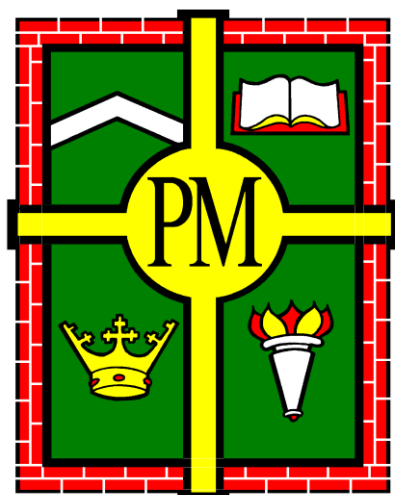


*THE  
PHILIP MORANT  
SCHOOL AND COLLEGE*

**GCSE Public  
Examinations**

**Information for  
KS4 Parents  
and Students**

**2008-2010**



<b>Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
Who is responsible for the examinations?	3
Who is entered for public examinations?	3
Can students take holidays during term time?	3
Coursework deadlines	3
What information will students receive about their examination entries?	3
How do I know when the exams take place?	4
What happens if a student has more than 1 exam at the same time?	4
What arrangements are made for examination preparation?	4
What are modular examinations?	5
What standards of behaviour are expected during examinations?	5
What should students wear for examinations?	5
Where will the examinations be held?	6
At what times do the exam sessions begin?	6
What should students bring to the examinations?	6
What should candidates not bring with them?	7
May students bring a drink?	7
Regulations governing the use of calculators	7
What are the regulations regarding mobile phones?	8
What is meant by Malpractice?	8
How are students supervised?	8
What happens if a student cannot find his/her place in the exam room?	8
How are the exams started?	9
What happens if a student is late?	9
What happens if a student does not turn up for an examination?	9
What do I do if my child is unwell at the time of one of the examinations?	9
What do I need to do if a student has problems that may affect his/her examination performance?	10
What do students do who finish early?	10
What happens at the end of an exam?	10
How can parents best help their son/daughter during the examination period?	10
What happens about the return of school books and equipment at the end of the examination period?	11
When and how are the results distributed?	11
What can I do if results are substantially different from what is anticipated?	11
How do I go about obtaining copies of marked examination scripts?	11
How should fees be paid?	11
When do students receive certificates?	12

## Introduction

Public examinations can be a stressful time for students and parents and it is important that all those involved are as well informed as possible. Well-informed students will realise that the rules and regulations are designed to ensure fairness and minimise disturbance and it is in the interest of all that the exams run smoothly.

Philip Morant School & College (The Centre) will make every effort to ensure that candidates receive the best possible preparation for their examinations, that the administrative arrangements run smoothly, and that the examinations are conducted in a way that will cause as little stress as possible and help students to achieve their best. Mock exams are run to the same standards and rules in order that students are familiar with the process beforehand.

This booklet is intended to inform you about examination procedures, to answer some of the most frequently asked questions and to help guide and support students and parents through the examination process.

If you have any other questions please feel free to make enquiries from the Exams Office. You can contact the Exams Office by:

Telephone: 01206 545222

e-mail: [theschool@philipmorant.essex.sch.uk](mailto:theschool@philipmorant.essex.sch.uk)

On exam days it is best to contact Reception on 01206 545222 and leave a message, with the nature of your query, since the main priority will be the starting of exam sessions on time. The switchboard is open from 8.00 am every morning.

### **Who is responsible for the examinations?**

The Examinations Officer, Mr Mulholland, is responsible for administering all public examination arrangements and for overseeing of students during exams, under direct responsibility from the Headteacher, Mrs Cowans.

There is a team of adult invigilators who will be present during the exams at all times and who are supervised by the Exams Officer and Assistant Exams Officer.

The awarding bodies or examination boards set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of exams, and the school is required to follow them precisely.

### **Who is entered for public examinations?**

It is Philip Morant's policy to enter every student who is being taught a subject, for the most appropriate level of exam. Only by exception, after consultation with parents, will students not be entered.

