



The
Portsmouth Academy

The Portsmouth Academy

Centre: 58503

Candidate Exam Handbook 2025 - 2026

Exams at The Portsmouth Academy

It is the aim of The Portsmouth Academy to make the examination experience as stress-free and successful as possible for all candidates.

This handbook is intended to inform you about examination procedures, to answer some of the most frequently asked questions and to help, guide and support candidates and parent/carer through the examination process.

Please read it carefully so that you are aware of the examination regulations and the procedures to follow in the event of any problem arising.

JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) sets down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations and The Portsmouth Academy is required to follow this precisely.

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the information supplied on The Portsmouth Academy website under the Learn with us/Year 11 tab:

<https://theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/learn-with-us/year-11/>

Please pay particular attention to the '*JCQ information for candidates' documents (on-screen test, social media and written examinations)* also the '*Warning to candidates*' and '*Unauthorised Items Poster*' included at the back of this handbook. (Hard copy only, please see the online versions via the link above if viewing this document digitally).

If you have any queries or need help or advice at any time before, during or after the examinations please contact:

**Mrs Guest
Exams Officer**

Email: anna.guest@tpa.tsat.uk

Telephone: 0333 360 2200 ext. 22232

(Exams Office is based on the ground floor next to the PE office)

Remember – We are here to help and wish you every success in your forthcoming Exams!

Exam Timetable

This can be also be found on the school website under the Learn with Us, Year 11 section and will be displayed on notice boards in your tutor base and the canteen during the exam season.

Examination Boards

The Academy uses the following Examination Boards: AQA, Pearson, OCR, WJEC and NCFE who are all regulated by JCQ.

Individual Timetable

Your individual exam timetable will be issued through your Form Tutor and also available to both you and your parent/carer on the Arbor app. Please keep it safe as you will need to refer to it daily. If you lose it please ask your tutor for a replacement. This timetable will show your specific examinations with details of date, time, duration of the exam, venue and seat number. It will also show your candidate number which is a four-digit number you will need to write on all of your exam papers. Please make sure you check this timetable before each exam so you know your venue and seat number.

Personal Details

Please check that all your personal details are correct on your Individual Timetable. This information will appear on your certificates so it is really important it is correct. See Mrs Guest in the Exams Office immediately if something is wrong.

Clashes

Your timetable will be carefully checked to make sure that there are no clashes. (A clash is when you have two or more exams timetabled at the same time).

Where there is a clash, the Exams Officer will re-schedule the times of the exams (on the same day). Candidates will normally sit one paper in the morning, then have a break, supervised by an Invigilator. During this time, they are not allowed to communicate with other candidates or access the Internet. After the break they will sit the second exam paper.

Rescheduled times will be on your individual candidate timetable. It may be necessary for you to bring a packed lunch as you will have to remain under supervision until both exams are completed.

Practical Subjects

Exam dates for Art and all Modern Foreign Language Speaking exams, will be agreed with your teacher and therefore will not be on your individual timetable.

Equipment you will need

Please make sure you have the correct equipment for the exam eg: **black pens**, pencils, erasers, ruler, maths equipment, highlighter and a calculator. If you bring in a **pencil case it must be a clear plastic one**. Pencil cases are not allowed on the desk, unless they are clear plastic.



Calculators

Candidates may use a calculator in an examination unless prohibited by the exam board's specification. Where the use of a calculator is allowed, candidates are responsible for making sure that their calculators meet the exam board's regulations. The instructions set out in this section apply to all examinations unless stated otherwise in an exam board's specification.

Calculators must be:

- ☐ of a size suitable for use on the desk;
- ☐ either battery or solar powered;
- ☐ free of lids, cases and covers which have printed instructions or formulas.

Calculators must not:

- ☐ be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities: -
 - ☐ language translators;
 - ☐ symbolic algebra manipulation;
 - ☐ symbolic differentiation or integration;
 - ☐ communication with other machines or the internet;
- ☐ be borrowed from another candidate during an examination for any reason;
- ☐ have retrievable information stored in them - this includes:
 - ☐ databanks;
 - ☐ dictionaries;
 - ☐ mathematical formulas;
 - ☐ text

Some calculators have 'Exam Mode', this is acceptable if activated as the calculator then becomes compliant with the above requirements.

