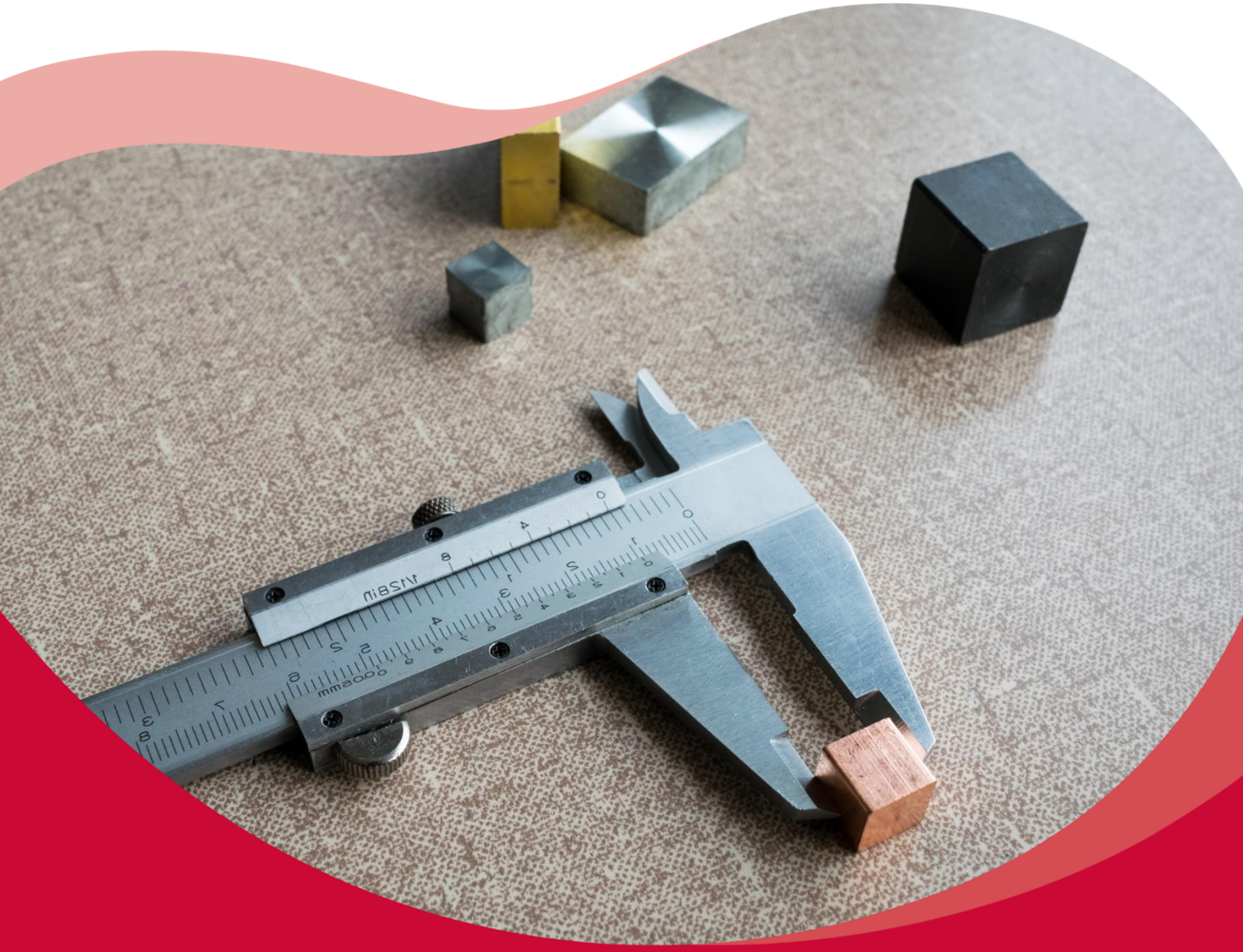
L-Università ta' Malta

MATSEC
Examinations Board



Exam Centre Management and Invigilation

MATSEC

2026

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A. INTRODUCTION

Invigilation staff are the link between the MATSEC Examinations Board and the candidate. They are the individuals responsible of making sure that the conditions discussed and agreed upon by MATSEC are put in practice such that all candidates are given a fair opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.

