

Candidate Handbook

Class of 2027



Introduction & Purpose

Overview & Regulations

Co-op North Manchester is committed to ensuring that candidates are fully briefed on the examination and assessment process.

This handbook has been produced to help prepare you for your upcoming examinations. There are a number of rules and regulations that you **MUST** make yourselves familiar with.

Please remember, most of these regulations are set by the **Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)** for the exam boards and must be adhered to.

Warning

Failure to adhere to the JCQ regulations may result in disqualification from your examinations.

Support & Resources

If there is anything included in this handbook that you do not understand, please do not hesitate to speak to your:

- Head of Year
- Pastoral Manager
- Exams Officer

A copy of this handbook is available on the school website.

Contingency Days 2027

Key Date: **23rd June 2027**

Candidates must remain available until **Wednesday 23 June 2027** should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

Malpractice

Integrity Commitment

Co-op Academy North Manchester will maintain the integrity of the examination process and will inform awarding bodies immediately of any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice.

What is Malpractice?

Malpractice means any act, default or practice which is a breach of the regulations that apply to the exam or assessment being taken.

Key Realities of Malpractice:

- It doesn't necessarily involve an intention to cheat or gain an unfair advantage.
- Most cases are unintentional breaches caused by a lack of knowledge of JCQ regulations (ICE).
- Significant consequences apply even if the malpractice was unintentional.
- A breach can **impact all pupils** at every centre taking that assessment, not just those involved.

The Investigation Process:

Awarding bodies have a duty to establish facts when a credible allegation is received. This follows the *JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures*.

Important Guidance

JCQ 'Warning to Candidates' and 'Information for Candidates' are located outside each exam room and enclosed in this booklet. Please read this thoroughly.

Malpractice Guidance

Definition & Integrity Commitment

What is **Malpractice**? Any act, default or practice which is a breach of the regulations that apply to an exam or assessment.

Co-op Academy North Manchester will maintain exam integrity and inform awarding bodies immediately of any alleged, suspected, or actual incidents.

Key Realities of Malpractice

- It does not necessarily involve an **intention to cheat** or gain an unfair advantage.
- Most cases are **unintentional breaches** caused by a lack of knowledge of JCQ regulations.
- **Significant consequences** apply even if the malpractice was unintentional.
- A breach can **impact all pupils** at every centre taking that assessment, not just those involved.

Plagiarism, Cheating & AI Misuse

Plagiarism & Cheating: Plagiarism involves passing off others' words or outputs as your own. Not showing sources in references is considered cheating.

AI Chatbots: Malpractice includes the misuse of AI chatbots. If work is not your own, it is malpractice under JCQ regulations.

Example reference: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>), 25/01/2025.

JCQ Malpractice Examples & Regulations

Integrity of qualifications requires strict adherence to rules. All alleged incidents are thoroughly investigated and reported to awarding bodies.

Specific JCQ Malpractice offences include:

- Unauthorised material in exams
- Breaches of exam conditions
- Exchanging or passing on exam-related information
- Offences relating to candidate work content
- Undermining exam integrity

Investigations & Important Guidance

Investigation Process: Awarding bodies have a duty to establish facts when a credible allegation is received, following JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures.

Candidate Guidance: JCQ 'Warning to Candidates' and 'Information for Candidates' are located outside each exam room and enclosed in this booklet. Please read them thoroughly.

Personal Data & Copyright

Personal Data

- **Malpractice Reporting:** Personal data is provided to awarding bodies if malpractice is suspected or alleged.
- **Data Sharing:** Data may be shared with other awarding bodies, regulators, or professional bodies.
- **Awarding Qualifications:** Relevant data (name, DOB, gender) is provided for the purpose of awarding qualifications.
- **Evaluating Performance:** "Student Materials" (written, audio, visual, computer data) are used to evaluate performance.
- **Privacy Policies:** Materials may also be used for other purposes as outlined in privacy policies.
- **Further Information:** Refer to awarding body privacy notices for more details. Information is on our exams website.

Copyright & Student Materials

Access to Materials: Candidates can access Student Materials (including scripts) through JCQ General Regulations (para 5.13).

