

I did lots of research into how to take exams. I was living in the Far East at the time I started researching but we ended up moving to the UK before my son took any exams, however. We began looking for an exam centre as soon as we decided to think about exams. We had help from other home educators, such as on the home education exams Yahoo group. The most useful advice was to find a centre first, then work out how to take the exams. I didn't approach the local authority at all. My son took three IGCSEs. He was eleven when he took the first and thirteen when he took the other two. I found two different private schools. We travelled 90 minutes for each of the first exams, only 15 minutes for the second set. The actual exam taking was not expensive - we paid the exam fees plus, in one case, invigilation fees (as no other child was taking an exam at the same time). For one exam I did all the teaching and all we paid for was two text books. For the second we used an online course, which was fairly expensive and the third exam I shared teaching with a tutor, which was expensive. I think we should have delayed the third exam until my son had a firmer grasp on essay technique. We should also have insisted on his using a computer, rather than just having extra time, to cope with his coordination problems. My son was young when he took exams, so when he decided to enter private school, he just took their own exams and started into the GCSE course.