



Student Vocational Course Handbook 2025-2026



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Introduction

Goldington Academy is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed all exam and assessment processes in place in the centre and are made aware of the required JCQ awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

This booklet aims to provide information that is helpful and informative. Please read it carefully so that you are aware of the regulations and procedures and share it with your parents or guardians so that they are also aware.

The Examination Boards (sometimes called Awarding Bodies) set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of non-examined assessments (NEA) and Goldington Academy is required to follow them precisely. You should therefore pay particular attention to the JCQ notices at the end of this booklet. Failure to do so can result in disqualification from some or all of your subjects.

If there is anything that you do not understand, please ask. If you or your parents or guardians have any queries or need help or advice at any time, please contact Mrs Henderson, the Examinations Manager at examoffice@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Purpose of the handbook

- To support/complement candidate briefings
- To inform candidates about malpractice in assessments
- To inform candidates about the use of their personal data and copyright
- To ensure candidates are provided with all the relevant information about their assessments in advance of any assessments being taken
- To ensure copies of relevant JCQ information for candidates documents are provided in advance of any assessments being taken
- To answer any questions candidates may have
- To signpost candidates (and where relevant parents/carers) to any assessment - related policies/procedures that they need to be aware of on the centre's website

Vocational Qualifications at Goldington Academy

At Goldington Academy we offer three different types of vocational qualifications which are covered by the guidance and regulations as set out in this handbook;

- OCR Cambridge Nationals
- WJEC Vocational Level 1/2
- BTEC Tech Award

For detailed information about the programme overview, unit details and assessment procedures, please refer to the specification on the examining board website.

These qualifications are different to GCSE's because:

- Students develop skills, knowledge and understanding in the vocational area they are studying.
- Each vocational course is made up of a number of units, allowing students to build up their qualification in stages.
- Students are assessed through non-examined assessments and an external examination.

- Students produce evidence for their key skills qualification throughout their vocational course.
- Students take responsibility for their own learning by planning their work, doing research and regularly reviewing their progress.

All vocational courses run by Goldington Academy are governed by the JCQ, you must read the Information for candidates – coursework assessments ([Appendix 2](#)) and Information for candidates – using social media ([Appendix 3](#)) documents. Speak to your teacher if you are unsure about any of the rules.

For OCR Cambridge Nationals courses, you will be provided with a ‘Student guide to NEA assignments’ booklet, which is specific to your course – for use in conjunction with the handbook.

Course Arrangements

Registration & Entry Information

- BTEC learners are registered with Pearson before November in Year 10
- OCR Cambridge Nationals and WJEC Vocational courses are entered for units in either the January or June assessment series in Years 10 & 11, depending on the unit completion date set by your teacher. The specific assessment plan will be provided by each subject teacher

For all Vocational courses, the external examination will be taken in summer 2027 (certification series).

Internal Assessment

The content of the assessment will be outlined on an Assignment Brief. For every assessment there will be a clear deadline by which the work must be submitted to your teacher. Ask your teacher if you are unsure.

Authentication of work

Before submitting your work, a declaration form (specific to the examining board) must be completed to declare that the work is your own. **A mark of zero will be recorded if a student cannot confirm the authenticity of their work.**

Marking of Internal Assessments

Your work will be marked by your teacher in accordance with the marking criteria provided by the awarding body. Following that, a sample of the assessments will be checked by another member of the teaching team to ensure the grading is fair and accurate.

Internal Appeals

Your teacher will inform you of your centre assessed mark before these are submitted to the exam board. There is an ‘Internal Appeals Policy’ in place for any candidate who feels that the assessment of their NEA has not been carried out fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification. This can be found on the ‘Examinations’ section of the school website.

To initiate an appeal, you may request copies of materials (generally, as a minimum, a copy of the marked assessment material (work) and the mark scheme or assessment criteria plus additional materials which may vary from subject to subject) to assist you in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment. **This request must be made within 3 calendar days of receiving your marks.**

There are strict deadlines to submit a written internal appeal and once the marks have been submitted to the examining board, this option will no longer be available to you. Non-examined assessments are not subject to the usual examination post-results services.

Ensure you discuss any concerns with your teacher or the exams office immediately for further guidance or support.

Moderation

Following the submission of marks to the examining board, a sample of students' work will be sent to a moderator. The purpose of moderation is to bring the marking of an internally assessed component/unit to an agreed standard in all participating centres. Please note that, after moderation, the centre assessed mark could go up, stay the same or go down. Your subject teacher and/or a member of SLT will be available on results days to support you should this happen.

