Using calculators (JCQ ICE: Effective from September 2026)

10.1 In this chapter a calculator is defined as an electronic device whose primary purpose is to carry out mathematical calculations.

10.2 This is the published guidance on calculators, unless specifically varied by an awarding body within their relevant qualification specification.

10.3 The instructions on the question paper will say whether calculators are allowed or not. If the instructions do not include such a statement, calculators should be treated as standard equipment and may be used by candidates.

10.4 Where the use of a calculator is allowed, candidates are responsible for making sure that their calculators meet the awarding bodies' regulations.

10.5 Candidates must be told these regulations beforehand and be familiar with the Information for candidates documents.

10.6 During an examination, a calculator must not be able to offer any of these facilities:

- language translation;
- symbolic algebra manipulation;
- symbolic differentiation or integration;
- communication with other machines or the internet.

10.7 During an examination, a calculator must not give access to any information stored prior to that examination. This includes:

- databanks, such as the periodic table (with the exception of scientific constants);
- dictionaries;
- mathematical formulae;
- text.

10.8 A calculator must not be borrowed from another candidate during an examination.

10.9 Some calculators have an 'exam mode'. This is acceptable in examinations where the exam mode is activated and the exam mode results in the calculator becoming compliant with the above requirements.

10.10 An invigilator may give a candidate a replacement calculator.

10.11 Where access is permitted to a calculator for part of an examination, it is acceptable for candidates to place their calculators on the floor under their desks in sight of the invigilator(s) for the non-calculator portion of the examination.