



QEHS Examination Handbook for Candidates

2026/27

**We expect all candidates to read this document in full and to follow the instructions provided.
Failing to follow these instructions may, in some instances, result in an allegation of cheating or
disciplinary misconduct.**

Ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable defense.

Important information re: exam contingency dates

We have been informed by the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) who are the providers of regulations and examination practices across the UK that they are planning to hold an exam contingency day on the following date:

- **Wednesday 23rd June 2027.**

The decision comes following the events of past summers including the COVID-19 pandemic. JCQ have decided that they need the option to postpone an exam in the event of an incident and rearrange for a later date to allow all students a fair and equal chance.

All exam candidates must be available to sit exams from the start of the exams in May up to and including Wednesday 23rd June 2027.

This decision is not a school decision and applies to all candidates in all schools. Students will not be expected to be in school that day unless they have a scheduled examination, however, **they must be available and not away on holiday.**

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1. Introduction

This document sets out the procedures you will need to follow when you sit your exams at QEHS in 2026/27. Please read it carefully – it tells you what to expect and what to do if the unexpected happens.

The school expects all candidates to read this document in full and to follow the instructions provided. Failing to follow these instructions may, in some instances, result in an allegation of cheating or disciplinary misconduct. Ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable defense.

If you have any questions please contact the Exams Officer, exams@gehs.lincs.sch.uk .

2. Candidate number

Your candidate number is a unique four-digit number which is used to make your exam entries and then by the awarding bodies to link all of your examined work to you. (Please note if you have taken exams at other schools previously, it will not be the same as your QEHS candidate number.)

There will be an ID card on your exam desk showing your candidate number, along with your full legal name, your photograph and the centre number. You should inform the invigilator if you think any of the details on your card are incorrect. You should write your candidate number on your exam answer book(s) and any supplementary sheets.

3. Exam timetables and locations

3.1. School exam timetable

Exam timetables are published on the school website in the Student > Exam Information section, on the noticeboard above the piano in the Upper School corridor and directly to candidates via their school email address.

3.2. Exam locations

Exams at QEHS take place mainly in the Sports Hall, but we do use a variety of rooms, so please check your timetable carefully.

3.3. Seating

Seating plans are produced for each exam and your allocated seat will be shown on your individual candidate timetable. However, seating plans can change right up until the time an exam starts, so you should always check the seating plan that is posted outside the exam room before you go in.

4. Permitted materials and equipment

There are clear guidelines about unauthorised items on the **JCQ Unauthorised Items** poster, in the documents for candidates on the school website, and in the invigilator's announcement at the beginning of each exam. You should have nothing with you in an exam other than the items you need to complete the exam. Leave what you do not need in your bag or locker or hand them in to the invigilator to be stored securely. Failure to follow these instructions may result in you being accused of cheating and you could be reported for malpractice. The School is not responsible for providing necessary equipment; candidates should provide their own. However, **some** items **may** be available to borrow.

4.1. Personal items, mobile phones and other electronic devices

You cannot use mobile phones, smart watches, smart glasses, stop watches, analogue/digital wrist watches, iPods, AirPods, e-readers, tablets or any other electronic or smart devices during an exam. You will be asked to hand in to the invigilator at the beginning of each exam all unauthorised items. **ALL** electronic devices **must be turned off completely** before being handed in to the invigilator and not set to silent or do not disturb.

4.2. Dictionaries

You are not permitted to use a dictionary for the purpose of overcoming any deficiency in your command of the English language.

Only candidates with authorised access arrangements can have access to dictionaries during the exams.

4.3. Personal items

If you use a pencil case or similar, it must be transparent to allow invigilators to see the contents without disturbing you or other candidates and it must not have any writing or printing on it.

You may bring unlabelled, clear water bottles into each exam. Water bottles should have no writing, printing or measurements on them and should have a small lid (sports caps are best, to avoid spillages).

Food is not allowed in exams unless you have an AA specifically allowing it. Please note that if your AA permits taking food or medication into the exam room these must be stored in a clear, label-free bottle or bag and you should inform the invigilator as you enter the exam room so they are aware you may need to take medication during the exam.