Policy Details: More information is in our post-results policy on the exams website.

Non-examination Assessments

AI Use & Malpractice

Strict Regulation & Authenticity Declaration:

The use of AI (what AI misuse is, how this will be treated as malpractice) is strictly regulated. Work submitted must be entirely your own; unacknowledged AI-generated content constitutes malpractice under JCQ regulations.

Assessment & Marking

- **Notification:** You will be notified by your subject teacher when your assessments will take place.
- **Deadlines:** Please ensure that you meet all deadlines set by your teacher.
- **Marking & Moderation:** Assessments are marked by your teacher and moderated by the awarding body, or sent directly for marking.
- **Centre Assessed Marks:** Your teacher will advise you of centre assessed marks before submission.
- **Appeals:** See your subject teacher immediately. More information is available in the Internal Appeals Procedure on the school website.

Important JCQ Documents

Please read these official JCQ documents located at the back of this handbook and on the school website:

- JCQ Information for candidates – coursework
- JCQ Information for candidates – non-examination assessments
- JCQ Information for candidates – AI (Artificial Intelligence & Assessments)

Written Timetabled Exams

Statement of Entry

All candidates receive a statement of entry in the Spring Term indicating subjects and entry levels.

- Check for correctness: Foundation vs Higher tiers.
- Verify personal details (DOB, spelling) to avoid certificate change fees.
- Inform the Exams Officer of any errors before the deadline.
- You are responsible for checking your exam timetable and subject entries.

Candidate Name

Format: First Name + middle name/s + (Legal) Surname.

Example:

e.g. Adam John Smith

Candidate Number

Each candidate has a unique **four-digit number** to be entered on all examination papers.

This number appears on:

- Candidate desk cards
- Statements of entry
- Individual candidate timetables
- Provisional results information

Examination Boards

The school uses the following awarding bodies:

AQA
Pearson
OCR
WJEC

AM / PM Exam Times

Morning Exams

9.00am — Exam Start Time

Afternoon Exams

1.00pm — Exam Start Time

Important Regulation:

Exam length is determined by the awarding body. You will not be allowed to leave before the scheduled end time.

Ensure you remain seated and silent until all papers are collected and you are formally dismissed by an invigilator.

Where you will sit your exams

Most exams will take place in the [Sports Hall](#). Your room and seat number will be on your exam timetable.

Important Instructions:

- You can speak to the **Exams Officer** at any point if you have questions.
- Do not enter an exam room until instructed by staff or an invigilator.
- Ensure you are sitting at the **correct desk** to avoid errors or being marked absent.

Access Arrangements

Candidates with established difficulties may take exams in smaller environments. Decisions are based on:

- Substantial and long-term impairment.
- Normal way of working within the centre.
- Ensuring the arrangement provides no unfair advantage.

Nervousness or low-level anxiety is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation.

Supervision & Conduct

- Exams are supervised by invigilators who follow strict JCQ regulations.
- Behave respectfully and always follow instructions.
- Invigilators manage papers and problems but **cannot explain questions**.

Timetable Clashes

An exam clash is when you have two exams scheduled for the same time. If this happens, we will write to you with the resolution.

- You will be kept under supervision between your exams.
- No electronic devices or internet access allowed. (Leave revision material with an Invigilator).
- No contact with other pupils except those being supervised with you.

Uniform, Belongings & Supervision

Uniform & Belongings

- **Full School Uniform:** You must wear your full school uniform to all examinations. This includes correct footwear.
- **Uniform Issues:** If you have any issues with your uniform, you must speak to your Head of Key Stage or Pastoral Manager before your exam.
- **Personal Belongings:** All personal belongings should be secured in your bag and left in the Sports Hall storage. You may store your phone in your pouch in the corresponding form box with the invigilators.

How your identity is confirmed

It is essential that we ensure the right student is sitting the right exam paper. We will confirm your identity as follows:

- Head of Key Stage, a member of SLT or Pastoral Manager are present at the start of each exam to identify candidates.
- Each candidate has their own ID card, containing photo, exam number, centre details and access arrangements.
- ID cards are placed on desks for each exam. **Do not deface these cards**, they are a JCQ requirement.

