

MALPRACTICE POLICY

2026-2027

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Contents

1.	The Malpractice Policy Purpose	Page 3
2.	Key Definitions	Page 3-4
3.	General Principles	Page 4-5
4.	Preventing Malpractice	Page 5
5.	Identification and Reporting of Malpractice	Page 6
6.	Communicating Malpractice Decisions	Page 7
7.	Appeals Against Decisions Made in Cases involving Malpractice	Page 7
8.	*Appendix 1: Information for candidates: Non-examination assessments (JCQ)*	Page 7-10
9.	*Appendix 2: Plagiarism in Assessments: Guidance for Teachers/Assessors (JCQ)*	Page 10-16

Purpose

This policy covers all qualifications delivered by the school and its purpose is to ensure that all staff and students:

- are aware of what constitutes malpractice;
- understand how to prevent it occurring so that they can actively take steps to prevent it; and
- where malpractice does occur, take prompt action to report it.

This policy outlines how students are informed and advised to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments, and how suspected malpractice issues should be escalated within the school and reported to the relevant awarding body.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the exam processes to read, understand and implement the policy.

The Malpractice Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Centre, Examinations Line Manager (Deputy Headteacher) and the Examinations Officer.

This policy covers all forms of assessment, including exams and non-exam assessment taken as part of students' GCSE, GCE and equivalent or alternative qualifications.

Key Definitions

Malpractice and maladministration

'Malpractice' and 'maladministration' are related concepts, the common theme of which is that they involve a failure to follow the rules of an examination or assessment. This policy and procedure uses the word 'malpractice' to cover both 'malpractice' and 'maladministration' and it means any act, default or practice which is:

- a breach of the regulations;
- a breach of awarding body requirements regarding how a qualification should be delivered; and/or
- a failure to follow established procedures in relation to a qualification;

which:

- gives rise to prejudice to candidates;
- compromises public confidence in qualifications;
- compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate; and/or
- damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre.

Malpractice may be:

- intentional, aiming to give a candidate or candidates an unfair advantage or disadvantage in an examination or assessment;
- due to a lack of awareness of the regulations, carelessness, or forgetfulness in applying the regulations (which may often be called 'maladministration'); and/or
- as a result of the force of circumstances which are beyond the control of those involved (e.g. a fire alarm sounds and the supervision of students is disrupted).

Candidate malpractice

'Candidate malpractice' means:

- malpractice by a candidate in connection with any examination or assessment, including the preparation and authentication of any controlled assessments, coursework or non- examination assessments, the presentation of any practical work, the compilation of portfolios of assessment evidence and the writing of any examination paper.

Centre staff malpractice

'Centre staff malpractice' means malpractice committed by:

- a member of staff, contractor (whether employed under a contract of employment or a contract for services) or a volunteer at a centre; or
- an individual appointed in another capacity by a centre such as an invigilator, a Communication Professional, a Language Modifier, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader or a scribe.

Suspected malpractice

For the purposes of this document, 'suspected malpractice' means:

- all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice.

General Principles

In accordance with the regulations, the school will:

- take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after examinations have taken place;
- inform the awarding body immediately of any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, by completing the appropriate documentation; and
- as required by an awarding body, gather evidence of any instances of alleged or suspected malpractice (which includes maladministration) in

accordance with the JCQ
publication Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require.

Preventing Malpractice

- The school has in place robust processes to prevent and identify malpractice, as outlined in section 3 of the JCQ publication ***Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures*.**
- This includes ensuring that all staff involved in the delivery of assessments and examinations understand the requirements for conducting these as specified in the following JCQ documents and any further awarding body guidance effective from 1st September 2026:
  - ***General Regulations for Approved Centres***
  - ***Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE)***
  - ***Instructions for conducting coursework***
  - ***Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments***
  - ***Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments***
  - ***A guide to the special consideration process***
  - ***Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures***
  - ***Plagiarism in Assessments***
  - ***AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications***
  - ***A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes***

Informing and advising candidates and staff

- Students are informed about malpractice, how to avoid committing malpractice (including plagiarism and misuse of Artificial Intelligence) and what steps to take if they suspect malpractice has been committed through an annual assembly and are also directed to an electronic copy of the JCQ document *Information for candidates: Non- examination assessments* (included as Pages 8-9 of this policy). Additionally a paper copy of information is included with their statement of entry for each exam season.
- Staff are given time to read the Malpractice Policy during the autumn term and required to sign a form to confirm that they:
  - have read and understood the policy;
  - understand the importance of reporting any incidences of suspected, alleged or actual malpractice to the Examinations officer; and
  - understand their responsibility for knowing the specific regulations relating to internal assessment for the qualifications in their subject(s) as well as general regulations about malpractice and plagiarism (including misuse of Artificial Intelligence).

