



## GCSE, IGCSE & A Level Course Information

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your enquiry.

This guide is designed to provide you with as much relevant information about this range of GCSE, IGCSE and A Level distance learning courses and the processes involved in booking and sitting exams.

### About Us

Distance Learning Centre is one of the leading and longest established suppliers of home learning and distance learning courses in the UK and, with our popular combination of supported open learning and innovative course materials, students are guaranteed an exceptional learning experience.

We currently offer more than 250 distance learning courses covering a wide variety of subjects ranging from teaching assistant courses and health care courses to web design courses and A Level courses which you can study at your own pace from home or work. Our experienced staff are dedicated to the success of our students and will offer invaluable support every step of the way.

With Distance Learning Centre you can learn at your own pace, so you can get through your course as quickly or slowly as you please. Thousands of students sign up for our home study courses each year and gain nationally recognised qualifications or certificates to improve their job opportunities. Why not become one of them by enrolling today?

### Starting a course

You can start a course at any time although examinations can only be sat at a registered examination centre in the appropriate examination window (May/June of each Year). Students would sit the same exams on the same dates and at the same times as all other students.

We do have closing dates for students aiming for specific examination dates, which are set by the course tutors and these are based on when they believe it is realistic to complete exams and registration processes and also considering the impact on support for all other students.

**Please Note:** We cannot accept students aiming for an exam window once the closing date that is set by tutors has passed.

Information on closing dates are detailed on page 2 and on our website. We also publish the dates for examinations on our website once they have been released.

If you have any questions about the courses then you can contact us on 0845 129 7238 or 0191 512 0481 or you can email us on [info@distance-learning-centre.co.uk](mailto:info@distance-learning-centre.co.uk).

Yours Sincerely

*Michael Verinder*

Michael Verinder  
Director

# GCSE, IGCSE & A Level Exams

## GCSE and IGCSE Exams

GCSEs have been designed to develop and test skills which will be relevant both for further study and in the wider world of work. It's what you can do rather than what you know. This makes them perfect for studying by distance learning. You may already have several GCSEs but find that a few gaps such as English, Mathematics or Science are holding you back. Many of our students are graduates who only now realise that they need these qualifications to become teachers, to enter nursing or to embark on a wide variety of other careers. GCSE Exams can be sat in the May/June Exam Window of each year.

IGCSEs are the same qualification level as a standard GCSE and the qualifications are considered by many to be a more rigorous preparation for A-levels. IGCSEs offer progression to 'A' Level, BTEC vocational courses, and other similar qualifications that are recognised internationally and by the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

If you are using an IGCSE qualification for a further education application then we do advise making sure it will be accepted but they are generally considered as the same qualification by most organisations.

All GCSE and IGCSE qualifications have been changed to a new grading system. The new grading system will be graded 1 to 9 with 9 being the highest grade.

**Please Note:** The closing date set by tutors for GCSE and IGCSE students aiming for exams in May/June 2020 has passed and we can only accept students aiming for May/June 2021 exams. The closing date for students aiming for exams in May/June 2021 will be in November 2020.

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B <small>GOOD PASS (DfE) 5 and above = top of C and above</small>
5	
4	C <small>AWARDING 4 and above = bottom of C and above</small>
3	
	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

## A Level Exams

A Levels are the Gold Standard of the British education system and our abilities, even in later life, are still measured against it. A Level exams can only be sat in a May/June exam windows. We usually recommend that students sit an A Level over a two-year period, although it is possible to study and sit exams in a single year.

All A Levels have recently changed from a modular specification to a new linear specification. The linear specifications will require students to sit all of their exams in a single exam window on completion of their studies. With the new linear specifications, the AS Level is now considered a separate qualification to the full A Level. Any student sitting an A Level over a two-year period can still sit their AS Level exams at the end of their first year of study although the results would not carry over to their A Level results.

**Please Note:** The closing date set by tutors for A Level students aiming for exams in May/June 2020 has passed and we can only accept students aiming for May/June 2021 exams. The closing date for students aiming for exams in May/June 2021 will be in October 2020.

## What dates will my exams be?

Students can decide to study over a one year or two year period (providing the specification and exams are available over that duration).

We have published the exam dates on the course overview pages of our website for the 2020 exam windows. Exam dates for 2021 will be published on 28 February 2020, but they tend to follow a similar pattern to the previous year.