Opportunities for resubmission of work

Every internal assessment unit contributes to the final qualification grade; therefore, it may be appropriate for your teacher to authorise resubmission of evidence to meet assessment criteria targeted by an assignment. This will only be authorised in cases where:

- it is permitted within the specification of the qualification and
- it is in the student's best interest to do so

Personal data

- 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 and 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.
- Links to each awarding body's privacy notice are listed in [Appendix 1](#).

Copyright

- The copyright of any work created by a candidate that is submitted to an awarding body for assessment (referred to as Assessment Materials) belongs to the candidate
- By submitting this work, a candidate is granting the awarding body a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use their assessment materials (referred to as Assessment Licence)
- If a candidate wishes to terminate the awarding body's rights for anything other than assessing his/her work, the awarding body must be notified by the centre and it is at the discretion of the awarding body whether or not to terminate such rights
- Candidates may access student materials (including examination scripts) through the access to scripts arrangements.

Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

Access Arrangements are determined by the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo), in conjunction with relevant teaching staff and exam office personnel. They are agreed before an assessment/exam. They allow candidates with special education needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- Access the assessment/exam;
- Show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment/exam

Goldington Academy will apply directly to the awarding bodies for access arrangements on your behalf. You will be notified of your approved access arrangements in writing by the SENDCo. Access arrangements are applied for based on your usual way of working. In some cases, an assessment may be carried out with you by an external assessor who specialises in access arrangements. If your teacher thinks you would benefit from this, they will discuss it in detail with you and make recommendations to the SENDCo.

Alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice

Attempted or actual malpractice activity will not be tolerated. The school will follow the JCQ procedures as described in JCQ's "[Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessment: Policies and Procedures](#)" document.

The following are examples of malpractice by candidates with regard to non-examined assessments. This list is not exhaustive:

- Plagiarism: the copying and passing off as the candidate's own work the whole or part of another person's work. OCR have produced a useful guide – How to reference and avoid plagiarism ([Appendix 4](#))
- Collusion: working collaboratively with other learners to produce work which is submitted as the candidate's only
- Failing to abide by the instructions of an assessor: this may refer to the use of resources which the candidates have specifically been told not to use
- The alteration of any results document
- Goldington Academy does not allow the use of AI by candidates when producing work for assessments

If a member of staff suspects a candidate of malpractice the candidate will be informed and the allegation will be explained. The candidate will have the opportunity to give their side of

the story before any final decision is made. If the candidate accepts that malpractice has occurred, she/he will be given the opportunity to repeat the assignment as long as the candidate has not already signed the authentication form. If found guilty of malpractice following an investigation, the member of staff may decide to re-mark previous assignments and these could also be rejected if similar concerns are identified.

Should the candidate be found guilty of malpractice after having signed the authentication form then the matter is no longer subject to internal school discipline and must be reported to the relevant awarding body.

Results

- Summer 2026 provisional statements of results release date is on Thursday 20 August 2026. Further information will be supplied later in the academic year
- Selected teachers and members of the senior leadership team will be available during the exam results collection window
- Results will **not** be given via telephone under any circumstance
- If you are unable to attend results day in person, you can have them emailed to you or elect another person (including family members) to collect your results on your behalf. For either option, you must complete the 'Candidate Permission form', available from Mrs Henderson, Exams Officer

Complaints procedure

Goldington Academy has a written complaints procedure which will cover general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification. This can be found on the 'Examinations' section of the school website.

Appendix 1 - JCQ Information for candidates – Privacy Notice

AQA

[Privacy notice \(aqa.org.uk\)](https://www.aqa.org.uk/privacy-notice)

OCR

[Candidate privacy policy \(ocr.org.uk\)](https://www.ocr.org.uk/privacy-policy)

Pearson/Edexcel

[Pearson's Privacy Notices](https://www.pearson.com/privacy-notice)

WJEC

[Privacy Policy \(wjec.co.uk\)](https://www.wjec.co.uk/privacy-policy)

Appendix 2 - JCQ Information for candidates

You **must** read this information if you are taking any qualifications that contain elements of non-examination assessment.

Preparing your work — good practice

If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your teacher, you **must** tell your teacher. They will then record the assistance given to you.