Identification and Reporting of Malpractice

Escalating suspected malpractice issues

- Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the school can report it using the appropriate channels.

Reporting suspected malpractice to the awarding body

- The Head of Centre will notify the appropriate awarding body immediately of all alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, using the appropriate forms, and will conduct any investigation and gathering of information in accordance with the requirements of the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures*.
- The Head of Centre will ensure that where a candidate who is a child/vulnerable adult is the subject of a malpractice investigation, the candidate's parent/carer/ appropriate adult is kept informed of the progress of the investigation.
- Form JCQ/M1 will be used to notify an awarding body of an incident of candidate malpractice. Form JCQ/M2 will be used to notify an awarding body of an incident of suspected staff malpractice/maladministration.
- Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment,

coursework or non- examination assessment component prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to the awarding body but will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures. The only exception to this is where the awarding body's confidential assessment material has potentially been breached. The breach will be reported to the awarding body immediately.

- If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual in malpractice, that individual (a candidate or a member of staff) will be informed of the rights of accused individuals.
- Once the information gathering has concluded, the Head of Centre (or other appointed information-gatherer) will submit a written report summarising the information obtained and actions taken to the relevant awarding body, accompanied by the information obtained during the course of their enquiries.
- Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used.
- The awarding body will decide on the basis of the report, and any supporting documentation, whether there is evidence of malpractice and if any further investigation is required. The Head of Centre will be informed accordingly.

Communicating Malpractice Decisions

- Once a decision has been made, it will be communicated in writing to the Head of Centre as soon as possible. The Head of Centre will communicate the decision to the individuals concerned and pass on details of any sanctions and action in cases where this is indicated. The Head of Centre will also inform the individuals if they have the right to appeal.

Appeals against Decisions made in Cases of Malpractice

The school will:

- provide the individual with information on the process and timeframe for submitting an appeal, where relevant; and
- refer to further information and follow the process provided in the JCQ publication *A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes*.

Appendix 1: Information for candidates: Non-examination assessments (Joint Council for Qualifications)

Non-examination assessments – Joint Council for Qualifications

This document tells you about some things that you **must** and **must not** do when you are completing your work. When you submit your work for marking, the awarding body will normally require you to sign an authentication statement confirming that you have read and followed the regulations. If there is something that you do not understand, you **must** ask your teacher.

Preparing your work – good practice:

- If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your teacher, you **must** tell your teacher. They will then record the assistance given to you.
- If you worked as part of a group on an assignment, for example undertaking field research, you **must** write up your own account of the assignment. Even if the data you have is the same, you **must** describe in your own words how that data was obtained. You **must draw your own conclusions from the data**.
- You **must** meet the deadlines that your teacher gives you. Remember – your teachers are there to guide you. Although they cannot give you direct assistance, they can help you to sort out any problems before it is too late.
- Take care of your work and keep it safe**. Do not** leave it lying around where your classmates can find it. **Do not** share it with anyone, including posting it on social media. You must always keep your work secure and confidential. If it is stored on the computer network, keep your password secure. Collect all copies from the printer and destroy those you do not need.
- **Do not be tempted to use any pre-prepared or generated online solutions and try to pass them off as your own work – this is cheating.** Electronic tools used by awarding bodies can detect this sort of copying.
- You **must not** write inappropriate, offensive or obscene material.

Research and using references:

- In some subjects you will have an opportunity to do some independent research into a topic.
- The research you do may involve looking for information in published sources such as textbooks, encyclopaedias, journals, TV, radio and on the internet.
- You can demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject by using information from sources or generated from sources which may include the internet and AI. Remember,though, information from these sources may be incorrect or biased. You **must** take care how you use this material - you **cannot** copy it and claim it as your own work.