### **Can students take holidays during term time?**

Dates for exams are rigidly fixed by the exam boards and are subject to change until close to the beginning of the exam series. The Exams Officer will not give actual dates for exams in advance to parents or students wishing to book holidays. Parents are reminded that they require the Headteacher's permission to take students out of school and they book holidays during term time at their own risk. A request form can be obtained from Reception. It is strongly against good practice, careful preparation and school policy to take holidays in term time.

### **Coursework deadlines**

Most of the subjects have an element of coursework included in them which has to be completed, then marked and assessed, and the marks and work sent to the boards well before the formal exam sessions take place. Philip Morant School set interim deadlines that allow time for this process and to meet the board deadlines, which are issued to students at the beginning of Year 11. These cannot be changed. Students who do not submit coursework on time will not be allocated a mark for this component and their overall grade will suffer. They may also not be eligible for special consideration for the formal exams should they be ill as they will not have completed the minimum 35% of the course.

### **What information will students receive about their examination entries?**

When the entries have been entered on the school's computer system, students will receive a student entry summary detailing the subjects and tiers for which they have been entered. This should be checked and you are asked to inform The Centre if you believe there are any errors or problems.

This document serves two purposes:

1. to check that all entries have been made and are correct,
2. to inform parents that they undertake to pay the entry fees should their son/daughter fail to take the examination without good reason.

Once the examination boards have received entries, Statements of Entry will be issued showing the subjects entered with that board, and giving the dates of the examination. These should be checked and kept safely by the candidate, as they are evidence that an entry has been made. They should be brought by the candidate to each examination as an additional check on papers entered, tiers of entry, candidate number etc, but not written on. Sometimes candidates will receive updated statements if their entries are amended.

### **How do I know when the exams take place?**

The main period for exams is from the start of May – until the end of June/early July but some oral examinations and practical examinations will take place earlier. All candidates will receive individual entry statements from the examination boards, which will give them the dates and sessions (am or pm) of the papers they are taking. They will also receive a school produced timetable of all GCSE examinations. This will include start times. It is helpful if parents make sure a copy of this timetable is available to them at home with their son's/daughter's exams highlighted.

### **What happens if a student has more than 1 exam at the same time?**

If a candidate is timetabled to sit two or more exams at the same time this is known as a clash. If these are for the same subject this is intentional on the part of the board and the exams are meant to run one after another. If not, then this should be picked up during the checking process and notified immediately to the Exams Officer who can grant permission for one of the papers to be taken at a different time on the same day. The candidate will have to remain under supervision between the two papers. In rare cases it may be necessary for a paper to be done the next day and it is a requirement that the candidate is supervised overnight. This is essential to avoid compromising the integrity of the examination and needs to be organised well in advance.

If an exam is delayed from a morning to an afternoon session the candidate will be supervised over lunchtime. They should bring some revision or reading material and their lunch and a drink, as they will not be allowed to buy food. Even attempting to communicate with any other candidate will invariably result in disqualification from the exam for all of the candidates involved.

### **What arrangements are made for examination preparation?**

The examination preparation timetable for Year 11 begins on dates notified by Philip Morant School & College, usually in May. After this date students are only required to be in school when they actually have examinations, when there are planned revision sessions or when pre-arranged study support programmes are taking place.

### **What are modular examinations?**

Modular GCSEs involve the written examinations on sections of the syllabus being taken at intervals throughout the course rather than all at the end.

Most modular sessions are in November, March and May according to the Board used. Students have the opportunity to retake certain units on the advice of their subject teachers but The Centre only pays the entry fee if the original examination was missed through illness and a medical certificate was produced.

### **What standards of behaviour are expected during examinations?**

All candidates are given a copy of the 'Notice to Candidates' produced by the examining bodies, which gives general regulations for conduct, which must be observed. A copy can be found in the back of this booklet and one will also be sent to students prior to the start of the examination period.

The school and the examination boards regard breaches of examination regulations very seriously. Parents should please impress on their sons/daughters the importance of good behaviour in an examination, as any activities that may disturb or upset other candidates will not be tolerated.

The Headteacher, the Exams Officer, the Assistant Exams Officer and Invigilators have the power to remove disruptive candidates.

Candidates are asked to wait quietly outside the exam venue and to enter and leave in silence. This avoids disturbance to other candidates and does help to maintain a calm atmosphere for those students who are nervous about their exams.