If you worked as part of a group on an assignment, for example undertaking field research, you **must** write up your **own account** of the assignment. Even if the information you have is the same, you **must** describe in your own words how that information was obtained. You **must draw your own conclusions from the data**.

You **must** meet the deadlines that your teacher gives you. Remember – your teachers are there to guide you. Although they cannot give you direct assistance, they can help you to sort out any problems before it is too late.

Take care of your work and keep it safe. **Do not** leave it lying around where your classmates can find it. **Do not** share it with anyone, including posting it on social media. You must always keep your work secure and confidential. If it is stored on the computer network, keep your password secure. Collect all copies from the printer and destroy those you do not need.

Do not be tempted to use any prepared or generated online solutions and try to pass them off as your own work – this is cheating. Electronic tools used by awarding bodies can detect this sort of copying.

You **must not** write inappropriate, offensive or obscene material.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts, ideas or outputs and trying to pass them off as your own. It could also include AI-produced material. **Plagiarism is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously.**

Don't think you won't be caught; there are many ways to detect plagiarism.

- Markers can spot changes in the style of writing and use of language.
- Markers are highly experienced subject specialists who will be very familiar with work on the topic concerned. They may have read the source you are using or even marked the work you have copied from.
- Internet search engines and specialised computer software can be used to match phrases or pieces of text with original sources and to detect changes in the grammar and style of writing or punctuation.

Research and using references

In some subjects you will have an opportunity to do some independent research into a topic.

The research you do may involve looking for information in published sources, such as textbooks, encyclopedias, journals, TV, radio and on the internet.

You can demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject by using information from sources, or generated from sources, which may include the internet and AI. Remember, though, information from these sources may be incorrect or biased. You **must** take care how you use this material - you cannot copy it and claim it as your own work.

Using information from published sources (including the internet) as the basis for your assignment is a good way to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject. You **must** take care how you use this material though - you **cannot** copy it and claim it as your own work.

The regulations state that:

'the work which you submit for assessment **must** be your own';

'you **must not** copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you'.

When producing a piece of work, if you use the same wording as a published source, you **must** place quotation marks around the passage and state where it came from. This is known as **referencing**. You **must** make sure that you give detailed references for everything in your work which is not in your own words. A reference from a printed book or journal should show the name of the author, the year of publication and the page number. For example: Morrison, 2000, p29.

For material taken from the internet, your reference should show the date when the material was downloaded and **must** show the precise web page, not the search engine used to locate it. This can be copied from the address line. For example: http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthistday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/newsid_2621000/2621915.stm, downloaded 5 February 2026.

Where computer-generated content has been used (such as an AI chatbot), your reference **must** show the name of the AI tool used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>), 25/01/2026. You should also reference the sources used by the AI tool in generating the content.

You **must** retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how you used it. This **must** be submitted with your work for final assessment so that your teacher can review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used.

You may be required to include a bibliography at the end of your piece of written work. Your teacher will tell you whether this is necessary. Where required, your bibliography **must** list the full details of publications you have used in your research, even where these are not directly referred to. For example: Curran, J. *Mass Media and Society* (Hodder Arnold, 2005).

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.

Sanctions for breaking the regulations

If it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following sanctions will be applied:

- you will be awarded zero marks for your work;
- you will be disqualified from that component for the examination series in question;
- you will be disqualified from the whole subject for that examination series;
- you will be disqualified from all subjects and barred from entering again for a period of time.

The awarding body will decide which sanction is appropriate.

REMEMBER – IT'S YOUR QUALIFICATION SO IT NEEDS TO BE YOUR OWN WORK.

