

# CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK

## 2025/26

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## Introduction

Parkside Community School is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the examination and assessment process in place in the centre and are made aware of the required JCQ/awarding body instructions and information for candidates.

## Purpose of this handbook

- To support/complement candidate briefings/assemblies
- To inform candidates about malpractice in examinations/assessments
- To inform candidates about the use of their personal data and copyright
- To ensure candidates are provided with all relevant information about their exams and assessments in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To ensure copies of relevant JCQ information for candidates documents and exam room posters are provided in advance of any exams/assessments being taken
- To answer questions candidates may have etc.
- To inform candidates of/signpost candidates (and where relevant parents/carers) to any exams-related policies/procedures that they need to be made aware of

## Malpractice

- To maintain the integrity of qualifications, strict Regulations are in place
- Malpractice means any act or practice which is in breach of the Regulations
- Any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice will be investigated and reported to the relevant awarding body/bodies
- JCQ provides information regarding what constitutes malpractice:
  - Introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room
  - Breaches of examination conditions
  - Exchanging, obtaining, receiving, or passing on information which could be examination related (or the attempt to)
  - Offences relating to the content of candidates' work
  - Undermining the integrity of examinations/assessments

As per the JCQ Malpractice Policies and Procedure, sanctions for malpractice can vary, but include a warning, loss of marks and loss of certification (disqualification).

As per the JCQ Information for candidates

### Things not to do on social media:

- Buy/ask for/share exam or assessment content
- Pass on rumours of what's in exams or assessments
- Share your work
- Work with others so that your assessment is not your own independent work

and/or non-examination assessments and coursework, as example:

### Research and using references

...Where computer-generated content has been used (such as an AI Chatbot), your reference **must** show the name of the AI tool used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>), 25/01/2026. You **must** submit a copy of the computer-generated content with your work for reference and authentication purposes.

You should also reference the sources used by the AI tool in generating the content.

You **must** retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how you used it. This **must** be submitted with your work for final assessment so that your teacher can review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used...

**If you copy the words, ideas or outputs of others and do not show your sources in references and a bibliography, this will be considered as cheating.**

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts, ideas or outputs and trying to pass them off as your own. It could also include AI-produced material. **Plagiarism is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously...**

You can also find more information in the **Managing Behaviour Policy** (Exams) and/or **Malpractice Policy** (Exams)

### **Personal data**

- The awarding bodies collect information about exam candidates
- To understand what information is collected and how it is used, you must read the JCQ Information for candidates – Privacy Notice available on our website [www.parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk](http://www.parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk) / statutory information / examination information

Candidates can also request a copy of our Data Protection Policy (Exams) from the main school office

### **Copyright**

- The copyright of any form of work created by a candidate that is submitted to an awarding body for assessment (referred to as Assessment Materials) belongs to the candidate
- By submitting this work, a candidate is granting the awarding body a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to use their assessment materials (referred to as Assessment Licence)

If a candidate wishes to terminate the awarding body's rights for anything other than assessing his/her work, the awarding body must be notified by the centre and it is at the discretion of the awarding body whether or not to terminate such rights

### **Coursework assessments/non-examination assessments**

- JCQ information for candidates' documents - coursework, non-examination assessments, social media are available on our website [www.parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk](http://www.parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk) / statutory information / examination information
- The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) – cheating or plagiarism – using AI to produce work dishonestly. If a member of staff feels AI has been used, they will ask you to complete the coursework again or even worse disqualification.
- Candidates are informed about assessments by their teachers, who can also provide information regarding marking and assessment procedures and internal appeals

Teaching staff will also confirm which NEA work is externally marked/assessed etc.

### **Written timetabled exams**

- Candidate statement of entry (to check that personal details and exam entries are correct) will be provided prior to the summer exam season
- If any information is incorrect, please contact Miss Evans immediately
- Candidate exam timetable (to ensure candidates know the date and time of all their exams/assessments), and any relevant information regarding seating arrangements, exam rooms etc will be provided prior to the examination
- The JCQ information for candidates' documents – written examinations, social media are available on our website (see previous link)

Exam room posters – Warning to candidates, Unauthorised items are also available on our website

## Contingency sessions - Summer 2026

The awarding bodies designate a 'contingency day' for examinations. In the event of a national disruption to a day of examinations in Summer the awarding bodies will agree the most appropriate option for managing impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements (and will be marked absent for that exam).