Food & Drink

- **Water bottles only** are allowed in the exam rooms.
- All bottles **MUST** be **completely clear** with no text or numbers printed on the plastic.
- All labels **MUST** be removed prior to entering the exam room.

Failure to comply may result in the bottle being confiscated.

Important Warning: Disruptive Behaviour & Malpractice

- Disruptive behaviour will lead to removal and a malpractice report to the awarding body.
- Malpractice results in possible disqualification from your examinations.

Exam Room Conditions

Arrival & Belongings

- Check seating plans outside the Sports Hall or exam room.
- Leave personal belongings in your bag in the secure storage facility.
- Option to store phone in its pouch with the exam team.
- **Access Arrangement pupils:** wait quietly outside with your belongings.

Formal Exam Conditions

You are under formal conditions from the moment you enter until you have permission to leave.

- **No talking, communicating,** or disturbing other candidates.
- Looking around or smiling is classed as communication.
- Sit and face the front at all times.
- Find your seat quickly and silently; use the wall letters/numbers for help.
- Follow all instructions from the invigilator.
- **Talking or communicating must be reported to the awarding body.**

Information on White Boards/Projector

The following details will be displayed at the front of the room:

- Centre number
- Subject title & paper number
- Date of exam
- Actual starting and finishing times

Exam Room Conditions Cont.

Exam Papers & Stationery

The exam paper will be placed on your desk before you enter. **Do not open it until the examination begins.**

When instructed, complete relevant information on answer books (first name and surname matching entry information, candidate number etc.).

Information on additional sheets will be given at the time. Exam board stationery is provided.

Toilet Breaks & Leaving the Room

- Go before the exam: Once started, you only get a break if you have a **toilet pass**.
- **Final 15 minutes:** No toilet breaks allowed during this period.
- **Restricted leaving:** Leaving the room is restricted to absolute necessity only.
- **Supervision & Security:** Centres must ensure no access to unauthorised materials during temporary absence.

Medication & Medical Equipment

- **Inhalers:** Permitted in the exam room, but **must be registered** and kept in a clear plastic bag on the desk. They may be inspected.
- **Other Medical Equipment:** For any other medication or medical monitoring equipment (e.g., blood sugar monitors), discuss with the **Exams Officer** immediately.

Equipment

General Rules

- Only authorised material can be brought into the exam room.
- You can bring your own equipment, however some will be provided for you.
- **Write in black ink only. Your papers are scanned for marking.**

Do Not Use:

- Correcting pens, fluid or tape
- Erasable / friction pens
- Highlighters in answers (ok for questions)
- Gel pens

Containers & Bottles

- Your **pencil case** must be see-through / clear.
- Your **water bottle** must be see-through with no labels or measurements. Only water is permitted.

Pencil Case Kit

- Black pens
- Pencil
- Rubber
- Highlighter
- Ruler

Specialist Equipment

If permitted, we will provide access to:

- Protractor
- Compass
- Calculator
- Tracing paper

Coloured pens/inks allowed **only for diagrams/maps** if the paper allows.

Unauthorised Items

We cannot stress enough the importance of not bringing any unauthorised material or equipment into an exam room.

Electronic Devices

- Mobile phones
- MP3/4 players & iPods
- Any watch (Smart or not!)
- Smart glasses
- Earphones & Airpods
- Any other similar devices

Other Materials

- Notes & study guides
- Own blank paper
- Dictionaries (unless allowed)
- Make-up & lip balm
- Bus passes, money & keys
- Reports & timetables

Note: These items should be left in your bag.

Important Information

Read JCQ 'Warning to Candidates' and 'Information for Candidates' located outside each room.

Any attempt to break rules may result in **disqualification** from some or all subjects.

The school must report any breach of regulations to the Awarding Body.

End of the Exam

- **Remain Seated:** You must stay seated and silent until invigilators have collected all exam papers.
- **Dismissal:** You will be dismissed from your desks one row at a time. Personal items can be collected outside the Sports Hall.
- **Formal Exam Conditions:** You **MUST** remain silent until you have left the room. Any incidents will be reported for malpractice.
- Please remember that other exams may still be in progress elsewhere in the building.
- Please do not congregate outside exam rooms to talk to your friends.

Unauthorised Absence

- **Zero Marks:** If you do not attend any part of an external exam for which you have been entered, you will receive a mark of zero for that paper.
- **No Resits:** There is no other opportunity to sit the exam.

Important Note: Misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.

Arriving Late

It is your responsibility to be on time for every exam.

- Report straight to reception and sign in if you arrive late.
- **Very Late (after 1hr):** Must be reported to the exam board. You will need to provide specific information as to why you were late.

The decision on whether your paper is marked is up to the awarding bodies.

Illness & Late Arrivals

Illness

It is really important that you attend school for all exams unless you are seriously ill.

Before

If unwell before the start, tell the Exams Officer immediately.

During

Put your hand up and an invigilator will assist you.

Absence

If extremely unwell, have a parent contact Student Absence immediately. Medical evidence is required.

The date and time of the exam is set by the exam board and cannot be changed. We may be able to put alternative arrangements in place, so try to come in!

Special consideration is only for exceptional circumstances. Medical evidence must be obtained on the day and given to the Exams Officer without delay.

Evacuation Procedure

In an emergency (e.g., fire bell), follow invigilator directions. Don't panic.

1. No Communication & Silence

You MUST remain completely silent. No talking, gesturing, looking around, or communicating with any other candidate in any way.

2. Assembly & Exam Conditions

Leave paper/equipment on your desk. Follow invigilators to **Tennis Courts**. Full exam conditions apply at all times.

You will be allowed the full working time for the examination once you return.

Results & Certificates

Results Collection

Your results will be available from school on: **Thursday 19th August 2027**.
Details of the arrangements will be shared after exams finish.

Candidate Only

Results will not be given to any person other than the candidate.

Emailing Results

Requires your prior written consent (not parent/carer). Sent after in-person collection.

Representatives

Nominating a representative for collection requires your written consent.

Telephone Policy

No results can be given over the telephone due to data protection.

Certificates

Available in the Autumn term following results day.

Original Documents

Certificates cannot be replaced by the school. Replacement costs are approximately £70 per board.

Keep them safe!

Late Collection

If not collected on time, certificates are available by appointment from the Exams Office.

Must be signed for; requires written permission for representatives.

Important Retention Policy

Certificates are only retained for one academic year. After this period, they are securely destroyed.

Post Results Services

Access to Scripts

Purpose of Access

We may wish to access your script for teaching/learning purposes or to support an informed decision about submitting an enquiry.

Action Required

Please sign the **Access to Script** form on results day before leaving. Available in your envelope or via QR code.

Review of Marking

Careful thought and consideration is taken before requesting a review of marking.

1. Requesting a Review

If external exam results do not reflect performance and are significantly different from expected, an enquiry may be submitted.

2. Internal Policy & Outcomes

We access your script for review by Head of Dept. Most review requests do not change grades, as original grades are typically accurate.

3. Grade Risk Warning

You must be aware that grades may go up, go down or stay the same.

Carefully weigh all possibilities before consenting.

4. Consent & Next Steps

If identified as a potential candidate, we will seek your consent on results day.

Policies related to post results are available on our website.

Our School Process

We do not blanket request reviews - it is an academic evaluation, not an automatic review. Once you have either been identified through our checking [process on results day or you initiate a request and provide signed consent, we follow these steps:

1. Boundary Check

We evaluate how close your current score is to the nearest grade boundary.

2. Script Retrieval

With your permission, we request a copy of the original exam script from the board.

3. Dept. Review

The Head of Department evaluates the script against the official mark scheme.

4. Suitability Decision

We provide an honest academic recommendation on whether a review is advisable given the risks involved.

5. Submission

If a review is deemed suitable, we submit the formal request to the exam board on your behalf.

Complaints & Appeals

The complaints and appeals procedure can be found in the exam section of our website.

Frequently Asked Questions



What time do my exams start?

Morning (AM) exams start at 9.00am.
Afternoon (PM) exams start at 1.00pm.



What happens if my exam runs into break/after school?