The Day of the Examination

Examination Start Times

9.00am for the morning session

1.30pm for the afternoon session

These are the usual start times but candidates are responsible for checking their own timetable and arriving at school on the correct day and time, in school uniform and with the correct equipment. **Candidates must arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the examination.** Please make sure you have used the toilet facilities prior to the exam.

Afternoon exams may run over the end of the normal school day.

Bags are not allowed in the exam, these need to be placed in the sports hall cupboard prior to the exam starting.

MOBILE PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF AND IN BAGS BEFORE ENTERING THE EXAMINATION ROOM.

Your wrist watch must also be removed and placed in your bag or handed to an invigilator.

Outside the venue, please line up next to the corresponding letter of the row in which you are to be seated. Please wait quietly to be called in.

Inside the Exam Venue

You will be under formal **exam conditions** from the moment you enter the corridor from the canteen to the sports hall until you are given permission to leave by the invigilator. **This means you must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once you have entered the room.**

You must listen to and follow the instructions of the invigilator at all times in the exam room.

Find your seat quickly and quietly. You must sit in the seat indicated on your individual timetable. There will be candidate cards clearly displayed on the desks and the Invigilators will help you if you can't find your seat.

If a mobile phone/smartwatch (or any other type of electronic communication or storage device) is found in your possession during an examination (even if it is turned off and in your pocket) it will be taken from you and a report made to the appropriate exam board. This could result in disqualification from the examination. No exceptions can be made.

Food is not allowed in the examination room. Only still water in a clear plastic bottle is allowed (any labels should be removed). Queries regarding medicines, etc, should be addressed to the Exams Officer.

At the front of the room, you will see that the centre number, name/code of the exam, day, date and time are displayed. You will need this information when you are asked to fill in the front of your exam paper.

You will be asked to check that you have the correct exam paper on your desk - check the subject and that you have the correct level i.e. Foundation or Higher. If something is wrong put your hand up and wait for an invigilator to come to you.

Listen carefully to instructions and notices read out by the Exams Officer/Invigilators – there may be amendments to the exam paper that you need to know about.

When you are asked to do so, fill in the details on the front of your exam paper. Please use your legal name and not your preferred name. If a signature is required, please enter this.

Please make sure you put your name, centre number, candidate number and question number on any additional sheets of paper you may use.

Read all instructions on the front of the paper carefully.

Please do not open the paper before being told to do so, this is malpractice.

Please do not write on examination desks or on the desk cards. This is regarded as vandalism and you will be asked to clean the desks or even pay for the damage.

Do not doodle on examination papers, or include any offensive comments or drawings. If included the examination board can refuse to accept your paper as this is classed as malpractice.

Candidates must stay in the examination room for the duration of the exam and may not leave early. If you have finished the paper use any time remaining to check over your answers and ensure that you have completed your details correctly.

At the end of the exam all work must be handed in – remember to cross out any rough work. If you have used more than one answer book or loose sheet(s) of paper place them inside your answer booklet, ensure your details are written on each booklet/sheet of additional of paper.

Invigilators will collect your exam papers before you leave the room. Absolute silence must be maintained during this time. Remember you are still under exam conditions until you have left the room and should remain seated and face the front.

The Invigilator will release you a row at a time, please leave the room in silence and show consideration to other candidates who may still be working.

During the exam remember:

DO NOT talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb any other candidate once you have entered the examination room.

DO NOT have anything on your desk except examination stationery and equipment needed in a clear pencil case. Any water must be in a clear plastic bottle with the label removed.

DO NOT have anything written on your hands or arms or any unauthorised notes in your pockets.

DO NOT pass anything to another candidate, including stationery.

DO NOT risk keeping your phone in your pocket or wearing a smartwatch or wrist watch. You will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification from the exam/qualification.

If you are concerned about anything put up your hand and speak to an invigilator.

Frequently asked Questions

What to do if I am ill before the exam and unable to attend?

If you are ill before an examination and therefore unable to sit the paper please telephone the Exams Officer to inform us on **0333 360 2200 ext.22232**. It may be possible for the school to apply for special consideration on your behalf if you have supporting medical evidence.

What is Special Consideration?

Special consideration is an adjustment to the marks or grades of a candidate who is eligible for consideration. The allowance of special consideration is from 0% (consideration given but addition of marks considered inappropriate) to 5% (reserved for exceptional cases).

Candidates and Parents/carers should be aware that any adjustment is likely to be small and no feedback is ever provided. Candidates will only be eligible for special consideration if they have fully prepared and covered the whole course but performance in the examination or in the production of non-examined assessment is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.

Examples of such circumstances may be illness, accident or injury, bereavement, domestic crisis. The Exams Office must be informed immediately, so that necessary paperwork can be completed (within 7 days of the last exam session for each subject) and the candidate will be required to provide evidence to support such an application.

What to do if you are ill during the exam?

If you are taken ill during an exam you should put up your hand and tell an invigilator. They will then draw this to the attention of the Exams Officer.

What happens if you are late or miss an examination?

You must arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of your exam.

If you are late for any reason, please report to the Exams Officer, she will then decide if you are still able to sit the exam.

What happens if you have an unauthorised absence from an exam?

Your exams are extremely important and it is vital that you attend all exams. If you do not turn up for an exam you will receive a zero mark and your parent/carer/carers will be invoiced for the exam entry fee. On average, this is approximately £60 per exam but varies depending on the exam/exam board. Please advise your Head of Year/Exams Officer of any issues you have around exam time.

Can I take the exam on another day?

No. The exam timetable is published nationally by the exam boards and you must attend on the stated date and time.

Why can't I bring my mobile telephone/electronic devices (included watches) into the exam room?

Being in possession of a mobile phone/smartwatch/wrist watch (or any other electronic device) is regarded as malpractice and is subject to severe penalty from the exam boards.

What is meant by the term Malpractice?

Malpractice is when a candidate fails to comply with the JCQ regulations. Any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice will be investigated and reported to the relevant exam board. To protect the integrity of the qualifications, JCQ rules and regulations must be followed.

How do I know how long the exam is?

The length of the examination is shown on your individual timetable under the heading 'duration'. The invigilators will tell you when to start and finish your exam. They will write the start and finish times on the board at the front of the exam room. There will be a clock in all examination rooms.

What do I do if I think I have the wrong paper?

The invigilators will ask you to check before the exam starts. If you think something is wrong, put your hand up and tell the invigilator immediately.

What happens in the event of an emergency in the exam room?

In the event of an emergency, the invigilator will stop the exam and give instructions to you.

You must:

Stop writing and close your exam paper.

Stay seated until the Invigilator advises you to leave the room.

Follow your designated invigilator to the pre-arranged meeting point.

You must not:

Communicate with anyone inside and outside the exam room other than the Exams Officer and Invigilators.

Collect any personal belongings, unless advised to do so by the invigilators. If you do not follow these rules, you may not be allowed back into the exam room to complete your exam.

Supervision during your exams - Invigilators

The school employs a team of Invigilators to conduct the examinations and ensure that JCQ regulations are upheld at all times.

Candidates are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards all Invigilators and follow their instructions at all times. Any disruptive behaviour, or any candidate who behaves in an unacceptable manner, will be reported to the Exams Officer.

It is the job of the Invigilator to watch candidates as they do their exams.

They will not approach you unless they think you are breaking the regulations or you put up your hand for assistance.

The Invigilator cannot give you any help with your exam. However, if you feel there may be an error on an exam paper then please raise your hand to alert a member of the Invigilation team.

The Exams Officer and the Invigilators are also responsible for making sure your exams go as smoothly as possible and that the process is fair for everyone.

After the Examinations

Examination Results will be available to collect from School:

GCSE – Thursday 20th August 2025 9.00am – 11.00am in the Main Hall

If you are not able to collect your results in person you can nominate someone else to collect them on your behalf. However, you must provide them with your written permission to do so, without this we are not able to release your results, even to a parent/carer.

Any results not collected on the day will be posted to your home address that afternoon.

Post-result services

Inquiries about results decisions are made together with subject leaders. The candidates' consent will be required before doing so. Further details will be included on results day.

Exam Certificates will be available to collect from School:

December 2026 – From Reception

Again, if you are not able to collect them in person you can nominate someone else but they must have your written permission to be able to collect them on your behalf.

All certificates must be collected by July the following year. Please collect your certificates as they will be needed as proof of your qualifications for future employers.



Joint Council for Qualifications ^{CIC}

The following information needs to be read, the documents can be found at:

<https://theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/learn-with-us/year-11>

JCQ Information for candidates – Written Exams

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

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 the 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 – 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 and AI