The provisional date for contingency days for Summer are;

- Wednesday 24 June – all day

**You are expected to be available up to and including that date.**

## What to do if you identify you have two or more exam papers timetabled at the same time (a timetable clash)

Please contact Miss Evans immediately. You will be advised of the arrangements to take place as soon as possible.

## Where you will take your exams

Most examinations will take place in the main school hall or the gym. For smaller groups, they may be in available offices or classrooms.

## What time your exams will start and finish

- Morning examinations begin at 9am, and afternoon at 1:15pm
- For all written examinations, you must stay in the exam room for the full published duration

## Supervision during your exams

- Exams are supervised by a team of invigilators
- Invigilators must follow strict rules and regulations when conducting exams as directed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- You are expected to treat the invigilation team with respect, and listen closely to their instructions

## Exam room conditions

- You will be expected to arrive to your designated exam room in good time, at least 5 minutes prior to the published start time
- Candidates are under formal exam conditions from the moment you enter the exam room until you are given permission to leave by the invigilator - it is vital you remain quiet for the entire duration of the exam, while you are in the exam room
- Candidates must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times in the exam room
- Candidates must not communicate with or disturb other candidates
- The centre number, subject title, paper number, date and start and finish times of each exam will be displayed in the exam room
- You must not complete the front of the answer booklet until you are instructed to do so by the invigilator
- If using additional answer booklets, please ensure you complete your details as per the answer booklet – legal name and candidate number
- Candidates must not open the question paper until the examination begins.

## **Where you will sit in the exam room**

- Candidates are seated in exam number order where possible
- Your seat numbers can be found on your exam timetable
- If you are unsure of your seat location on the day of the exam, please ask an invigilator

## **How your identity is confirmed in the exam room**

- Candidates are identified by a member of the senior leadership team on arrival at the exam room

Candidates ID cards are also placed on the exam table to ensure invigilators can also identify you

## **What equipment you need to bring to your exams**

- Candidates are provided with all stationery and calculators
- You should not need to bring anything into the exam room
- Water is permitted in a clear bottle – please remove all labels and place the bottle on the floor next to your desk

## **What you must not bring into the exam room**

Please see JCQ information regarding unauthorised items poster available on our website.

- As stationery is provided, there should be no need to bring anything into the examination room with you apart from a clear water bottle if required.

## **Food and drink in exam rooms**

Food is not permitted in the exam room. A drink must be in a clear bottle with NO writing on it.

## **What you should wear for your exams**

School uniform – please be aware you may remove your blazer once seated if the room is warm

## **Where your personal belongings will be stored during your exam**

- Bags are left outside the main hall, ensuring not to block the pathway or doors

If at all possible, mobile phones and watches should not be brought into school during examinations. However, if that is not possible, they will be collected by invigilators, and kept in an office until students can collect after the examination has finished

## **What to do if you arrive late for your exam**

It is very important that you arrive to school on time every day – especially during your exams.

If you are going to be late due to unforeseen circumstances please contact school as soon as possible.

JCQ regulations cover late arrival for exams.

We will endeavour to ensure you can still complete your examination but the awarding body may not accept your exam script if you are very late.

## **What happens in the event of an emergency in the exam room**

In the event of an emergency, please stay calm and follow the invigilators instructions carefully.

## **Candidates with access arrangements/reasonable adjustments**

- Please refer to your exam timetable for the location of your exam
- If you have any queries regarding your access arrangement please contact Mrs Spencer

## Results

GCSE published results day is Thursday 20 August 2026.

We will write to you closer to the date to confirm arrangements for collection.

Uncollected statements of results will be posted to the home address we have on file. Please check this prior to results day if you have any concerns.

If you would like to nominate an authorised person to collect the results on your behalf you need to write to school to give permission, ensuring you give the full name of your nominated person. On collection, that person will need to bring photographic proof of identity to enable us to release your results to them.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team and Teaching staff will be available on results day to discuss your results and post-results services (see below).