- Using information from published sources (including the internet) as the basis for your assignment is a good way to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject. You **must** take care how you use this material though – you **cannot** copy it and claim it as your own work.
- When producing a piece of work, if you use the same wording as a published source, you **must** place quotation marks around the passage and state where it came from. This is known as **referencing**. You **must** make sure that you give detailed references for everything in your work which is not in your own words. A reference from a printed book or journal should show the name of the author, the year of publication and the page number, for example: Morrison, 2000, p29.
- For material taken from the internet, your reference should show the date when the material was downloaded and **must** show the precise web page, not the search engine used to locate it. This can be copied from the address line. For example: http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/newsid_2621000/2621915.stm, downloaded 5 February 2027.
- Where AI has been used, your reference **must** show the name of the AI bot used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2027. You should also acknowledge the sources used by the AI tool in generating the content. 3 You must retain a copy of the question(s)/prompts used to generate the AI content and the AI-generated content itself 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.
- You may be required to include a bibliography at the end of your piece of written work. Your teacher will tell you whether this is necessary. Where required, your bibliography **must** list the full details of publications you have used in your research, even where these are not directly referred to, for example: Curran, J. Mass Media and Society (Hodder Arnold, 2005).

- **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 is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously.**

Don't think you won't be caught; there are many ways to detect plagiarism.

- Markers can spot changes in the style of writing and use of language.
- Markers are highly experienced subject specialists who are very familiar with work on the topic concerned — they may have read the source you are using,

or even marked the work you have copied from!

- Internet search engines and specialised computer software can be used to match phrases or pieces of text with original sources and to detect changes in the grammar and style of writing or punctuation.

Sanctions for breaking the regulations:

If it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following penalties will be applied:

- you will be awarded zero marks for your work;
- you will be disqualified from that component for the examination series in question;
- you will be disqualified from the whole subject for that examination series;
- you will be disqualified from all subjects and barred from entering again for a period of time.

The awarding body will decide which penalty is appropriate.

REMEMBER – IT'S YOUR QUALIFICATION SO IT NEEDS TO BE YOUR OWN WORK.

Appendix 2: Plagiarism in Assessments: Guidance for Teachers/Assessors (Joint Council for Qualifications) Plagiarism in Assessments – Joint Council for Qualifications

1. This guidance note is written for the staff of assessment centres who have responsibility for supervising and/or marking candidates' non-examination assessments or portfolio work. Further guidance regarding malpractice and how it is treated by Awarding Bodies can be found on the JCQ website (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice). Information specifically regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools can be found in the JCQ *AI Use in Assessments – Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications* guidance (https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/artificial-intelligence/).

2. Plagiarism calls into question the integrity of examinations and assessments, especially those assessment components such as non-examination assessments where plagiarism can occur most easily. If non-examination assessments are to remain as a viable assessment method, it is the duty of all who are preparing and assessing candidates for assessments as well as those who have an interest in the setting, marking and administration of assessments, to do whatever they can to address plagiarism.

Defining plagiarism:

3. Before considering what steps can be taken to counter this practice, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of what plagiarism is.

4. There are several definitions of plagiarism, but they all have in common the idea of taking someone else's intellectual effort and presenting it as one's own. The JCQ *Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures and Procedures* define plagiarism as: *"unacknowledged copying from, or reproduction of, third party sources or incomplete referencing (including the internet and AI tools);"*

5. Plagiarism refers to a student copying work and submitting it as their own. This can involve published resources (whether in print or on the internet), AI-generated content, essays, or pieces of work previously submitted for assessments by others or manufactured artefacts. Copying can involve memorisation and reproduction of text.

6. A strict interpretation of the above definition would include the original ideas as well as the actual words or artefacts produced by another. Assessors should reflect the incidence of any paraphrasing in the way they apply the mark scheme/assessment criteria. Students who have not independently met the marking criteria must not be rewarded in the marking.

   Plagiarism also incorporates the direct and unacknowledged translation of foreign language texts into English.

7. It should be noted that plagiarism does not include collusion; that is, working collaboratively with other candidates; neither does it include copying from another candidate in the same exam.

Preventing plagiarism:

8. If you are a teacher or assessor entering candidates for a qualification with a non- examination assessment (NEA) component, you must authenticate the work which is submitted for assessment. You must confirm that the work produced is solely that of the candidate concerned. You must not accept work which is not the candidate's own. Where you have doubts about the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment you must investigate and take appropriate action.
9. In order to prevent plagiarism, you:
   a) must ensure that each candidate is issued with an individual copy of the appropriate JCQ *Information for Candidates* (www.jcq.org.uk/examsoffice/information-for- candidates-documents);

b) must ensure that each candidate understands the contents of the notice; particularly the meaning of plagiarism and what sanctions may be applied;

c) should reinforce to a candidate the significance of their signature on the form which states they have understood and followed the requirements for the subject;

d) could require candidates to sign a declaration that they have understood what plagiarism is, and that it is forbidden, in the learning agreement that is signed at enrolment in some centres;

e) should make clear what is and what is not acceptable in respect of plagiarism and the use of sources, including the use of websites. It is unacceptable to simply state Google, just as it would be unacceptable to state Library rather than the title of the book, name of the author, the chapter and page reference. Candidates must provide details of any web pages from which they are quoting or paraphrasing. Some suggestions on acceptable forms of referencing can be found at the end of this guide.

