



Joint Council for
Qualifications^{CIC}

Notice to Centres

Instructions for conducting GCSE, GCE AS and A-level Modern Foreign Languages & Irish Listening examinations

(CD players and MP3 players, laptops, tablets, other digital devices and digitising listening material)

Effective from 1 September 2023

Produced on behalf of:



©JCQ^{CIC} 2023

Contents

1. Use of CD players or MP3 players, laptops, tablets and other digital devices.....	1
2. Digitising listening material (storing listening material on a centre's computer network).....	3
3. Use of wireless headphones	4

1. Use of CD players or MP3 players, laptops, tablets and other digital devices

1.1 The following instructions apply to the use of CD players or MP3 players, laptops, tablets and other digital devices in GCSE, GCE AS and A-level Listening examinations.

(**Note:** Individual CD players and digital devices are only permitted for GCE AS and A-level examinations.)

- The exams officer **must** sign for listening materials provided in CD format as detailed in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*. This requirement does not apply where a centre downloads the listening materials from an awarding body's extranet site.
- CD players, MP3 players, laptops, tablets and other digital devices **must** be provided by the centre. A candidate **cannot** use their own CD player, MP3 player, laptop, tablet or other digital device such as a mobile phone.
- The downloading of GCE AS and A-level listening materials onto centres' devices from an awarding body's secure extranet site (or from a CD) **must** take place **no earlier than one working day before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination**.
- It is recommended that a member of staff from the centre's IT department or the exams officer undertakes this task.
- Subject teachers **cannot** check the digital devices once the listening materials have been downloaded.
- Only the listening material for the GCSE, GCE AS or A-level Listening examination may be stored on digital devices. **No other material must be stored.**
- The confidential materials supplied by the awarding body for the Listening examination **must** be returned to the centre's secure storage facility as soon as the download to each of the digital devices has been completed.
- All digital devices with confidential material stored on them prior to the examination **must** be returned to the centre's secure storage facility. They **must** be stored as detailed in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*. The digital devices **must** be treated as confidential examination material until the examination has been taken.
- The exams officer **must** keep a log of:
 - the date when the confidential material was downloaded to each of the digital devices;
 - when the digital devices with confidential material stored on them were placed in secure storage; and
 - when the digital devices were cleared of the listening material.
- Centres **must** ensure that:
 - the digital device is of a suitable size and can operate independently;
 - each digital device is fully operational at the time the downloading of the listening material takes place. The general working condition of the equipment is the responsibility of the centre. An awarding body **will not** normally consider a fault in the operation of a digital device as sufficient grounds for an application for special consideration;
 - at least one spare CD player or digital device is available for candidates where CD players or digital devices are being used in a Listening examination.

- **Candidates must not borrow a CD player or digital device from another candidate for any reason whilst the examination is in progress.**

The invigilator **must** supply the candidate with a replacement CD player or digital device provided by the centre. The candidate **must** always remain under centre supervision and **must** be allowed the full amount of time specified for the examination.

- **Once the examination has finished:**

- the listening files **must** be removed from the digital devices. The digital devices **must** be cleared of files prior to the commencement of a subsequent examination;
- the files may be retained by the centre for their own internal use with future candidates.

Where candidates are using laptops or tablets, access to the internet is strictly prohibited. Access to the internet **must** be disabled for the entire duration of the examination.

Where a question paper has Listening, Reading and/or Writing sections, centres **must** provide candidates with appropriate space to complete all sections of the paper. Candidates **must not** be moved to another room to complete different parts of the paper.

The tempo adjustment on a digital device **must not** be used. The recording **must** be played at the original speed.

Note: A subject teacher, a tutor or a senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined **cannot** be present in the examination room when the Listening examination is being conducted. **This would also apply to a member of centre staff who has overall responsibility for the candidates' preparation for the examination, such as a Head of Modern Foreign Languages.**

2. Digitising listening material (storing listening material on a centre's computer network)

- 2.1** For the purposes of digitising the GCE AS or A-level listening material on a centre's computer network, centres may have access to the confidential listening material **up to one working day before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination**. Prior permission **does not** need to be sought from the awarding body.
- 2.2** It is recommended that a member of staff from the centre's IT department or the exams officer undertakes this task. **The material must be downloaded to the secure part of a centre's network, i.e. the part of the network which is accessible to IT staff and not to candidates until the permitted time.**
- 2.3** Subject teachers **cannot** check the downloaded listening materials.
- 2.4** Once the listening material has been downloaded, the examination room/area **must not** be left unsupervised or unlocked. Access to the internet, data stored on the hard drive or any portable media such as floppy disks, CDs or memory sticks is **not** permitted during the examination.

3. Use of wireless headphones

- 3.1** It is essential that any headphones used in Listening examinations enable the candidate to have access only to the recorded assessment material and nothing else. Any wireless headphones/earpods etc. **must** therefore be point to point and not multipoint. It is the responsibility of the centre, if it allows candidates to use wireless headphones of any kind, to ensure that students cannot access anything other than the recorded Listening test via the headphones.

Note: centres **must** always refer to the subject specific instructions issued by the relevant awarding body for GCSE, GCE AS and A-level Listening examinations.