## Post-results services

The awarding bodies offer various post results services;

- clerical re-check
  - *checking all parts of script have been marked, totalled and recorded correctly*
- review of marking
  - *review of original marking to ensure agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly. Reviewers will not re-mark the script, they will only act to correct any errors identified in the original marking*
- review of moderation
  - *check to ensure that the assessment criteria have been fairly, reliably and consistently applied*
- copy of script to support review of marking
  - *to allow decisions to be made whether a review of marking should be applied for by teaching staff*
- copy of script to support teaching and learning
  - *to support teaching and learning*

Permission/consent will be sought prior to requesting any of the post-results services. In giving consent, you are confirming you understand that any grade and/or mark awarded following a re-check or review may be lower than, higher than, or the same as the result which was originally awarded.

Parkside Community School Teaching Staff will look at the marks awarded for each component alongside mark schemes and results reports to determine if a review or re-check is appropriate.

## Certificates

Exam certificates are usually released to schools late November to be checked for any errors. We will write to you closer to the date to confirm arrangements for collection.

Unclaimed certificates are kept safely on site for a minimum of 12 months.

It is vital that you collect your certificates and keep them safe. The awarding bodies charge for replacements or certified statement of results, which can cost up to £50 each.

## Internal appeals procedure

Certain GCSE and other qualifications contain components of non-examination assessment which are internally assessed by Parkside Community School and internally standardised. The marks awarded are then submitted to the awarding bodies for external moderation.

On being informed of your centre assessed marks, if you believe that the procedures were not followed or the marking standards were not correctly applied you may make use of the appeals procedure by first discussing with your teacher.

If you believe there are grounds to appeal against Parkside Community Schools decision not to support a review of results or clerical re-check, you can submit an internal appeal to us prior to the internal deadline for submitting a request for review of results.

The Awarding Bodies have not released their deadlines for Post Results at time of production of this handbook. However, they are usually very short so we would encourage any discussions and appeals be made in the first few days following issue of results.

Awarding Body deadlines are shared on the Post Results consent form.

## **Complaints and Appeals Procedure**

If you (or your parent/carer) have a general concern or complaint regarding our delivery and administration of qualifications, we would encourage you to try and resolve this informally in the first instance by contacting the Headteachers PA.

If a complaint fails to be resolved informally, you are at liberty to make a formal complaint. Details of which are included in our written complaints and appeals procedure and available on request to the Headteachers PA.



**JCQ Information for candidates****JCQ Information for candidates – coursework**

You **must** read this information if you are undertaking qualifications that contain elements of coursework assessment.

**JCQ Information for candidates – non-examination assessments**

You **must** read this information if you are undertaking qualifications that contain components of non-examination assessment.

**JCQ Information for candidates – on-screen tests**

You **must** read this information if you will be taking any externally assessed on-screen tests as part of your qualification(s).

**JCQ Information for candidates – written exams**

You **must** read this information before you take any externally assessed timetabled written exams.

**JCQ Information for candidates – Privacy Notice**

You **must** read this notice as it contains “information about you and how we use it”.

**JCQ Information for candidates – Social media**

You **must** read this information to help you stay within examination/assessment regulations when using social media.

**JCQ Unauthorised items poster**

This poster will be displayed outside each exam room. You **must** note that “Possession of unauthorised items, such as a mobile phone, is a serious offence and could result in **DISQUALIFICATION** from your examination and your overall qualification.”

**JCQ Warning to candidates poster**

This poster will be displayed outside each exam room. You **must** note all the warnings.

JCQ’s published documents can be found on our website, [www.parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk](http://www.parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk) school overview, statutory information, examination information.

## CANDIDATE CONFIRMATION

To confirm you have received, read and understood the contents of this handbook, please sign and date the tear-off slip below and return to **Miss Evans** by **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024**.

If there is anything you do not understand, you should ask **Miss Evans** for clarification



### CANDIDATE EXAM HANDBOOK

**NAME:** Overwrite your name here

Date I received the handbook: DD / MM / YYYY

#### I have read the contents

**I understand** (Tick all of the boxes that apply)

- ☐ What constitutes malpractice in examinations/assessments
- ☐ What my personal data is used for by awarding bodies
- ☐ Copyright

**I have read and understand the current JCQ information for candidates documents** as they relate to the qualifications I am taking (Tick all of the boxes that apply)

- ☐ Coursework
- ☐ Non-examination assessments
- ☐ On-screen tests
- ☐ Privacy Notice
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Written exams

By signing here, I am confirming all of the above

**Candidate Signature:** Overwrite your signature here

Date of signature: DD / MM / YYYY