# Finding Exam Centres

## Finding Exam Centres

GCSE, IGCSE and A Level Exams must be taken at a registered Exam centre. We offer course materials covering the syllabus and full student support, however we do not host exams. Student advisors can assist with finding exam centres and dealing with coursework forms but we do not book exams for students.

**Please Note:** Exam entry is entirely the responsibility of the student. We accept no liability for late, wrong or missing entries, nor do we have any influence over which centres will accept you or what they charge.

All students should read the Introduction to their course very carefully as it will provide the exam entry specification codes and explain how the exams are structured. Candidates should also look at the Private Candidate guidance sections of the relevant exam board website which will list registered exam centres:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/>  
<http://www.edexcel.com/>

All the required forms, except for the centre entry form, can also be downloaded from the awarding body websites. As a general rule, if you want to sit exams in May/June, you must have found an exam centre and arranged your exam by the end of January. Final deadlines are published on the exam board websites although exam centres prefer to be contacted much earlier than these final dates.

In our experience exam officers tend to look more favourably on well organised and polite candidates who have made themselves familiar with the specification codes and exam requirements and who apply in good time. Students who are well prepared and flexible will always find a centre to take them. However, if you have any special needs it may be more difficult and you must tell your exam centre before they make a booking for you. Below are a few suggestions about how to improve your chances of booking an exam place and maintaining good relations with your exam officer.

**There are many ways of finding exam centres; you just need to be resourceful and sometimes persistent in the number of calls you may have to make:**

- The first place you should try is the most convenient school or college for you. Being in their local community may be a key factor in a school's decision as to whether to accept your request. Your local school or college will not be on our exam centre database if none of our students has ever contacted them before.
- One of the most successful ways to find an exam centre is to contact your old school, your child's school, or any school that you have any sort of contact with, however tenuous. Schools will often accept ex-pupils or people who are known to them in some way, even though their policy is not to accept Private Candidates in general.
- Private tutorial colleges are the most flexible exam centres and will usually take you for any exam, but they also tend to be the most expensive. Look in your Yellow Pages or on Google for private tutorial colleges in your area.
- Independent schools, private schools and faith schools are often more helpful than overstretched state-maintained schools and some welcome Private Candidates as a means of contributing towards their budget. They are also likely to be the most familiar with IGCSE exams.
- Both the AQA and Edexcel exam boards publish lists of centres that may be prepared to accept Private Candidates, but there are no certainties. AQA can be contacted on 0800 197 7162 (or +44 203 671 8010 from outside the UK), and Edexcel on 0845 618 0440, or by emailing [students@pearson.com](mailto:students@pearson.com).
- There is a database of previously used exam centres that have agreed to help students in the past and this is available to all our registered students. Please remember that things change from year to year and subject to subject and each centre reserves the right on which students they accept as a private candidate.

# Dealing with Exam Centres

## Exam booking procedures

All students sitting exams in the May/June exam window will be written to in the preceding December/January and will be given detailed instructions about locating exam centres and booking their exams. If the specification has coursework then appropriate coursework forms will be included.

## Exams with coursework

If a syllabus includes coursework then the coursework marking fee is included within the course fees and you must follow the detailed procedures and form filling required by the awarding body very carefully to avoid any problems on results day. Board-examined Coursework is not the same as Tutor-marked Assignments.

Students will be written to with full instructions and the required forms. If you change your exam date you must tell us in good time as it is your responsibility to ensure that you have all the necessary paperwork.

Any coursework needs to be authenticated and marked by your course tutor. This will not happen until the tutor has seen at least 4 Tutor-marked Assignments. Make sure you have completed these well before you need to start your coursework.

You can send draft coursework or Practice Investigative Skills Assignments (ISAs) to your tutor for comments and guidance. Make sure you allow plenty of time to do this. All final coursework must be with your course tutor for authentication by 30th March at the latest.



## Exams with no coursework

Most of the specifications we offer don't have coursework. The Introduction to your course will make it clear whether your course has Board-examined Coursework or not.

If an exam does not include any coursework then the procedure is very simple. You fill in the exam centre's own entry form, pay the fee, get a confirmation of entry and then remember to turn up at the right time for any oral assessments and written exams.

No other exam board forms are required, although your course advisor will need a form returning to find your exam centre and make any enquiries on your behalf.