f) should teach the conventions of using footnotes and bibliographies to acknowledge sources. There is no one standard way of acknowledging sources but the use of inverted commas, indented quotations, acknowledgement of the author, line/page number, title of source, indicate that the candidate is using a source. Teachers and candidates should be aware that when acknowledging sources clarity ensures that there is no suspicion of plagiarism;

g) must teach candidates about the risks of using AI, how to acknowledge its use and what constitutes malpractice (see further guidance in the JCQ *AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications*);

h) should teach the use of quotation marks when sources are quoted directly (a suggested guideline for the need to put items in quotation marks would be the use of more than six words in unchanged form);

i) should set reasonable deadlines for submission of work and provide reminders;

j) where appropriate, should give time for sufficient work to be done in class under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate each candidate's whole work with confidence;

k) should examine intermediate stages in the production of work in order to ensure that the work is underway in a planned and timely manner;

l) should introduce classroom activities that use the level of knowledge/understanding achieved during the coursework thereby making the teacher confident that the candidate understands the material;

m) could ask candidates to make a short verbal presentation to the rest of the group on their work;

n) should explain the importance of the candidate producing work which is their own and stress to them and to their parents/carers the sanctions for malpractice;

o) must take care to ensure that work undertaken in previous years' examinations

by other candidates is not submitted as their own by candidates for the current examination. The safe keeping of such earlier work is of great importance, and its issue to candidates for reference purposes should be carefully monitored;

p) must not accept, without further investigation, work which you suspect has been plagiarised; to do so encourages the spread of this practice.

Dealing with plagiarism:

10. There are three steps in the process for dealing with plagiarism:
    - keeping watch
    - confirmation
    - reporting
11. There are a number of clues that point to the possibility of plagiarism, and you should remain alert to the possibility of spotting these.

Keeping watch on content:

12. You should check a candidate's work for acknowledgement of sources as the work is being completed.
13. Varying quality of content is one of the most obvious pointers. Well-written passages containing detailed analyses of relevant facts alternating with poorly constructed and irrelevant linking passages ought to give rise to suspicion.
14. Another practice is for candidates to write the introduction and conclusion to an assignment to make it fit the question, and then fill in the middle with work which has been lifted from elsewhere.
15. If the work is not focused on the topic, but presents a well-argued account of a related matter, this could be a sign that it has been used elsewhere. The same applies if parts of the work do not fit well together in developing the response to the assignment.
16. Particular care should be taken when candidates submit work without completing intermediate stages. When candidates submit completed work without intermediate stages this can be an indication that the work is not the candidate's own.
17. Dated expressions, and references to past events as being current can also be indications of work which has been copied from out-of-date sources.

Keeping watch on vocabulary, spelling and punctuation:

18. The use of a mixture of English and American vocabulary or spellings can be a sign that the work is not original.
19. If the piece contains specialised terminology, jargon, obscure or advanced words, the teacher should ask if this is typical of this level of candidate and reasonable, or if it is because the candidate did not write the passage.
20. Is the style of punctuation regular and consistent?

Keeping watch on style and tone:

21. Look for differences in the style or the tone of writing. If a candidate uses material from textbooks alongside items from popular websites the change of tone between the two should be marked.
22. Look at the level of sophistication of the sentence structure. Is this the sort of language that can be expected from the candidate? Is the use of language consistent, or does it vary? Does a change in style reflect a change in authorship at these points?

Keeping watch on presentation:

23. Look at the presentation of the piece. If it is typed, is the size and style of the font uniform? What about the use of headers and sub-headers? Are the margins consistent throughout? Does the text employ references and if so, is the style of referencing consistent? Are there any references, for example, to figures, tables or footnotes, which don't make sense (because they have not been copied)?
24. Lack of references in a long, well-written section could indicate that it had been copied from a website such as Wikipedia or similar general knowledge source.
25. Look out for quotations that run on beyond the part which has been acknowledged.

