

How to apply for exams as a Home Educator

As a Home Educator you will need to apply as a private candidate.

A private candidate is someone who:

- Enters for exams through an exam board approved school, but is **not** enrolled as a student there.
- Is self-taught, home-schooled or has private tuition with a tutor or studies through a distance learning provider.

Some things you should know:

- Not all exams are open to private candidates. A school may allow you to enter for written papers but not for controlled assessment or spoken tests or the exam board may not offer that exam to private candidates e.g. AQA 8700 English Language (new specification) due to spoken content.
- You can check which subjects are offered on the exam board websites – <https://qualifications.pearson.com> (formerly Edexcel), www.aga.org.uk , www.ocr.org.uk (Cambridge, Oxford and RCA)

Where to start:

- Begin by deciding which subject and qualification you wish to study. You can find specifications (syllabuses) and other subject information including past papers and mark schemes on exam board's websites (downloadable). As a private candidate, it is up to you to read your subject specifications and to be aware of the requirements.
- Contact schools that have agreed to act as exam centres (see County Council website list). This process can take some time. You can use more than one centre but the unique candidate code has to be used for the same exam board. (Always alert the exam officer if this is the case!).
- Speak to the exams officer to find or confirm the correct exam code for the exam you wish to enter. Some schools may only offer certain exam boards or subjects.
- This process needs to be completed and agreed well in advance to allow the exams officer time to process your entry. For example around the middle of February is the deadline for exam entries for most boards for June exams. You should contact schools well before this date.
- Agree the cost of exams, any invigilation costs and know what information is required and by when to complete exam entry. Ask for a confirmation email or letter.

Taking exams:

- Ensure you give yourself plenty of revision time.
- Build up writing stamina to ensure you can work within the time limits for your exam.
- Use the past papers from the exam board websites. Sit them in exam conditions including timings.
- Ensure you check what equipment is required or not allowed for the exam you are sitting.

Good Luck!

Information gathered courtesy of the websites mentioned above.