## Important note regarding Edexcel specification IGCSE and A Level exams:

A benefit of Edexcel IGCSE and A Level qualifications is that they can be sat in many overseas countries, either in international schools or via the British Council.

We do advise searching for centres prior to enrolment to make sure suitable centres are available within an appropriate travelling distance.

If you do an internet search for "Edexcel private candidate centres" then you can access an online map showing suitable centres, The IGCSE exams are on every Edexcel registered school's electronic database and no special forms or permissions are required to book them.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## When can I start my course and take my exams?

You can start a GCSE, IGCSE or A Level course at any time but you can only sit your Exams at an appropriate exam time. The Exam window for schools and colleges is May/June of each year and your Exams would need to be sat on the set date and time dictated by the Exam board. You can find Exam dates on the awarding bodies' websites.

## What if I am not ready for my chosen exam window?

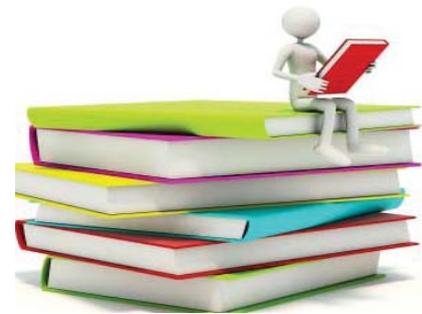
All students get the option to defer to the next available exam window if they don't feel they are ready providing the same specification exams are available. There is a £15.00 deferral fee for this process. If a specification has been changed then additional course materials may also need to be purchased.

## What does the study pack consist off?

When you enrol you will be provided with one of our comprehensive study packs. The pack has been written to cover a specific GCSE, IGCSE or A Level syllabus. All Course materials are paper-based materials which are displayed in a large ring-binder course folder. The courses are divided into a number of modules according to the nature of the subject or syllabus. Exam fees are separate to any course materials and have to be sat at an appropriate centre.

## Each lesson normally contains the following features:

- Outline of Key Topics
- Self-assessment tests
- A final test covering the whole lesson
- Guidance on study notes
- A large left-hand margin for making notes
- Recommendations on further reading materials



## Do I receive any tutor support?

Every student receives a qualified personal tutor with whom they need to keep in regular contact. The majority of tutors hold either a B.Ed. or PGCE and all have UK Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), so you can be reassured that you have someone who can help you with any queries you have as you progress through your studies.

Your course tutor will contact you shortly after you receive your course materials and will let you know the best times and methods for contacting them. You can contact your tutor by Telephone, Post or Email and all tutors have a UK "0800 Freephone" telephone number, and most will also have Skype capabilities. Each course has a set number of tutor-marked assignments (TMA's) to put into practice what you are learning. These are marked by your tutor and help the student consolidate their learning and prepare for examinations. Whilst you are still actively submitting assignments, you should expect to be in contact with your tutor regularly. Remember, to get the most out of your tutor, you will need to tell them when you need assistance.

## How can I pay for the courses?

We recommend ordering your course via our website. All students need to fill in and return a student registration form which is completed as part of the online order process. Alternatively, you can fill in and return an enrolment form which can be downloaded from our website. We do require the student registration form returning before we can process your application as there is important information that your course tutors require.

## Are there any special requirements?

Most of our courses have specific entry requirements. Please see individual course pages for exact details. In general we will only admit students for A Levels who have a minimum of 4 GCSEs or IGCSEs at grade C or above (or equivalent qualifications). These would ideally include English and Mathematics. In addition to the recommended text, each course will have suggested reading to help you achieve a broader understanding of your subject.

**Please Note:** We cannot accept any student under the age of 18 years old for GCSE, IGCSE or 'A' Level Courses.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What if I am not completely satisfied with my course materials?

All students have a 14 day cooling off period from when they receive their course materials. If you change your mind or you are not satisfied with the materials then notify us in writing or via email. We will then send instructions on how you can return your course materials. As long as we receive the course materials in good condition, and within the required time, you will receive a full refund of your course fees. Please read our terms and conditions of sale for more information on this.

## Can I study from abroad?

It is possible to study any of the Courses from outside of the UK, although some courses are easier to study from abroad than others, some restrictions to the type of tutor contact will apply and all AQA Specification GCSE and A Level exams have to be sat in the UK. Please remember that most GCSEs and 'A' levels will also have several Exams which may well be spread over several weeks. Edexcel IGCSE and A Level Exams can be sat overseas in British Councils or EDEXCEL Exam Centres. Overseas students should contact the British Consulate or Edexcel to confirm if the Exams are available in their area.