Confirmation:

26. If you suspect that an assignment has been plagiarised, the next step is to try to locate the source.
27. The easiest method is to type a four-to-six-word phrase from the text (preferably one with an unusual phrase in it) directly into a search engine such as Google and perform an "exact phrase search". If the article was copied from the free, visible web there is a good chance this approach will find it, particularly if a few search engines are tried.
28. Another method is to look through the websites that candidates use, as these are common sources for essays and assignments. Assessors should familiarise themselves with the websites that offer essay distribution or writing services. A list of these is

given at the end of this article, but as new sites frequently open this list does not claim to be comprehensive or up to date. Use a search engine to find other similar sites. Once on the site a quick search may be all that is needed to locate the source of a suspect piece.

29. If it does not come up through these searches, the piece may have been taken from the "invisible web", that is, from articles which are not separately indexed to a search engine, although the site itself is. Sites run by newspapers, magazines, online encyclopaedias, subject specific sites, and those sites providing help with essays tend to fall into this category, and would have to be searched individually, but again the use of a few well- chosen words in a "find" tool could produce results.

30. Computer programmes to detect plagiarism have been available commercially for some time. There are two basic types. The first type requires software to be installed on the user's machine. This compares a candidate's essay to a defined bank of essays such as an institution's own record of previous candidates' work. The second and more sophisticated approach compares a submitted essay to the whole of the internet. One such tool is *Turnitin* which is web-based and thus requires no installation. The manufacturers claim that all work submitted to their website:

"is checked against three databases of content:

- *Both a current and extensively archived copy of the publicly accessible Internet (more than 4.5 billion pages updated at a rate of 40 million pages per day);*
- *Millions of published works, including the ProQuest commercial database, ABI/Inform,*

31. *Periodical Abstracts, Business Dateline, and tens of thousands of electronic books including the Gutenburg Collection of Literary Classics;*

- *Millions of student papers already submitted to Turnitinuk"* [http://www.turnitinuk.com].

A report is then produced which identifies any text that is found to be unoriginal and links it to its original source.

32. In addition to the ability to locate original sources, the use of computer-based detection systems is a powerful deterrent to those who otherwise might be tempted to commit plagiarism.

33. There are also computer detection tools to identify potential AI misuse. AI chatbots, as large language models, produce content by 'guessing' the most likely next word in a sequence. This means that AI-generated content uses the most common combinations of words, unlike humans who use a variety of words in their normal writing. Several programs and services use this difference to statistically analyse written content and determine the likelihood that it was produced by AI:

- OpenAI Classifier (https://openai.com/blog/new-ai-classifier-forindicating-aiwritten- text/)

- GPTZero (https://gptzero.me/)
- The Giant Language Model Test Room (GLTR) (http://gltr.io/dist/)
- Turnitin Originality (https://www.turnitin.com/products/originality)

More information regarding AI use and misuse can be found in the JCQ *AI Use in Assessments guidance*

(AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications)

34. If plagiarism is suspected, conducting an oral assessment of the candidate may help a teacher to assess whether the work is that of the candidate.

35. If an investigation is inconclusive the work in question could be removed and replaced by alternative work whose authenticity is not in doubt. Alternatively the candidate could be given another piece of work to complete under controlled conditions in the centre which must be completed by the awarding body's deadline.

Reporting:

36. If your suspicions are confirmed and the candidate has not signed the declaration of authentication, your centre need not report the malpractice to the appropriate Awarding Body. Centres can resolve the matter themselves prior to the signing of the declarations. Teachers must not accept work which is not the candidate's own. Ultimately the Head of Centre has the responsibility for ensuring that candidates do not submit plagiarised work.

37. If plagiarism is detected by the centre and the declaration of authentication has been signed, the case must be reported to the Awarding Body. The procedure is detailed in *JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures* (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/).

38. If plagiarism is suspected by an awarding body's moderator or examiner, or if it has been reported by a student or member of the public, full details of the allegation will usually be relayed to the centre. The relevant awarding body will liaise with the Head of Centre regarding the next steps of the investigation and how appropriate evidence will be obtained.

39. The awarding body will then consider the case and, if necessary, impose a sanction in line with the sanctions given in the JCQ *Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures* (https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/). The sanctions applied to a student committing plagiarism and making a false declaration of authenticity range from a warning regarding future conduct to disqualification and the student being barred from entering for one or more examinations for a set period of time.

40. Awarding bodies will also take action, which can include the imposition of sanctions, where centre staff are knowingly accepting, or failing to check, inauthentic work for qualification assessments.

Guidance for staff on referencing can be found on Pages 12 and 13 of the JCQ publication Plagiarism in Assessments:

https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Plagiarism-in-Assessments.pdf