Candidates who try to communicate with other candidates inside the venue, or who create a disturbance in the examination room will be asked to leave, and the circumstances will be reported to the examination board. This may result in the candidate not receiving a grade for the whole of that examination.

### **What should students wear for examinations?**

Examinations are a school activity and students must wear normal uniform. We ask for the co-operation of parents in ensuring candidates are correctly dressed as we wish to avoid causing stress to candidates in the examination room by pointing out when they are not in correct uniform. All students know the uniform rules and it is their responsibility to ensure they observe them.

Candidates should bring as little as possible in the way of coats into the examination room and baggage, eg handbags, school bags will not be permitted in the room.

Items of jewellery, such as rings or bracelets should not be worn as they make a noise on the desk and would be deemed a disruption to other candidates, likewise keys around necks.

### **Where will the examinations be held?**

The main location for written papers is the Sports Hall. Candidates are asked to be there 30 minutes before the advertised start time to enable seating procedures to be carried out efficiently and to allow for any unforeseen room changes. They will be asked to queue outside the hall in candidate number order (lists are displayed to indicate where the students should queue). A member of staff will remind students of the conditions to be adhered to when entering the exam hall and they are asked to wait quietly until invited to enter. Where a candidate sits will be determined by their candidate number, which appears on all statements of entry. The candidate will sit at the desk bearing a card with their candidate number. This arrangement follows examination board rules and the school cannot change it.

### **At what times do the exam sessions begin?**

The exam boards dictate the permissible start times for exams. Candidates are asked to report no later than 8.30 am for morning examinations and 1.00 pm for afternoon examinations. The length of examination papers varies and they will frequently not finish until after the school day has finished. Students and parents should be aware of this and make appropriate arrangements for getting home. Students will not be allowed out of an exam early for any reason.

Some students may also receive an allowance of extra time for the examinations and so their finishing times will be even later. Timings for some papers may deviate from this pattern and the candidates will be made aware of this. It is the candidates' responsibility to be aware of the start time of each exam but parents should be warned there is a tendency for students to confuse AM and PM sessions. Please ensure your son/daughter checks his/her exam commitments for each day on the previous evening.

### **What should students bring to the examinations?**

Candidates should bring writing equipment, coloured pencils, erasers, etc in a transparent plastic bag or pencil case. Non-transparent pencil boxes or cases will not be permitted in the examination room. All candidates should have their name clearly marked on their calculators.

Pens should be **black ink only** for all exam papers.

Some subject papers will require the use of dictionaries or set texts and candidates will be advised by their subject teachers about this.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they bring everything they need to the examination. The school is not always able to provide spare equipment to loan on the day.

## What should candidates not bring with them?

Some items are strictly banned from exam rooms and should not be brought into the examination room under any circumstances. The exam boards treat mere possession of these items as an infringement:

- Mobile phones
- Personal CD/tape/minidisk players/MP3 players – unless permitted for individual language exams.

*These items can be handed to an invigilator **before the start** of an exam but the school cannot be responsible for the security of these while the examination is in progress.*

- The use of tippex or correction pens is not permitted. Candidates should cross through work they do not wish to be marked.
- Notes, papers and text books, etc, are only allowed in certain exams and candidates will be informed by the subject teachers in advance.
- Candidates should not bring lucky mascots, etc, into the examination room.
- No food items or chewing gum are allowed

## May students bring a drink?

Candidates may bring a drink with them into the exam room in a clear plastic bottle with the label removed. No fizzy drinks, cans or pouches will be allowed due to the risk of spillage. Drinking too much may cause an issue since candidates may not be allowed to use toilet facilities during short exams due to issues of supervision.

## Regulations governing the use of calculators

Some subject papers, especially Maths, explicitly prohibit the use of calculators. Candidates must not have on them or attempt to use any form of calculator for these.

Also calculators with any of the following facilities are prohibited:

- Data banks
- Dictionaries
- Language translators
- Retrieval of text or formulae
- QWERTY keyboards
- Built-in symbolic algebra manipulations
- Symbolic differentiation or integration
- Capability of remote communication with other machines

The use, or attempted use, of any such calculators will be regarded as malpractice.