Exams are scheduled by Awarding Bodies and must run at the same time in all centres. If you miss your break, you'll be allowed time to eat and rest before returning to your timetable.



Do I have to wear my uniform?

Yes, normal uniform policy applies.



What if I feel unwell during the exam?

Raise your hand and an Invigilator will assist you. Tell an Invigilator or the Exams Officer if you feel ill before the exam starts.



What if I feel sick on exam day?

Try to attend if possible, but notify school immediately for guidance. Medical evidence is required from exam boards for missed final exams.



What happens if I am injured or too sick to attend?

For injuries like a broken arm, emergency access arrangements (e.g., a scribe) can be requested. If unable to attend, a medical certificate or hospital discharge letter is required.

Frequently Asked Questions



What happens if I am late for an exam?

You must sign in and notify your Head of Key Stage, Pastoral manager or the Exams Officer immediately. You'll be allowed full time (unless access arrangements say otherwise). If over 1 hour late, a form is sent to the board; they decide if it's marked. Lateness can lead to disqualification.



Where should I leave belongings?

Leave all belongings in the designated area. Ideally, leave valuables at home on exam day.



What does 'TBA' mean?

'To Be Advised'. This applies to exams with flexible windows (e.g. speaking). Dates will be shared once confirmed.



Wrong paper?

Check details before starting. If something is wrong, raise your hand and tell the invigilator immediately.



Forgotten Candidate Number?

Numbers are on seating plans outside the room and on your desk card. Invigilators can help.



What is the Centre Number?

The Centre number is **32389**. It is clearly displayed in the Exam Room.

Frequently Asked Questions



What is an Appeal for Special Consideration?

Adjustment to marks for eligible candidates (0-5%). Only for those fully prepared but affected by adverse circumstances (illness, bereavement, etc.). Notify Exams Officer immediately; evidence required.



If I miss an Exam, can I take it on another day?

No, not in the current series. Most GCSEs have no re-take opportunity at the end of the course. A missed paper results in 0 marks.



Unauthorised Items

No bags, coats, food, stress balls, or fidget toys. Only clear label-less water bottles and listed materials are allowed.



How long is the exam?

Check your individual timetable (shown in minutes). Invigilators will state times and display the finish time on a board.



Can I leave the Exam Early?

No. Use any extra time to check your answers and ensure personal details are filled in correctly.



Can I go to the toilet during an Exam?

Generally no. JCQ rules only permit leaving for necessity or if supervised rest breaks are granted by the SENCo.

Frequently Asked Questions



Why do I need to check the details on my Statement of Entry?

These are the details that will be printed on Certificates. If the name and date of birth do not match your birth certificate, it may cause problems proving your qualification to employers or colleges. Also check you're entered for all expected subjects.



I am entitled to extra time; how will this affect my exams?

Eligible pupils receive up to 25% extra time. Where possible, you will sit together to minimise disruption from others finishing earlier. Invigilators are fully aware of students requiring this support.



What do I do if I don't get the grades I need?

Staff will be available on results day to offer advice and support. Further details regarding post-results services will be shared at that time.

Top tips for revision

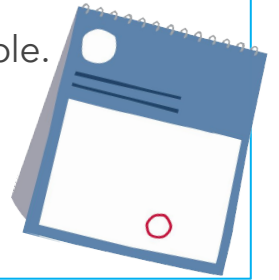
1 Make a plan

Work out how much time you have, and plan enough time for each subject.



2 Start early

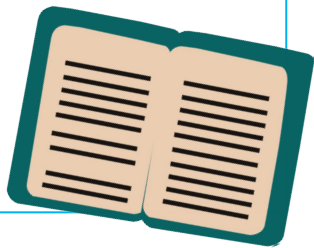
Your revision should start as soon as possible.



3 Know your stuff

Revise. This means taking notes and using past papers.

It is easier to remember material once you understand it!



4 Stay focused

Find a quiet place to study. Set up a reward after a session before getting back to your books.



5 Take breaks

Avoid stress. Take breaks and stick to your plan.

You cannot revise everything in a day, or even a week.



6 Find your way

Use the revision style that suits you. Mix strategies, work in a group for two hours, then listen to revision podcasts. Keep stimulated.

