

Northgate School

Candidate Exam Handbook 2025/26

Field	Detail
Academic year	2025/26
Head of Centre	Paul O'Neill
Exams Officer / SENCo	Althea Chambers
Approved/reviewed by	Althea Chambers
Next review	January 2026

Northgate School is a specialist SEMH provision. Examination processes are delivered with consideration for students' emotional regulation, sensory needs and vulnerabilities, while maintaining full compliance with JCQ and awarding body regulations.

Purpose

- Support candidate briefings and reduce anxiety before exams.
- Explain malpractice, personal data, copyright, exam room rules, access arrangements, results, post-results services, certificates, appeals and complaints.
- Signpost candidates and families to the required JCQ Information for Candidates documents and exam room posters.

Malpractice

- Malpractice means any act or practice which breaches JCQ or awarding body regulations.
- Examples include unauthorised materials, mobile phones or watches in the exam room, communication with others, plagiarism, AI misuse, sharing assessment content or work on social media, and any unfair or dishonest practice.
- Alleged, suspected or actual malpractice will be investigated and reported to the relevant awarding body where required.

Personal data and copyright

- Candidate data is shared with awarding bodies for entries, examinations, awarding, certificates, post-results services and where malpractice is suspected.
- Candidate work may be used by awarding bodies in line with their privacy notices and terms.
- Candidates may request access to scripts through the centre where available and within awarding body deadlines.

Coursework and non-examination assessment

- Candidates must follow JCQ information for coursework, non-examination assessments, social media and AI use in assessments.
- All sources, including AI tools where permitted, must be acknowledged.
- Candidates must meet school and awarding body deadlines and sign authentication statements where required.

Written timetabled exams

- Morning exams start at 09:30 and afternoon exams start at 13:00 unless candidates are told otherwise.
- Candidates should arrive at least 15 minutes before the exam start time.
- Candidates are under formal exam conditions from entering the exam room until dismissed by the invigilator.
- Candidates must not talk to, communicate with, disturb others, open the paper early, or use unauthorised items.
- School will provide equipment and water. Only water in a clear bottle is permitted unless an agreed medical or SEND-related adjustment applies.

Contingency sessions - Summer 2026

- Thursday 11 June 2026, afternoon session.
- Wednesday 24 June 2026, full day and final day of the examination series.
- All candidates must remain available up to and including Wednesday 24 June 2026.

Access arrangements and SEMH/SEND support

- Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments based on evidence of need and normal way of working.
- Support may include supervised rest breaks, alternative rooming, word processor, reader, scribe or other arrangements where permitted.
- Candidates can speak to Althea Chambers before exams about anxiety, sensory needs, illness, attendance, access arrangements or uncertainty about exam routines.

Results, post-results and certificates

- GCSE results day 2026 is Thursday 20 August 2026. Candidates will be given a collection time.
- Post-results services must be requested through the centre and require candidate consent where marks or grades may go down, stay the same or go up.
- Certificates are usually issued within 12 weeks of results. Candidates should collect certificates promptly or nominate a parent/carer where agreed.

Internal appeals - candidate summary

1. Raise the concern with the subject teacher, SENCo or Exams Officer within 5 school days.
2. Submit a written request to the Exams Officer within 10 school days of receiving the relevant decision or mark.
3. The Head of Centre, Paul O'Neill, will arrange a review by appropriate staff not directly involved in the original decision wherever possible.
4. A written outcome will normally be provided within 15 school days, or sooner where awarding body deadlines require this.

Complaints

- Initial concerns should be submitted in writing to the Exams Officer, Althea Chambers.
- If unresolved, the concern may be escalated to the Head of Centre, Paul O'Neill.
- Further escalation follows the school complaints policy.

Candidate confirmation

Candidates should confirm they have received, read and understood this handbook and the relevant JCQ candidate information documents before examinations or assessments take place.