Calculators with graphic displays and programmable calculators are permitted if information and/or programs stored in the calculator's memory are cleared before the examination. Retrieval of information and/or programs during the examination is an

infringement of the regulations. Candidates are responsible for clearing any information and/or program before the examination.

### **What are the regulations regarding mobile phones?**

The regulations state that mobile phones are not to be brought into examination rooms under any circumstances. This applies to all public and internal school examinations. They cause disturbance to other candidates if they ring and can present opportunities for malpractice. Any student found to have a phone in the exam room will be reported to the appropriate examination board. Should this happen they are likely to be disqualified from that paper and possibly from the whole examination in that subject.

It is a very serious offence and our advice is that the phone should not be brought to school. We can take no responsibility for the security of mobile phones brought to school.

### **What is meant by Malpractice?**

Malpractice is the term that the exam boards use for any irregularity, or breach of the regulations. The Exams Officer is required to, and will, report all infringements to the appropriate body and they will decide on what action to take based on the nature of the infringement. There is a tariff system of actions and some infringements carry automatic loss of marks as a **minimum** penalty. The exam boards take the integrity of exams very seriously and it is important that candidates heed the Exam Officer's instructions carefully.

### **How are students supervised?**

Adult external invigilators will supervise students under the direct management of the Exams Officer and Assistant Exams Officer. Once candidates enter the exam room they must remain supervised and follow the invigilators instructions at all times. The invigilators are experienced in exams procedures and subject to strict regulation, references and police checks. They usually work in teams and can contact the Exams Officer or Assistant Exams Officer to resolve any issues.

In some sessions papers will already be on exam desks. These must not be opened until candidates are advised to do so.

### **What happens if a student cannot find his/her place in the exam room?**

Occasionally problems arise because a student's number card is not where he/she thinks it should be. There are a number of possible reasons for this and the situation has to be investigated. Your son/daughter will be asked to wait at the front for a few moments whilst the invigilator on duty checks the entry and sorts the problem out with the Assistant Exams Officer. Every effort is made to keep these problems to a minimum and they will not prejudice any student's chance of taking an examination for which he/she has been entered. Students who have been officially withdrawn from an examination will not be permitted to sit the papers. It is helpful if the

candidate has his/her statements of entry with him/her, but these must not be written on.

### **How are the exams started?**

The exam will be announced formally and candidates cautioned that they are subject to the exam regulations. Students will be asked to check they have the correct paper, paying particular attention to the subject and tier. Any instructions or board notices, changes to papers etc will be read out and the candidates asked to complete their details on the answer papers. When all candidates are ready to start the paper, the time will be announced and the instruction to begin will be issued.

### **What happens if a student is late?**

If parents are aware that their son/daughter has got the timing of the examination wrong and has missed the starting time, they should telephone the school immediately and get a message to the Exams Officer or Assistant Exams Officer. Depending on how long the exam has been in progress, it may be possible for the candidate to be admitted. However, we are bound by examination board regulations on this matter. Normally candidates with a genuine reason and who are brought straight to the school may be admitted within the first 30 minutes of the start time, after this time the board will decide whether to accept any paper sat.

Candidates who arrive more than 1 hour after the start or after the end of the exam will not be admitted.

### **What happens if a student does not turn up for an examination?**

A student who absents themselves from any examination without presenting a doctor's note or a satisfactory reason for a request for special consideration will receive a grade based only on those elements of the examination which have been marked.

Parents should be aware that Philip Morant School & College will seek to recover the exam fees if a child fails to turn up for an examination without prior notification.

### **What do I do if my child is unwell at the time of one of the examinations?**

Even if you would not normally visit your doctor's surgery for minor illnesses it is important that you do so at examination time. Your doctor will advise as to whether your son/daughter is fit to sit the examination. If the candidate takes the paper, your doctor should give you a letter, which the school can forward to the examination board asking for special consideration on the grounds of illness. If the candidate is unable through illness to sit a paper the board **may**, after examining the doctor's letter and any evidence of performance on other papers, decide to award a grade. It is essential that you see your doctor on the day of the examination or previously. Retrospective information is not accepted by the examination boards and any doctors' letters must be forwarded to the Exams Officer **without delay**, as there is a tight deadline.