Invigilation staff are to be vigilant, organised, and professional. They should:

A.01. act according to the guidelines for invigilation set by MATSEC;

A.02. ensure the security of MATSEC scripts, examination papers and materials;

A.03. calmly, clearly, and politely communicate important information to candidates in clear Maltese and/or English;

A.04. be able to recall MATSEC Regulations for examination conduct;

A.05. be able and willing to recognize instances of malpractice and report these to MATSEC;

A.06. be able to deal with emergencies;

A.07. complete and return necessary documentation.

B. INVIGILATION STAFF

GENERAL CONDUCT

B.01. Invigilation staff should not be directly related to, teaching, helping, or having any other relationship with any candidate sitting for an examination in their workplace.

B.02. Invigilation staff is to wear clean, comfortable clothing with soft sole shoes and avoid shoes which make excessive noise, such as those with high heels.

B.03. Disturbances to candidates are to be avoided wherever possible. Talking with candidates or other staff is strictly prohibited unless this is necessary and related to the running of the examination.

B.04. Invigilators are not to use their phones, read books, chat, or perform other non-invigilation tasks.

B.05. Invigilators and corridor supervisors are to survey the area they are responsible for. Their presence must be felt. Where there are two or more invigilators in a room, both invigilators should not be sitting down at the same time.

B.06. Invigilators are to keep calm in all situations.

B.07. Candidates are not to be shouted at or judged.

CANDIDATE MALPRACTICE

B.08. Candidate malpractice is best avoided through proper invigilation. Invigilators are to, as unobtrusively as possible, go round the examination room and observe candidates from different positions.

B.09. Invigilation staff are to keep vigilant for signs of malpractice or attempts to cheat. All candidates must be observable by the invigilator/s.

B.10. Candidates who are not facing straight ahead are to be reprimanded.

B.11. Candidates who are observed acting in a manner deemed by exam invigilators to be suspicious (e.g. looking regularly at their crotch) may be asked to stand up, roll their sleeves, or perform any other non-intrusive measure in the presence of Head of Centre.

B.12. If candidate malpractice is found or suspected, the candidate is to be allowed to continue his/her examination and the irregularity reported to MATSEC through Form D.

B.13. Prohibited material is to be confiscated only where this does not include valuables (e.g. mobile phones). Invigilators or Head of Centres are **not** to look into candidates' mobile phone data.

B.14. One should be on the lookout for smartwatches, mobile phones, notes in the candidates' timetable envelopes, and other cheating techniques.

B.15. The compartment under the candidates' desks can be observed from the other side of the room to ensure this compartment is empty.

B.16. All irregularities are to be noted using Form D, even if the invigilator feels that these do not require further action. Candidates are **not** to be given 'second chances'.

ROLES

B.17. **Head of Centres** are responsible for the general running of examination centres. They:

a. Ensure that all required documentation and forms have been duly filled in;

b. manage, brief, and oversee invigilation staff and report irregularities and/or malpractice to MATSEC (Form E);

c. act as a link between MATSEC, the Examinations Department, and the examination centre (both staff and candidates);

d. ensure that MATSEC regulations and conditions for a fair assessment are abided to and that examinations run as smoothly as possible.

e. report centre, candidate, and invigilating staff irregularities to MATSEC using appropriate forms;

f. ensure that invigilation staff and candidates are informed when (i) reading and noting time starts, (ii) the examination starts, (iii) there are 20 minutes left to the end of the examination, and (iv) the examination ends.

g. ensure security of MATSEC materials from when these are delivered to the centre until collected by MATSEC staff.

B.18. **Head of Centre Assistants** aid Head of Centres in the general running of examination centres. They:

a. perform any invigilation related task as instructed by the Head of Centre;

b. discuss with the Head of Centre to evaluate the standard of running of the examination centres;

c. do **not** take decisions without consulting with the Head of Centre.

B.19. **Exam Invigilators** ensure that MATSEC regulations and guidelines are abided to. They:

a. act as a communication link between candidates and Head of Centres;

b. read important instructions to candidates before/during examination sessions;

c. monitor the whole examination room;

d. report all cases of candidate malpractice to Head of Centres and MATSEC (Form D);

e. take note of candidates who temporarily leave the examination room (Form C);

f. duly fill in Form B for every examination session.

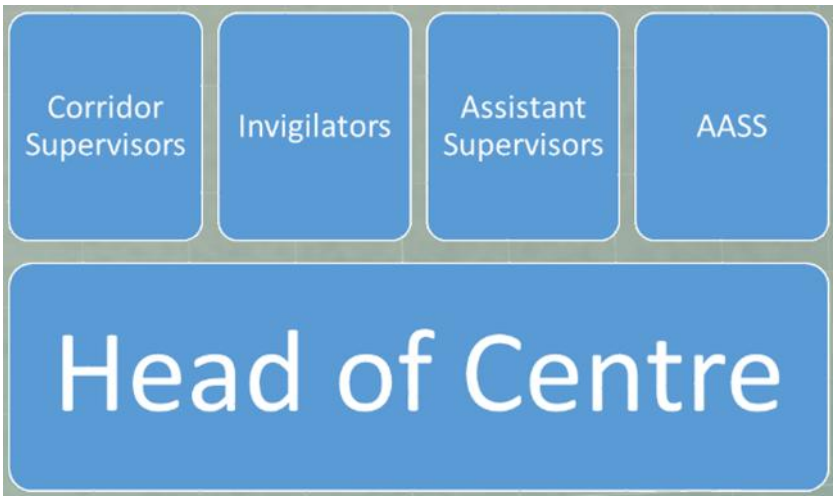
B.20. **Corridor Supervisors** ensure that the atmosphere in the corridor and adjacent rooms is conducive to examinations. They:

a. stroll the corridor, entrances of adjacent examination rooms, and toilets which are being used for the examination session;

b. do not allow multiple candidates to use the restrooms at the same time;

c. relieve invigilators who need to temporarily leave the examination room;

d. inform Head of Centres or their assistants about observed invigilator and/or candidate irregularities.



C. MATSEC EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

GENERAL REGULATIONS

C.01. **No** part of the script can be torn off or highlighted.

C.02. Candidates shall use their own pens, pencils, rulers and any other required equipment to each examination. **No** borrowing is allowed.

C.03. All stationery is to be kept in a transparent container.

C.04. Unless otherwise stated in the examination rubric candidates are to use blue or black ink only (with the exception of graphs and diagrams).

C.05. Candidates are required to write all answers and rough work on the stationery provided by MATSEC. Rough work is to be crossed out without making it illegible.

C.06. Answers must be written legibly.

C.07. All electronic devices are to be switched off.

C.08. Pencil cases, books, music/video players, mobile phones, smart-watches, other disallowed materials, and materials which are not relevant to the examination are to be placed in a closed bag.

C.09. Required materials, such as stationary and water bottles, are to be taken out of the bag before the start of the examination.

C.10. Electronic devices such as mobile phones and smart-watches seen on a candidate's person (i.e. not in a separate bag) are considered attempts to cheat even if the device is switched off.

C.11. Candidates are **not** to attempt to communicate, verbally or otherwise, with other candidates. Candidates should be facing straight ahead.

C.12. Candidates are **not** allowed to leave the examination room permanently in the first hour or in the last 15 minutes before the end of the examination unless otherwise stated on the examination rubric.

C.13. The candidates' time table and a form of identification (ID card or passport) are to be placed on their table near the index number.

C.14. Candidates are to adhere to the regulations set by exam invigilation staff.

C.15. Candidates should not write their name on any part of the examination book or make any other mark thereon which may disclose their identity to an examiner, except when specifically directed to write their name in a space provided for the purpose.

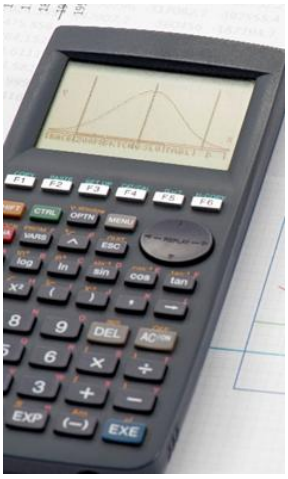
C.16. Candidates should not attempt to remove examination books, materials, or parts thereof from the examination venue.

C.17. Candidates should not wear coats, scarves, hats, baggy clothing, outdoor wear, or clothing with excessive number of pockets, except where exemption applies for religious or medical reasons. During laboratory practical examinations, candidates are to wear appropriate clothing as required by the subject and communicated by MATSEC.

C.18. Candidates may be asked to empty their pockets by examination centre staff.

C.19. The use of non-programmable scientific calculators is allowed in all examinations except for SEC/IM/AM Computing (all papers).

C.20. Programmable and graphical calculators are not allowed in all MATSEC examinations. These calculators typically have larger screens (pictured).



SUBJECT SPECIFIC RULES

C.21. SEC/IM/AM Art:

a. Sheets used by candidates which are **not** provided by MATSEC are to be signed at the back by the Invigilator/Head of Centre **before** being used by the candidate. Sheets that have been tampered with are **not** to be authorised.

b. Candidates have to provide their own media, fixatives, easel, drawing board, and paper clips.

c. All objects provided by MATSEC for the Still Life Component (SEC Art Paper II, IM Art, AM Art Paper II) are to be returned to MATSEC intact.

d. **SEC Art**: The use of a monolingual dictionary is permitted.

e. **SEC Art Paper I**: Candidates are to bring their work journal with them. The work journal should not contain printed images. The work journal should be collected with each candidate's final work. Candidates can bring their own A3 paper but must be checked to see that it is empty and not tampered with. This is too be signed by the invigilator.

f. **SEC Art Paper II**: Candidates can bring their own A3 paper but must be checked to see that it is empty and not tampered with. If preparatory sketches or sketches are carried out before starting the final work, these are to be handed in with the final work.

g. **IM Art**: **TWO** absentee forms are to be filled for each absent candidate.

h. **AM Art Paper I**: At the end of the exam, the invigilator must collect both the Extended Thematic Project Exam (Paper I) and the Thematic Project Work (this should be in a folder provided by the candidate).

C.22. **SEC/IM Chemistry**: A periodic table is printed on the back of the script.

C.23. **SEC/IM/AM Computing**: The use of flowchart stencils is permitted. Calculators are not allowed.

C.24. **SEC English Language and SEC Il-Malti**: In Paper II, **TWO** absentee forms are to be filled for each absent candidate.

C.25. **All other SEC Languages**: In Paper I and II, **TWO** absentee forms are to be filled for each absent candidate.

C.26. **SEC Geography**: Candidates may make use of a string/thread.

C.27. **SEC Graphical Communication**: Candidates are to bring their own drawing equipment.

C.28. **IM/AM Graphical Communication and Engineering Drawing**: A2 sheets will be provided as an answer booklet. Candidates are required to provide their own drawing board and draughting equipment.

C.29. **IM/AM Mathematics (Pure/Applied)**: A data and formulae booklet will be distributed to all candidates. All booklets are to be collected and reconciled after the examination.

C.30. **SEC Mathematics**:

a. Candidates are allowed to use transparencies for drawing transformations.

C.31. **IM/AM Physics**: A data and formulae booklet will be distributed to all candidates. All booklets are to be collected and reconciled after the examination.

C.32. **IM Physical Education**: In Section A (video) a semi-dark, quiet room is required. Invigilating staff are to stay away from obstructing the screens.

C.33. **IM Systems of Knowledge**: Candidates are to be given **FOUR** scripts, one for each section. **FOUR** absentee forms are to be filled for each absent candidate.

ORAL EXAMINATIONS

C.34. All marking sheets are placed in one envelope in order of room number.

C.35. Invigilation staff are to check the marking sheets as filled by markers to ensure that:

a. Absent candidates should be marked absent on **both** the attendance and marking sheets.

b. All slots (including the total) in the marking sheets are to be filled in. Invigilators are to ask examiners to fill in empty slots before leaving the centre.

C.36. The preparation times listed in the table below (in minutes) are to be respected:

	SEC	IM	AM
Arabic	10	7	7
English	10	10	10
French	5	10	>15
German	5	15	15
Italian	5	6-8	10
Maltese	n/a	n/a	n/a
Spanish	5	15	15
Il-Malti bħala lingwa barranija	10		
Chinese	10		

C.37. Candidates are to be asked to go to the corridor/preparation room only when it is time for them to start preparing for the exam. Candidates who arrive early for the examination must wait in a different area.

C.38. There are to be **THREE** separate areas for an oral examination. All of these are to be quiet and free of distractions:

a. Preparation area

b. Waiting area

c. Examination room

C.39. Invigilation staff must ensure that candidates do **not** write on corridor papers. If the Examination Paper stipulates that notes may be taken, these must be jotted down on a provided blank paper.

C.40. Corridor papers must be collected by the invigilators from the candidates before they enter the examination room.

AURAL (LISTENING) EXAMINATIONS

C.41. All absent candidates should be marked absent on **both** the attendance and marking sheets.

C.42. Scripts of Level 1-2 and Paper 2-3 candidates (indicated on the attendance sheet) are to be packed separately in ascending order.

C.43. The listening component of every language examination must be administered first.

C.44. At the start of the examination, invigilators shall distribute the listening examination paper only.

C.45. Both invigilators and candidates must strictly follow the instructions provided in the MATSEC audio recording.

C.46. Immediately upon the conclusion of the recording, the listening examination papers must be collected. The remaining examination papers are to be distributed directly afterward.

C.47. If the listening component concludes before the time allocated on the examination paper, the remaining time shall be added to the duration permitted for the rest of the papers.

C.48. If the listening component concludes after the time allocated on the examination paper, the remaining time shall be deducted from the duration permitted for the rest of the papers.

C.49. Following the Listening component, candidates are to be given the Reading and Writing scripts. The time indicated on these scripts refers to the total time available for the completion of both components and not to each component separately.

C.50. Invigilators should ensure that the examination concludes within the scheduled examination session, irrespective of any variation in the duration of the Listening component.

C.51. Music Exams: Following the Aural component, candidates are to be given the Written script (History and Analysis, Theory, Composition and Harmony). The time indicated on this script refers to the total time available for the completion of both components and not to each component separately.

C.52. Music Exams: Invigilators should ensure that the examination concludes within the scheduled examination session, irrespective of any variation in the duration of the Aural component.

C.53. The recordings will have pauses to allow candidates to write their answers; the recording should not be paused or tempered with in any way throughout the exam.

C.54. The session is over when the recording states 'This is the end of the Examination'. Scripts may only be collected after this announcement.

D. FORMS

D.01. Head of Centres are to fill in Forms A and E as necessary.

D.02. Invigilation staff are to fill in Forms B, C, and D as necessary.

D.03. Invigilation staff with candidates with access arrangements are to also fill in Form F.

D.04. Forms A and B should be filled for every session, while the other forms are to be filled in as required.

D.05. The times a candidate leaves and returns to the examination room are to be filled in Form C (to the nearest minute). Candidates can leave the room (for bathrooms) after the first half hour and before the last fifteen minutes of examination (unless instructions in the rubric of the examination paper or other official MATSEC documentation stipulate otherwise).

D.06. Candidate malpractice is to be reported using Form D.

a. The report is to have the essential information (e.g. if a candidate's phone rings, was the phone in his/her bag, pocket, or under the table?).

b. Form D is to be signed by at least one invigilator and the Head of Centre.

c. Candidates are asked to read and sign the report.

d. Candidates can choose to do so after the session.

E. BRIEFING

E.01. Invigilators are to report at the centre at least 30 minutes before the commencement of the examination.

E.02. During this time, the Head of Centre is to brief all invigilation staff before every examination session.

E.03. The briefing is to include:

a. information on the Forms;

b. other general points;

c. relevant subject specific rules;

d. any other information which the Head of Centre deems important.

E.04. All the information required for the briefing (except for point d above) is found in this guidebook.

E.05. The Head of Centre is to report any invigilation staff who were absent/late for the briefing.

F. THE EXAMINATION CENTRE

The statements below do not apply for SEAC vocational subjects' controlled assessments.

Physical

F.01. Examination rooms within the centre:

a. must be sufficient to accommodate all candidates sitting for examinations at the same time within the centre.

b. are not to be used for any other purpose besides MATSEC synoptic or controlled examinations from when the room was checked and verified as suitable by the head of school until the end of all examinations scheduled in the room for that day.

c. must be appropriate for conducting the examinations. The head of school is to pay attention to conditions such as heating, ventilation, lighting, and levels of noise which may be controlled by the centre.

F.02. Seating of candidates should be adequate:

a. There should be a minimum distance of 1.25 m between the centres of candidates' chairs.

b. Tables provided to candidates in an examination room should be of adequate and equal size.

c. Graphical communication and Art candidates are given two tables to work on.

d. All candidates must be facing the same direction unless the examination rubric requires otherwise (e.g. Art examinations).

B.03. Clocks:

a. are to be present in each examination room;

b. are to be visible to students in the examination room;

c. must be reliable;

d. may be analogue or digital;

e. may not be countdown or countup.

F.03. Signs and notices:

a. Clear signage is to be present inside the main building to direct candidates to respective examination rooms.

b. MATSEC's notice to candidates about unauthorised material is to be attached to the entrance of every examination room (Appendix 2.2).

F.04. Student index numbers are to be placed on the desks according to the seating plan (for non-vocational subjects only).

F.05. All information that can help students for an examination, including writings on the (electronic) whiteboard, charts, and models, shall be removed or covered.

F.06. A number of examination rooms should have facilities to play audio (for aural examinations).

F.07. Toilet facilities at the centre should be open and contain no material which can aid candidates. Also, the number of facilities must be sufficient for the number of candidates expected to attend the centre (at least one toilet per 35 students according to Maltese law [S.L.327.12]);

Procedural

F.08. Examination material must be stored securely at all times and solely be accessed according to MATSEC's instructions.

F.09. Centre staff must not provide advice and guide with regard to the completion of the assessment. Centre staff is not to comment on the examination paper.

F.10. During an examination, only the following may be present in the examination room:

a. invigilation staff, and where applicable technical staff;

b. students who have been registered as sitting the assessment;

c. MATSEC and Examinations Department officers who may be visiting the centre.

F.11. Although other staff may be present at the centre, these may at no time be present in the examination room before or during the examination.

F.12. Candidates shall be admitted to the examination venue ten minutes before the start of the Examination, or as deemed appropriate by the Head of Centre/Supervisor.

F.13. Should any of the above conditions not be met, the Head of Centre should duly report so by filling Form A.

G. GENERAL NOTES TO CANDIDATES

Candidates are to be informed of the following:

G.01. Important regulations:

a. All electronic devices should be switched off and stored in your bags. If any such device, even switched off, is found on your person, this will be considered as an attempt to cheat.

b. All required materials are to be taken out of your bags now. You are not to access your bags during the examination.

c. Headwear and outdoor clothing is to be removed.

d. No containers, including pockets, are allowed except if these are transparent.

e. Borrowing is not allowed.

G.02. Reading and noting time and the start of the examination:

a. You have 5 minutes to read the paper and take notes. During this time writing is permitted.

b. The reading and noting time is over. You have ____ hours to complete the paper.

G.03. Twenty minutes before the end of the examination (five minutes before candidates can no longer leave the examination room):

a. There are 20 minutes left until the end of the examination.

G.04. End of the examination (please refer to the appropriate section in this Guidebook).

H. SECURITY OF EXAMINATION MATERIAL

H.01. Examination papers are to be sealed on their arrival at the examination centre.

H.02. Invigilation staff are to aid in the unloading of MATSEC materials and ensure that no examination material is left unattended.

H.03. Plastic bags containing examination papers are to be opened by invigilating staff in full view of at least three candidates, who are to sign the appropriate Examinations Department form.

H.04. Examination papers and scripts are not to be given to third parties. These remain the property of the MATSEC Examinations Board and shall not leave the centre unauthorized. Photocopying examination material is illegal.

H.05. All personnel are to ensure that examination papers, scripts and other materials are not left unattended at any time, and that they are kept out of candidates' reach or any other persons not connected with the examination.

H.06. Invigilation staff is not to read examination papers.

H.07. Examination papers, scripts, and all other examination material is to be accounted for.

I. DISTRIBUTION OF EXAMINIATION MATERIAL

I.01. Examination papers are distributed on the candidates' desks facing down.

I.02. Candidates requesting extra scripts are to be provided with these, as long as **all** scripts are collected after the examination.

I.03. The Head of Centre is to be informed of candidates requesting to have their examination paper replaced and will replace the script **only** if necessary.

I.04. Single sheet graph papers are to be provided to candidates who ask for an extra graph paper.

I.05. All data and formulae booklets are to be collected after the examination. These are to be counted and any discrepancy is to be immediately reported to the Head of Centre who should inform MATSEC using Form A and telephone.

J. EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

Verifying Candidate Identity

J.01. After at least 30 minutes from the start of the examination;

J.02. each candidate's information on the timetable is to be compared to that on their ID card/passport:

J.03. each candidate's index number is to be compared with that on the table, the timetable and the front of the script.

J.04. Candidates' index numbers are to be checked again once all examination papers have been collected.

J.05. An Absentee Form is to be filled for each absent candidate. In some cases, more than one absentee form for each candidate may be required (see Subject Specific Rules).

J.06. Candidates who are not able to provide acceptable proof of identity are to be directed to the Head of Centre. These candidates may be permitted to continue the examination provided that they undertake to produce verification of their identity within a reasonable period, normally to the Head of Centre on the same day of the Examination. If verification is not provided, the matter shall be referred to MATSEC (Form D).

CANDIDATES TEMPORARILY LEAVING THE EXAM ROOM

J.07. Candidates shall **not** be allowed to leave the examination venue during the **first half hour** and during the **last fifteen minutes** of an Examination, unless instructions in the rubric of the examination paper stipulate otherwise.

J.08. Normally not more than one student shall be allowed to leave the examination venue at any one time.

J.09. The index number, time-out and time-in of candidates leaving the examination room temporarily is to be noted on Form C.

CANDIDATES PERMANENTLY LEAVING THE EXAM CENTRE

J.10. Candidates shall **not** be allowed to leave the examination venue during the **first hour** and during the **last fifteen minutes** of an Examination, unless instructions in the rubric of the examination paper stipulate otherwise.

J.11. Candidates may **not** be re-admitted to the examination venue after they have left the venue, unless during the period of absence they have been under approved supervision.

CANDIDATES WHO FEEL UNWELL

J.12. Should a candidate feel unwell during an examination, the Head of Centre is to be informed.

J.13. The Head of Centre is to discuss with the candidate whether s/he wishes to:

a. continue the examination;

b. continue the examination after a supervised break; or

c. leave the examination.

J.14. MATSEC is to be informed of such incidents **before** the end of the examination and by filling Form D.

LATE CANDIDATES

J.15. Candidates who arrive late are to be allowed to enter the examination centre and start the examination without further delay.

J.16. MATSEC is to be notified of candidates arriving more than 30 minutes late using Form D. These candidates are to be informed that their paper might not be corrected if their reason for being late is not acceptable by MATSEC.

J.17. Late candidates shall not be given additional time to make up for the time lost because of their arriving late, unless in special circumstances arrangements have been approved in advance by MATSEC.

OUT-OF-CENTRE CANDIDATES

J.18. Candidates who report to a centre which is not their own are to be allowed to sit for the assessment only if:

a. the same exam;

b. at the same level; and

c. the same paper option (where applicable)

are being offered at the centre.

J.19. Any candidate whose name does not appear on the list of candidates should be allowed to sit for the exam just the same.

J.20. In the case of candidates with access arrangements who report at the wrong centre, the Head of Centre is to contact MATSEC to see which arrangements, if any, can be provided.

J.21. Out-of-centre candidates' scripts should be packed in a separate envelope.

J.22. Form D is to be duly filled for any of the above cases.

CHANGE IN SEATING

J.23. Any changes in seating (due to candidates complaining about heat, a fan, direct sunlight, etc) are to be taken note of on the seating plan.

J.24. Changes are to be signed by the Head of Centre.

QUESTIONS ABOUT EXAMINATION CONTENT

When candidates ask questions about content related to the examination, such as claiming to have difficulty with a part of the examination, it is important to keep in mind the following procedure:

J.25. Inform the candidate raising the query that a decision will be taken and that s/he is to continue his/her work in the meantime;

J.26. Stay close to the door, but still inside the room and facing the candidates, to attract the attention of the corridor supervisor, Head of Centre, or assistant;

J.27. Inform the Head of Centre about the query;

J.28. The Head of Centre will contact MATSEC, get a ruling about the situation and communicate this back to the invigilator;

J.29. In case of rulings that need to be communicated to the whole centre, the Head of Centre will be informed to do so by MATSEC;

J.30. Do **not** provide your interpretation of the question.

MISBEHAVING CANDIDATES

J.31. All candidate irregularity is to be reported using Form D.

J.32. Misbehaving candidates are to be reported with other cases of candidate irregularities using Form D.

a. The report is to have the essential information (What did the candidate do? When?).

b. Form D is to be signed by at least one invigilator and the Head of Centre.

c. Candidates are asked to read and sign the report **only if** the candidate will not try to further disturb other candidates.

d. MATSEC is to be contacted immediately in cases of unruly behaviour.

K. ENDING AN EXAMINATION

K.01. Twenty minutes before the end of the examination, the following announcement should be made:

"There are 20 minutes left until the end of the examination."

K.02. Once the time for the examination is over, candidates are to be informed as follows:

"Time is up. Please stop writing. You are still under examination conditions: remain seated in silence until you are given permission to leave."

K.03. When collecting scripts, invigilators should check that all candidates have written their index number on **ALL** scripts that they were given.

K.04. **ALL** scripts given to candidates are to be collected, even if these have been unused.

K.05. Invigilators should reconcile the number of scripts and any other examination material that they are returning to the Head of Centre with the number originally given to them.

K.06. Once all examination materials have been collected and accounted for **and** the corridor supervisor or Head of Centre has confirmed that candidates may leave the centre, candidates are to be informed as follows:

"You may now leave the examination hall."

K.07. The scripts should be packed according to candidate index number in increasing order (smallest first).