

18th May 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Social media and GCSE examinations – guidance from JCQ and the exam boards

As your child sits their GCSE examinations, I am writing on behalf of the school to share important guidance issued this week by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and all exam boards regarding the use of social media during the exam period. A copy of the official JCQ candidate guide is attached for your reference, and I would be grateful if you could take a moment to look through it together with your child.

We know this is a busy and sometimes anxious time for families, and we want to support our students in feeling well-prepared and confident going into their assessments. Social media is a normal part of young people's lives, and it can genuinely be a helpful place to share revision tips, ask questions and stay connected with friends who are going through the same experience. We don't want to discourage that. There are, however, a few specific things that students need to be aware of, because getting them wrong – even unintentionally – can have serious consequences for their results.

In short, the JCQ rules ask students not to:

- Buy, ask for, or share exam or assessment content online
- Pass on rumours about what might be in an exam or assessment
- Share their own coursework or assessment work on social media
- Collaborate with others in a way that means their assessed work is no longer their own independent effort

If a student does come across exam content circulating online, or is approached by anyone claiming to be selling exam papers, the right thing to do is to tell a teacher straight away. Unfortunately, scammers selling fake papers are a real problem each year, and reporting it protects both your child and their classmates. Students will not get into trouble for reporting something they have seen.

It is important that families are aware of the potential consequences if the rules are broken. JCQ can issue a written warning, deduct marks, disqualify a candidate from part or all of their qualifications, or in more serious cases ban them from taking exams and assessments for a number of years. These outcomes are rare, but they are real, and a moment's lapse online can put months of hard work at risk.

 **CARING, LEARNING
AND SUCCEEDING**

Please could you:

1. Look through the infographic at the end of this letter, with your child.
2. Have a brief conversation about what is and isn't okay to post, share, or forward during the exam period – including in group chats and on platforms like TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram and WhatsApp.
3. Encourage them to come and speak to their teacher if they are ever unsure, or if they see something that doesn't feel right.

The full JCQ guidance for candidates is available at: [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents)

If you have any questions about how this applies to your child's particular subjects or assessments, please do not hesitate to contact the Exams Office or your child's Head of Year.

Thank you, as ever, for your support – we are very much looking forward to seeing our Year 10 and Year 11 students do themselves proud this exam season.

Yours faithfully
Jane Galbraith
Headteacher



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



Things to do on social media:

- Have fun
- Be responsible
- Report any exam or assessment content you see to your teacher

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

If you do any of the above activities, you may:

- ! • Receive a written warning
- ! • Lose marks
- ! • Be disqualified from a part of or all of your qualifications
- ! • Be banned from taking exams and assessments for a number of years

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the JCQ rules:
jqc.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents