such as a passport or a driver's licence.
5. The College may refuse to accept the application and fee from any candidate without reason.
6. The Candidate is responsible for complying with the normal standard of behaviour of a college student whilst on the premises and the College has the right to refuse the Candidate entry to the premises.

## Personal Data

1. The Candidate agrees to the College processing personal data as defined in the Data Protection Act of 1998 contained in the application form for any purpose(s) reasonably required to ensure the provision of the Services. By registering for an examination or test the Candidate is agreeing that data provided as part of the entry process will be passed to the Awarding Organisation for the same purpose(s).
2. The Candidate must also agree and acknowledge that if they apply for an educational course where the examination result is used in the admissions process then the Awarding Organisation will provide the Candidate's personal data to the institution(s) to which the Candidate has applied and to UCAS.

## Force Majeure

1. The College will not be liable to the Candidate for any failure or delay or for the consequences of any failure or delay in performance of the Contract, if it is due to any event beyond the reasonable control and contemplation of the College including, without limitation, acts of God, extreme weather conditions, war, industrial disputes, protests, fire, tempest, Virus outbreak, forced closure, explosion, an act of terrorism and national emergencies.

This Contract shall be governed by the laws of England and Wales, and the parties submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of England and Wales.

## Changes

Swansea College reserves the right to alter regulations and procedures. Any changes will be published on the website in the External Exams candidate guide and they will take immediate effect upon publication. Please ensure you check the website regularly.