Please telephone the school if your son/daughter will **not** be attending an examination or if he/she will be present but is unwell. It is often helpful for the invigilator to be aware that a candidate is not feeling well.

Please be aware that any medical certificate must be accompanied by a note detailing the examinations to which it refers and the date on which the papers were sat. We cannot guarantee otherwise that all relevant examinations will be covered.

### **What do I need to do if a student has problems that may affect his/her examination performance?**

Some candidates are eligible for extra time or special examination arrangements. These are normally identified by the school and appropriate applications made supported by an educational psychologist's report. The Exams Officer and Headteacher are empowered to grant some limited special examination arrangements but only given the correct professional evidence and at their sole discretion. The Learning Support department will make arrangements for providing any other special assistance and inform the candidates of any special rooming arrangements. Any illness, or family circumstances, which may affect examination performance, arising shortly before or during the exams, should be notified as soon as possible to the Assistant Exams Officer so that an application for special consideration can be made to the boards. Parents should be aware that any adjustment is likely to be small and that no feedback is ever provided.

### **What do students do who finish early?**

Students should use all of the available time on their exams and spend any time at the end checking their answers. In any event they are not permitted to leave before the duration of the exam. They must sit quietly at their desk so as not to disturb other candidates.

### **What happens at the end of an exam?**

Five minutes before the end of the exam, an announcement is made advising the students how long is left. When the time is finished, students will be instructed to ensure their name and candidate number is on all their answer sheets and then will be told to put their pens down. The invigilators will then collect all the exam answer sheets and question papers as quickly as possible. Students will be reminded that they have to adhere to exam conditions until they have left the hall. They will be asked to leave the hall as quietly as possible and remain silent until they are outside the building.

### **How can parents best help their son/daughter during the examination period?**

Examinations are inevitably a stressful time for some candidates and support from both the school and parents can be helpful. The school will provide advice about revision programmes and examination techniques and if this is followed it should not be necessary for any student to work abnormally long hours during the revision

period. It is probably helpful to discuss with your son/daughter how he/she intends to organise revision and to talk through any anxieties about particular techniques or subject matter. Testing knowledge of factual material can benefit the student if such help is requested but often all that is needed is a quiet place to work and lots of encouragement. Students should get plenty of sleep and some opportunities for relaxation.

### **What happens about the return of school books and equipment at the end of the examination period?**

A collection day is organised at the end of the summer term and students are invited to attend to return all books, equipment, locker keys, etc. Please ensure that all textbooks and equipment are returned promptly to the school.

### **When and how are the results distributed?**

GCSE results arrive at the school in August and the exact date is advised to the students prior to the examination period. Results will normally be available for collection from 10.30 am. Students wishing for a relative or friend to collect their results **must** send a signed letter of authorisation with the collector. The collector will have to show proof of identification. Results will not be given over the telephone under any circumstances.

GCSE candidates not intending to collect in person but wishing their results to be posted should leave a stamped addressed envelope (also bearing their candidate number), either with the Assistant Exams Officer or at the school reception. Result slips not collected or posted on results day will be retained in school for collection, again with the necessary authority.

### **What can I do if results are substantially different from what is anticipated?**

It must be remembered that examinations can only measure performance on the day and that candidates can do better or worse than anticipated for a variety of reasons. If you have serious concerns about a result, in the first instance you should contact the Head of Department concerned to discuss the issue.

If the results have serious implications for the student's future plans then advice should be sought from the careers service.

### **How do I go about obtaining copies of marked examination scripts?**

It is currently possible to have access to some GCSE scripts. You will need to contact the Exams Officer who will be able to provide details of the fees payable.

### **How should fees be paid?**

Where students are requesting a chargeable service, a request for payment will be sent to the parents when the school has received the invoice from the exam board.

**When do students receive certificates?**

The examining boards issue certificates well after the examinations have taken place. The school distributes the ones issued for the main summer's exams at the school's Commemoration Evening in December each year. If a student is unable to attend this evening, the certificates will be retained by the school and the student can collect them from reception at any time. A friend or family member may collect them but only bearing a letter of request signed by the candidate and some form of ID.

Certificates uncollected will be kept at Philip Morant School & College.

