



## Coursework – A summary for parents/carers and students

### What is Coursework?

Coursework is any piece of written or practical work which is marked by the school or an external examiner and which contributes to an accredited 14-19 award-eg 'A' Level or 'AS' level. The coursework component of an 'A' or 'AS' level qualification is set out in the specific examination board specification for the subject.

The student completes coursework over an extended period of time. Coursework components assess candidates' skills, knowledge and understanding that may not readily be assessed by timed written papers.

### How will coursework be delivered?

1. Subject staff will ensure that students are clear about the assessment criteria which they are expected to meet in their coursework. Specifications usually explain the criteria in detail, but candidates may require some further explanation or interpretation before they fully understand the nature of the skills which they are expected to demonstrate.
2. For each subject, all students will be given the same and sufficient time to complete the work.
3. Students will be given clear instructions as to the time and place for handing in the work.
4. The work must be handed in by the student to the designated teacher and not given to another student in school to hand in.
5. All coursework submitted for assessment **must** be the candidate's own work. Written material may be handwritten using black ink or where possible, word-processed. (Computers may be used unless stated otherwise in the examination board specification.)
6. Parents/carers should encourage their son/daughter to spend time on their coursework and to think about it as early as possible. They should discuss with their son/daughter the planning and timing of the work. Parents/carers may provide their children with access to resource materials and discuss the coursework with their children, but they must **not** give direct advice on what should or should not be included.
7. If the coursework has not been completed by the final deadline date, the incomplete work must be handed in on the final deadline day to receive a mark. If this is not done then the latest piece of work collected in will be marked instead. There will be no further opportunity to complete this work for an improved mark unless this has been agreed by the Head of Department.
8. Normally there will be no extension of a coursework deadline if a student is absent for a day or two during the period that the coursework is being completed. If the student is absent from school on the interim or final deadline day, the work should be given to the designated teacher on the first day back at school.
9. If a student is absent for an extended period then an individual final deadline may need to be negotiated with a member of the Head of Department. In such circumstances, appropriate evidence (for example a medical note) will be required.



## Authentication of coursework

Candidates must not:

- submit work which is not their own;
- lend work to other candidates or allow their work to be copied;
- allow other candidates access to, or the use of, their own independently sourced material or assist others in the production of coursework; (this does not mean that candidates may not lend their books to one another, but candidates must not plagiarise others' research);
- use any books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution;
- submit work word-processed by a third person without acknowledgement.

**These actions constitute malpractice, for which a penalty (e.g. disqualification from the assessment) will be applied.**

## Where will coursework take place?

- Coursework is designed to extend students' class work and therefore, most coursework will be completed at home or in school outside of lesson times.
- There may be occasions when it is more appropriate or convenient to have all students in a larger venue, such as the sports hall or gym under close supervision but this will be the exception.

## What is the coursework process?

- All coursework is subject to 'Levels of Control', ranging from high (most controlled) to low (least controlled) to ensure reliability and authenticity and to make assessments more manageable for teachers and students. Coursework subject to 'High' level of control work must be completed in school under supervision. If ICT is used then it is subject to the stipulations set out below. 'Medium' Level of control work must be completed in school, under supervision, but collaborative working is allowed. 'Low' level of control work may be completed outside of the classroom or at home. Neither 'Medium' or 'Low' level of control work is subject to the ICT stipulations set out below.
- Individual subject specifications give specific details about which tasks are high, medium and low control. Your son/daughter's teachers will inform them which tasks are to be completed in high, medium or low control conditions.

## Use of ICT and security of students' work ('High' Level of control)

- If ICT use is permitted for 'High' level of control coursework, students are not permitted to access their work between coursework sessions.
- All students will be issued with a separate computer login and password to use during 'High' level of control coursework sessions.
- Students are **not allowed** to save work on USB devices to bring home. USB ports and the internet can be 'switched off' during coursework ICT sessions.
- Breaches of these measures can be interpreted as malpractice and the students have been informed of the possible consequences.

## What does formal supervision (high level of control) mean?

- Students must be in direct sight of the supervisor at all times.
- Use of mobile phones, MP3 and other electronic devices is strictly prohibited and all breaches will be noted and reported to the exams office.
- The use of resources is tightly prescribed, normally only research folders/diaries.
- Students must complete all work independently but those students who work with learning support, following an assessment, can be assisted; this is noted and declared to the examination boards.
- Students are not permitted to communicate with each other. The assessment is carried out under examination conditions.
- No assistance can be given to students.



### **What does informal supervision (medium level of control) mean?**

- Students do not have to be directly supervised at all times but there must be adequate supervision to ensure that work can be authenticated.
- Use of mobile phones, MP3 and other electronic devices is strictly prohibited and all breaches must be noted and reported to the exams office.
- Teachers must ensure that:
  - △ the students' work is their own
  - △ plagiarism does not take place
  - △ the contributions of individual students are recorded accurately.
- Students have access to resources.
- Students can work together.
- Students can receive limited teacher guidance.

### **What does limited supervision (low level of control) mean?**

- Student work may be completed without supervision, outside the classroom.
- Students will be given guidance on how to complete low control tasks.
- Students have access to resources such as books and files during low control tasks.
- Students can work together to collect information but how they use this information in their work must be on an individual basis.
- Students can receive guidance from teachers during low control tasks.