4.4. Materials / Equipment / Stationery

Details about permitted materials and equipment will be listed on the front of your exam paper. If you are unsure about what you may or may not take into an exam, you should check with your subject teacher beforehand.

4.5. Calculators

You may only use a calculator in an exam if this is permitted by the exam board.

Your calculator must be compact, hand-held, and quiet to operate and have its own power supply. Devices with an internet connection are not permitted. Your calculator must not have instructions, formulae or a lid.

You may not access information stored in the memory of your calculator or use any other software during your exam. You will be responsible for clearing any stored memory from your calculator (or if applicable, setting your calculator to 'Exam/Test Mode'). If your calculator is found to have items in its memory, this will be considered malpractice.

Please note that there is no list of approved calculators. Instead, all calculators adhering to the above criteria are acceptable. If you are unsure whether your calculator is permissible it is your responsibility to check with your subject teacher.

5. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

You may be eligible for Access Arrangements (AAs) if you are disabled, have a specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia or dyspraxia) or have an ongoing medical condition. If you have approved AAs, you will be notified before the start of the exam period. Your AAs will reflect your normal way of working and must not give you any advantage over any other candidates. If you have an AA, you might not sit your exam in the main room(s) with the other candidates, but in most cases, all exam candidates with AAs at QEHS are seated in the main room with the rest of the cohort. If you believe you are entitled to an AA and have not already done so, you should contact your Head of Year or the SENDCo. You may qualify for Reasonable Adjustments in the way you take an exam if you are affected by a particular condition, for example, if you have an injury that requires a certain seating position, or something similar.

6. Special Consideration

6.1. Present but disadvantaged

Whereas Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments exist to remove inequality at the point you take an exam and are based on prior knowledge of an existing condition, Special Consideration (Spec Cons) exists for when something **unexpected** happens **at the time of an exam** which may adversely affect your performance. Spec Cons cannot be granted for something which is predictable, such as a long-term illness, as this should be covered by an AA. If you experience an unexpected problem, for example, if you are ill or have an accident on the day of an exam, and you think this may warrant particular exam arrangements, you should make this known to a member of staff such as your Head of Year, the Exams Officer, an invigilator, or any other person connected with the exam in question. (Please note: if you contract a contagious condition, such as chicken pox or mumps, you should not travel to the school, regardless of your exam schedule.)

6.2. Absent from exam

If you are unable to attend an exam due to something unexpected happening at the time of or immediately preceding the exam, it is possible to request Spec Cons from the awarding body provided that there is sufficient evidence to support the request. You must inform the school immediately if you know you are not able to attend so that measures may be put in place. Whether Spec Cons is granted is entirely at the discretion of the awarding body.

7. Internal Appeal Procedures

7.1. Appeals/Review of marking procedure against internal assessment decisions

The School is committed to ensuring that whenever staff mark candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and where training is available through the examination boards this will be accessed.

The School is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

In order to allow sufficient time for this marking and moderation to occur as well as time for any appeal, the student deadline for submission will always be a minimum of four weeks before the board's deadline for submission. If a student fails to meet the school deadlines, the school may not be able to fulfil any request for a marking review and, in extreme cases,

may not be able to mark and moderate the student's work in time for submission to the board. Assuming that the student meets the deadlines set, and on being informed of their centre assessed marks, if a candidate believes that the above procedures were not followed in relation to the marking of their work, or that the assessor has not properly applied the mark scheme to their marking, then they may make use of this appeals procedure to consider whether to request a review of the centre's marking. **Candidates need to be aware that should their appeal be upheld their marks could go down as well as up.**

1. The School will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.
2. The School will inform candidates that they may request copies of materials (for example, a copy of their marked work, the relevant specification, the mark scheme and any other associated subject-specific documents) to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment. This request must come within 5 days of reviewing their moderated marks.
3. The School will, having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate within 5 working days. **(The timescales identified in this policy are only effective during term time, there will be no provision for the internal appeal process during school holidays.)**
4. The School will provide candidates with sufficient time to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision.
5. Requests for reviews of marking **must** be made in writing within 5 working days of receiving copies of the requested materials – by completing the **internal appeals form and payment of a fee for marking, administration and where necessary secure delivery**. Fees will be refunded if the review shows marks to have been outside of tolerance (Fees are available from the exams officer).
6. The School will allow 10 working days for the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline.
7. The School will ensure that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review.
8. The School will instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
9. The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.

10. The outcome of the review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the review of the centre's marking bring any irregularity in procedures to light, the awarding body will be informed immediately.

After candidates' work has been internally assessed, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. The moderation process may lead to mark changes. This process is outside the control of the School and is not covered by this procedure.

7.2. Appeals against the centre's decision not to support a clerical check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal

If the candidate (or their parent/guardian) believes there are grounds to appeal against the centre's decision not to support an enquiry, an internal appeal can be submitted to the centre by completing the internal appeals form at least 7 calendar days prior to the internal deadline for submitting an EAR.

The appellant will be informed of the outcome of their appeal before the internal deadline for submitting an EAR.

Following the EAR outcome, an external appeals process is available if the head of centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome and believes there are grounds for appeal. The JCQ publications *Post-Results Services* and *JCQ Appeals Booklet (A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes)* will be consulted to determine the acceptable grounds for a preliminary appeal.

Where the head of centre is satisfied after receiving the EAR outcome, but the candidate (or their parent/guardian) believes there are grounds for a preliminary appeal to the awarding body, a further internal appeal may be made to the head of centre. Following this, the head of centre's decision as to whether to proceed with a preliminary appeal will be based upon the acceptable grounds as detailed in the *JCQ Appeals Booklet*. Candidates or parents/guardians are not permitted to make direct representations to an awarding body.

The **internal appeals form** should be completed and submitted to the centre within 10 calendar days of the notification of the outcome of the EAR. Subject to the head of centre's decision, this will allow the centre to process the preliminary appeal and submit to the awarding body within the required **30 calendar days** of receiving the outcome of the enquiry about results process. Awarding body fees which will be charged for the preliminary appeal must be paid to the centre by the appellant before the preliminary appeal is submitted to the awarding body (fees are available from the exams officer). If the appeal is upheld by the awarding body, this fee will be refunded by the awarding body and repaid to the appellant by the centre.

8. Sitting the Exam

By entering the exam room, you are declaring yourself fit to sit the exam. If you believe there are grounds for an application for Spec Cons (see section 6), you must make this known to a member of staff as soon as possible.

8.1. Entering the exam room

You should arrive at school in good time for each exam and be outside the exam room at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start. You should empty your pockets and leave anything you do not need for your exam in your bag or locker. **Candidates that leave bags outside of the exam room do so at their own risk.** The Head of Year or an invigilator will tell you when you may enter the room.

8.2. Question papers

Before the exam starts, you will be asked to check that you have the correct question paper on your desk. You should also check that you have an answer booklet, if required, and that you have any/all permitted materials.

DO NOT open the exam paper until you are told to do so.

Read the instructions on the front of the paper carefully. Make sure you take time to read through the whole paper at least once before you start writing. Check that you know how many questions there are and how many you need to answer.

Reading time may be permitted if indicated on your exam paper. This is additional time to the duration of the exam. This time can only be used for reading the exam paper— unless otherwise stated. You may not make notes or write in your answer booklet, unless the exam paper explicitly states you may write during reading time. Invigilators will inform you of the start and finish of reading time and when you may begin writing.

8.3. Answer booklets

When the invigilator tells you to, you should fill in your full, legal name, candidate number and centre number on the front of your answer booklet. This information will be on the ID card on your desk.

All your work, including rough work, should be done in your answer booklet. You should ensure you have put the correct question number next to your answers. Any work you do not wish to be marked should be crossed through with a single line.

If you need additional answer booklets because yours is full, you should raise your hand and an invigilator will bring you a supplementary booklet or sheet. **It is your responsibility to ensure all used answer booklets have your name, candidate number and the centre number on them, all your answers have the correct question number next to them and are securely placed together when handing into the invigilator.**

Your answers must be written in English unless the paper specifies otherwise.

You should write legibly, in black biro only, do not use gel pens or fine nib pens which produce a wet ink as this prevents the exam board scanning equipment reading your exam paper which may cause a loss of marks. Be careful not to lose marks because your answers are difficult to read.

You must stop writing as soon as the invigilator announces the end of the exam.

You are not allowed to remove any answer booklets (even if blank) or other materials supplied by the school from the exam room.

8.4. Exam question queries

Examinations may contain questions that surprise you and that are unlike past questions. This is intentional: the examiners want to test that you have understood the material well enough. Invigilators are not permitted to give you any explanation or clarification of any questions.

During the exam, if you have a concern about the content of the question paper or you think there is a mistake, you should alert the invigilator. They will contact the Exams Officer who will check your query with the awarding body. While any checks are being made, you should continue with the exam, answering all the questions to the best of your ability.

8.5. Leaving the exam room

Candidates can only leave the exam room in an emergency and only if accompanied. This means that they should not be asking to go to the toilet during an exam. Such requests can only be granted **after the first 50 minutes and before the last 15 minutes** of an exam and only if there are enough supervisors available to facilitate a toilet visit without leaving the exam room under-staffed. If you need to leave the room for any reason, you should raise your hand to attract the attention of the invigilator. If they agree that you have a legitimate reason to leave the exam room, you will be escorted by a supervisor to ensure that the security of the examination is maintained, and you will be asked to check your pockets prior to leaving and entering the room.

8.6. Emergency evacuation

In the event of an emergency evacuation, you must follow the invigilator's instructions at all times. You remain under exam conditions unless notified otherwise and you must not communicate with anyone other than the invigilator.

Whenever possible, exams will restart following an emergency evacuation. The time that was missed during the evacuation will be added to the end time of the exam so that candidates get the full time allowed for the exam.

9. When things go wrong

9.1. Late arrival

If you arrive within 30 minutes of the scheduled start of the exam, you will be permitted to sit the exam. You should report to your Head of Year, the Exams Officer or Reception to explain that you are late. They will arrange for you to be escorted to the exam and explain the situation to the invigilator. You will be allowed the full time for the exam and the invigilator will inform you of your finish time.

If you arrive more than 30 minutes late, you must not enter the exam room until the Exams Officer has checked that the head of centre will permit you to sit the exam. If agreement is confirmed, the same procedure as outlined above will apply.

9.2. Illness / Unexpected events on the day

If you experience an unexpected problem, for example, if you are ill or have an accident on the day of an exam, and you are unable to attend, you must inform the school immediately by ringing the School Office (01427 612354). If you are ill on the day of an exam, you are strongly advised to contact your own doctor for a note explaining your absence which can be sent to the awarding body as part of an application for Special Consideration (see section 6.2).

If you are able to attend your exam but you have been disadvantaged due to something unexpected happening at the time of or immediately preceding the exam, it is possible to request Spec Cons from the awarding body provided that there is sufficient evidence to support the request. You must inform the invigilator or the Exams Officer so that measures can be put in place. Whether Spec Cons is granted is entirely at the discretion of the awarding body.

9.3. Illegible Scripts

You should make every effort to ensure you write clearly so that the markers can concentrate on your answers, rather than the quality of your handwriting. This includes smudged pencil or ink. You may lose marks if parts of your answer book are indecipherable.

9.4. Malpractice

JCQ regulations concerning malpractice can be found in their document **Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures** which states:

“Failure by a centre to notify, investigate and report to an awarding body all allegations of malpractice or suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice in itself.”

Therefore, if any reports are made where there is a suspicion that a breach of the regulations has occurred, the awarding body will be made aware of the allegation and they will decide whether a penalty needs to be applied and what that penalty should be.

10. Where else to find information

Information can be found on the website: <https://gehs.lincs.sch.uk/exam-information>