The school does not keep copies of the certificates and if a candidate requires a replacement they will have to apply directly to the exam boards. Proof of identity will be required, such as an original birth certificate and a substantial fee per certificate.


AQA	City & Guilds	CCEA	Edexcel	OCR	WJEC
-----	---------------	------	---------	-----	------

### Notice to Candidates

**For written examinations held in the period 1 September 2008 to 31 August 2009**

This notice has been written to help you. Read it carefully and follow the instructions.

If there is anything you do not understand, especially which calculator you may use, ask your teacher.

<b>A</b>	<b>Regulations – Make sure you understand the rules</b>
1	Be on time for all your examinations. If you are late, your work might not be accepted.
2	Do not become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice during the examination.
3	If you try to cheat, or break the rules in any way, you could be disqualified from all your subjects.
4	Only take into the examination room the materials and equipment which are allowed.
5	Do not take into the examination room any unauthorised materials or equipment which might give you an unfair advantage. This includes notes, calculator cases/instruction leaflets, bags, personal TVs/stereos, digital equipment, reading pens, electronic or radio communication devices, <b>including mobile telephones</b> , iPods, MP3 players and pagers. Any pencil cases taken into the examination room must be see-through. <b>Remember:</b> possession of unauthorised material is breaking the rules, even if you do not intend to use it, and you will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification. 
6	Do not use correcting pens, fluid or tape, highlighters or pale coloured gel pens in your answers.
7	Do not talk to or try to communicate with or disturb other candidates once the examination has started.
8	If you leave the examination room unaccompanied by an invigilator before the examination has finished, you will not be allowed to return.
9	Do not borrow anything from another candidate during the examination.
<b>B</b>	<b>Information – Make sure you attend and bring what you need</b>
1	Know the dates and times of all your examinations.
2	Arrive at least ten minutes before the start of each examination.
3	If you arrive late for an examination, report to the invigilator running the examination.
4	If you arrive more than one hour after the published starting time for the examination, you will not normally be allowed to take it.
5	Only take into the examination room the pens, pencils, erasers and any other equipment which you need for the examination.
6	You must write in black ink. Coloured pencils or inks may be used only for diagrams, maps, charts, etc. unless the instructions printed on the front of the question paper state otherwise.
<b>C</b>	<b>Calculators, Dictionaries and Computer Spell-checkers</b>
1	You may use a calculator unless you are told otherwise.
2	If you use a calculator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make sure it works properly; check that the batteries are working properly;</li> <li>• clear anything stored in it;</li> <li>• remove any parts such as cases, lids or covers which have printed instructions or formulas;</li> <li>• do not bring into the examination room any operating instructions or prepared programs.</li> </ul>
3	Do not use a dictionary or computer spell checker unless you are told otherwise.
<b>D</b>	<b>Examination Instructions</b>
1	Listen to the invigilator and follow their instructions at all times.
2	Tell the invigilator at once: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if you think you have not been given the right question paper or all of the materials listed on the front of the paper;</li> <li>• if the question paper is incomplete or badly printed.</li> </ul>
3	Read carefully and follow the instructions printed on the question paper and/or on the answer booklet.
4	Fill in all the details required on the front of the question paper and/or the answer booklet before you start the examination.
5	Remember to write your answers within the designated sections of the answer booklet.
6	Do your rough work on the proper examination stationery. Cross it through and hand it in with your answers.
<b>E</b>	<b>Advice and Assistance</b>
1	If on the day of the examination you feel that your work may be affected by ill health or any other reason, tell the invigilator.
2	Put up your hand during the examination if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you have a problem and are in doubt about what you should do;</li> <li>• you do not feel well;</li> <li>• you need more paper.</li> </ul>
3	You must not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions.
<b>F</b>	<b>The end of the Examination</b>
1	If you have used more than one answer booklet and/or any loose sheets of paper, place them in the correct order. Remember to fasten them together with a treasury tag before you leave.
2	Do not leave the examination room until told to do so by the invigilator.
3	Do not take from the examination room any examination stationery, used or unused, rough work or any other materials provided for the examination.
You must stay in the examination room until at least one hour (or a period equal to the duration of the examination if this is less than one hour) after the <b>published</b> starting time for each examination.	
<b>This poster must be displayed in a prominent place outside each examination room.</b>	