



Joint Council
for Qualifications

AQA

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This notice has been produced on behalf of: AQA, CCEA, City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC

Notice to Candidates

GCE, VCE, GCSE and GNVQ EXAMINATIONS: COURSEWORK AND PORTFOLIOS

This leaflet tells you about some things that you must, and must not, do when you are completing coursework.

Before you submit any coursework for marking, you will be asked to sign an authentication statement confirming that you have read and followed these regulations.

If there is anything that you do not understand, you must ask your teacher or lecturer.

Coursework provides you with an opportunity to do some independent research into a topic. The research you do will involve looking for information in published sources such as textbooks, encyclopaedias, journals, TV, radio, and the world wide web.

Using information from published sources (including the internet) as the basis for your coursework is a great way to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject, but you must take care how you use this material - 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.

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 called "referencing". You must make sure that you give detailed references for everything in your work which is not in your own words. A reference should show the name of the author, the year of publication and the page number: For example: (Morrison, 2000, pg.29.)

For material taken from the internet, your reference 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://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/16/sosteacher/history/49766.shtml>)

You must also include a bibliography at the end of your work, which lists the full details of publications you have used to research your project. For example:
Morrison, A. (2000) "Mary, Queen of Scots", London: Weston Press.

**If you copy the words or ideas of others and don't show your sources in references and a bibliography, you will be committing plagiarism —
and that's cheating.**

Preparing your coursework — good practice

If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your teacher, tell your teacher who will record the nature of the assistance given to you.

If you worked as part of a group on a project, for example, undertaking field research, you must each write up your own account of the project. Even if the data you have is the same, the description of how that data was obtained and the conclusions you draw from it should be in your own words.

You must meet the deadlines that your teacher gives you for submitting drafts and final pieces of work. Your teachers are there to guide and assist you — showing them your work as it progresses will allow you and your teacher time to sort out any problems before it is too late.

Take care of your work and keep it safe. Don't leave it lying around where your classmates can find it. If it is stored on the computer network, keep your password secure. Collect all copies from the printer and destroy those you don't need.

Don't be tempted to use essays from online essay banks — you will be running the risk of being caught out. Electronic tools can detect this sort of copying.

More about plagiarism

Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts or ideas and trying to pass them off as your own. It 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 are very familiar with work on the topic concerned — they may have read the source you are using (or even marked the essay 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.

Penalties for breaking the regulations

If your work is submitted and it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following penalties will be applied:

- the piece of work will be awarded zero marks.
- you will be disqualified from that unit for that exam session.
- you will be disqualified from the whole subject for that exam session.
- you will be disqualified and barred from entering again for a period of time.

Your awarding body will decide which penalty is appropriate.

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