Overseas students will still get the same level of access to your tutor that any student enjoys, although they will not be able to use the Freephone telephone number and due to the costs involved, tutors cannot telephone students whilst they are abroad. If you require a tutor with Skype access then please detail this in your application. Students should also consider the time differential when phoning your tutors. All overseas courses have to be paid in full. The price of delivery to the UK mainland is included in our course fees. However, students who live outside of the UK will be required to pay an extra fee for International deliveries. The delivery cost will be added to your course fees when you choose your geographical area on our websites checkout page.

## Are there additional reading materials?

All courses will have suggested additional reading materials where appropriate. Information on any required reading will be detailed on the individual course pages.

## What are the exam fees?

Examination fees need to be paid direct to your chosen exam centre. Prices for exams will vary depending on the exam centre's administration costs, so it is worth contacting a few to compare prices.

## Money Back Guarantee if you do not pass your exams!!

We believe that these courses will give you the best possible preparation for your exams. We are so confident that you will pass your exam that we will give you your money back if you fail, so you have absolutely nothing to lose!!

## The only conditions are that:

- 1) Students must have completed all of their assignments in the course, earning a mark of at least 40% in each assignment.
- 2) Students must have undertaken all the Exams required and submitted all coursework where required.
- 3) Written proof of exam failure must be supplied.

**Please Note:** The limit of liability to any student under any circumstances will be the amount paid for that student's course of study. A pass at A Level is considered to be any grade between A and E. A Pass at GCSE or IGCSE will be 4 or above.

## Further Syllabus Information

All courses are AQA or Edexcel specifications. Further information on any specification can be found on their websites. We supply direct links to each specification on the course pages of our website.

# Price List

GCSE Courses	Awarding Body / Specification	Price
English Language	AQA Spec. 8700	£445.00
English Literature	AQA Spec. 8702	£295.00
Law (Currently Unavailable)	AQA Spec. 4160	£295.00
Mathematics	AQA Spec. 8300	£295.00
Psychology	AQA Spec. 8182	£295.00
Religious Education (Currently Unavailable)	AQA Spec. 4055 (B)	£295.00
Sociology	AQA Spec. 8192	£295.00

IGCSE Courses	Awarding Body / Specification	Price
Biology	Edexcel Spec. 4BI1	£295.00
Business Studies	Edexcel Spec. 4BS1	£295.00
Chemistry	Edexcel Spec. 4CH1	£295.00
Economics	Edexcel Spec. 4EC1	£295.00
English Language	Edexcel Spec. 4EA1	£295.00
English Literature	Edexcel Spec. 4ET1	£295.00
French	Edexcel Spec. 4FR1	£345.00
Geography	Edexcel Spec. 4GE1	£295.00
History	Edexcel Spec. 4HI1	£295.00
Human Biology	Edexcel Spec. 4HB1	£295.00
Mathematics	Edexcel Spec. 4MA1	£295.00
Physics	Edexcel Spec. 4PH1	£295.00
Science (Single Award)	Edexcel Spec. 4SD0	£395.00
Science (Double Award)	Edexcel Spec. 4SD0	£570.00
Spanish	Edexcel Spec. 4SP1	£345.00

A Level Courses	Awarding Body / Specification	Price
Biology *	Edexcel Spec. 9BIO (B)	£395.00
Business *	AQA Spec. 7132	£395.00
Economics *	AQA Spec. 7136	£395.00
English Language *	AQA Spec. 7702	£445.00
English Literature *	AQA Spec. 7712	£445.00
French *	Edexcel Spec. 9FR0	£445.00
History *	AQA Spec. 7042	£445.00
Law	AQA Spec. 7162	£395.00
Mathematics	AQA Spec. 7357	£395.00
Psychology *	AQA Spec. 7182	£395.00
Sociology *	AQA Spec. 7192	£395.00
Spanish *	Edexcel Spec. 9SP0	£445.00

**Please Note:** AS Level Courses are available in the new linear specification for the courses marked above with an \* while the remaining courses are in the modular format. Please refer to the A Level overview page of our website for information as to when linear specifications will be replaced.