Appendix 3 - JCQ Information for candidates – Social media

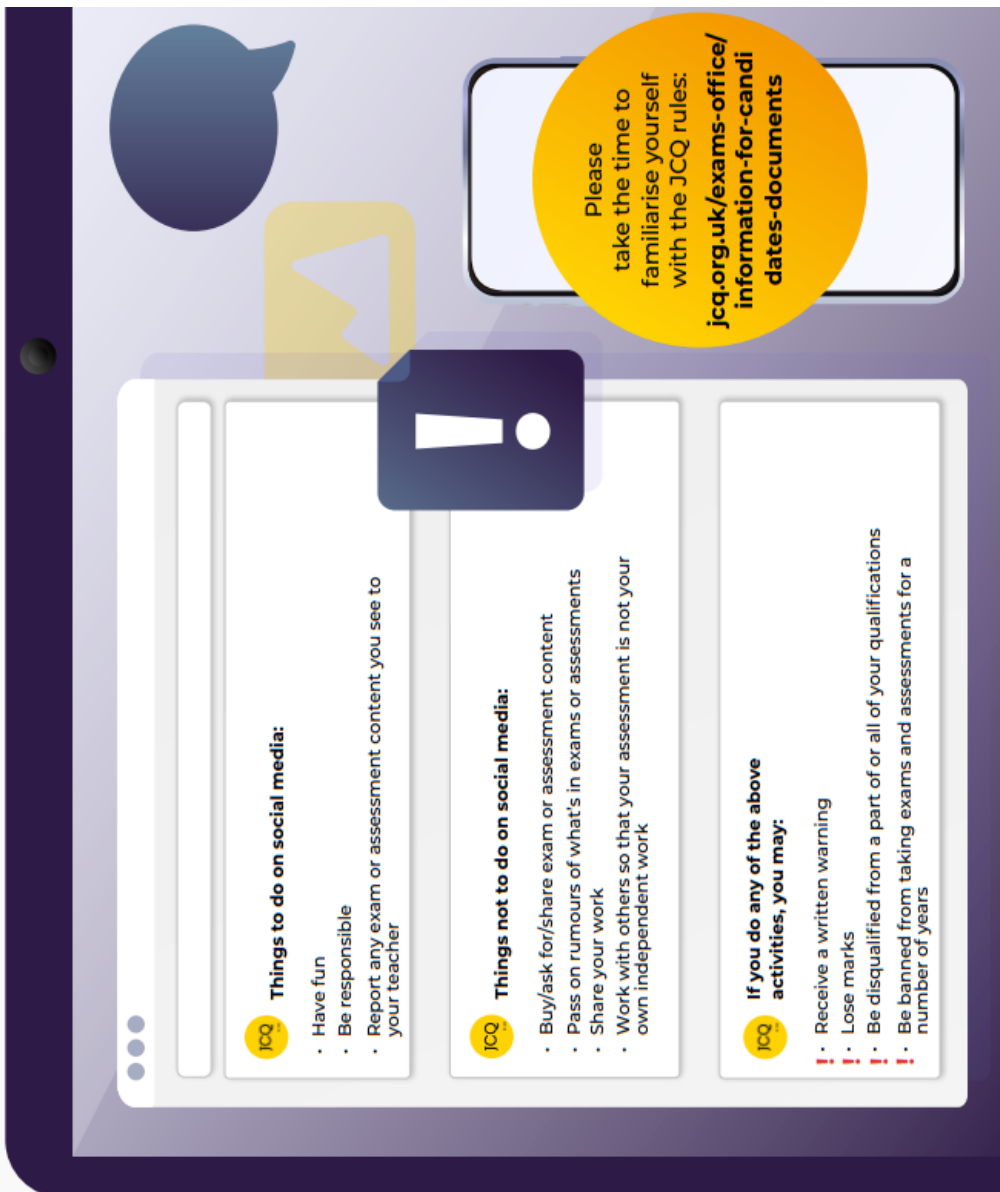
You **must** read this information to help you stay within examination/assessment regulations when using social media.



Information for candidates
Using social media and examinations/assessments

While we like to share our experiences online, when it comes to exams and other assessments, we have to be careful.

- Sharing ideas online can be helpful when you're studying or revising
- However, sharing certain information (see information on the right) can break the rules and could affect your results
- If you're not sure what you can and can't discuss online, check with your teacher
- If you receive exam content on social media, you must tell your teacher
- Don't be caught out by scammers selling fake exam papers



Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the JCQ rules:

jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents



How to reference and avoid plagiarism



What is referencing?

Giving details in your work about where your information came from.

What is plagiarism?

Taking someone else's work, words or ideas and passing them off as your own.



Do

- ✓ **Reference** anything you've copied from websites, books or course notes
- ✓ Always use quotation marks “ ”
- ✓ Say where it's from and the date you got it
- ✓ **Use your own words** as well when asked to describe or explain something



Why?

- ✓ A good way to get across your own opinions and thoughts
- ✓ Demonstrating your understanding helps get you marks



Don't

- ✗ **Just** copy from websites, books or course notes – use it to support your own thoughts and ideas and make sure you **reference**



Consequences

- ✗ Copying without referencing looks like you're pretending it's your own words. This is known as plagiarism and **you could lose marks**

If you're not sure what this means for your assignment work, **ask your teacher.**