



Examination and Assessment Malpractice

Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.

Further information may be found on the JCQ website: www.jcq.org.uk

1. Principles

- The school does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by learners or staff
- The school will impose penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven.
- All staff involved in assessment processes and procedures must be vigilant regarding assessment malpractice and where malpractice occurs it must be dealt with in an open and fair manner.
- All allegations of malpractice will be investigated. Senior Leadership [Ms KJ Ratcliffe] will supervise investigations resulting from allegations of malpractice and will inform learners and staff suspected of malpractice of their responsibilities and rights.
- The Awarding Bodies reserve the right, in suspected cases of malpractice, to withhold the issuing of results/certificates while an investigation is in progress. Depending on the outcome of the investigation results/certificates may be released or withheld.

2. Aims

The policy on malpractice aims to:

- define malpractice in the context of assessment and certification for qualifications
- set out the rights and responsibilities, with regard to malpractice, of the learner, staff and Awarding Bodies.

3. Practice

Awarding Bodies require assessors in centres to ask learners to declare that their work is their own by providing a written declaration that the evidence is authentic and that the assessment was conducted under the requirements of the assessment specification. This may be in the form of signing the front of the examination paper or the coursework declaration sheet available from the Awarding Body.

Teaching staff and assessors should inform learners of the academy's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice and show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Learners should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the learner has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.

Staff should use procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, e.g. plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc. These procedures may include:

- periods of supervised sessions during which coursework is produced by the learner
- altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis
- the assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of learners
- using oral questions with learners to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc within their work
- assessors getting to know their learners' styles and abilities, etc.

4. Examples of learner malpractice

- plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learner's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including Internet sources), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source
- collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work. Learners should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential key skill for many sectors and subject areas, but the use of minutes, allocating tasks, agreeing outcomes, etc are an essential part of team work and this must be made clear to the learners
- impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment

- fabrication of results and/or evidence
- failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an assessor, a supervisor, an invigilator, or Awarding Body conditions in relation to the assessment rules, regulations and security
- misuse of assessment / examination material
- introduction and/or use of unauthorised material contra to the requirements of supervised assessment conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), personal stereos, mobile phones or other similar electronic devices
- obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written papers/notes during supervised assessments
- behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment or the alteration of any results document, including certificates
- cheating to gain an unfair advantage
- accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.

5. Examples of staff malpractice

- failing to keep mark schemes secure
- alteration of any mark schemes
- alteration of assessment and grading criteria
- assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner
- producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's coursework
- facilitating and allowing impersonation
- misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- failing to keep learner computer files secure
- falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner
- completing all the requirements of assessment
- failing to keep assessment papers secure prior to the assessment
- obtaining unauthorised access to assessment material prior to an assessment.

6. Investigating alleged malpractice

As part of the investigation the Academy retains the right to:

- include all involved in the malpractice allegation in the investigation process, including the learner or learners
- deal with all involved in the malpractice, including the learner (if aged 18 or above) and/or the learner's representative.

This may occur, for example, when a learner's account of events is at variance with that of the centre. Where learners aged 18 or over are involved, they may wish to be assisted by centre personnel, parents or guardians.

During the investigation period, the Awarding Body may:

- refuse learner registrations/entries
- withhold the release of results/certificate,
- withhold test/examination papers if the security of a test/examination is considered at risk pending the outcome of the investigation.

If malpractice is discovered then the Awarding Body will conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will require the full support of Senior Leadership and Examination Office and all personnel linked to the allegation.

In suspected cases of malpractice that involve an Awarding Body representative (e.g. External Moderator, External Verifier etc) then the award body will conduct an investigation appropriate to the nature of the allegation.

7. Malpractice discovered by a centre

Centres are required to have in place a centre policy on malpractice in place.

Depending on the outcome of the investigation, certificates may be recalled and declared invalid.

8. Dealing with malpractice

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership [Ms KJ Ratcliffe] to carry out an investigation into allegations of malpractice. Investigations into alleged malpractice against the Senior Leadership will normally be conducted by a Vice Principal and / or the Head of Centre. Investigations into alleged malpractice against the Head of Centre will normally be conducted by the Chair of the Governing Body of the centre or an appointed nominee. The alleged incident must be reported to the Awarding Body at the earliest opportunity.

If a centre discovers or suspects anyone of malpractice, the centre must make the individual fully aware (preferably in writing) at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.

If a centre is alleging an individual may have been involved in act of malpractice, the centre must give the individual the opportunity to respond (preferably in writing) to the allegations made. Centres must also inform such individuals of the avenues for appealing should a judgment be made against them.

The Awarding Body reserves the right to access any documents held by the centre in relation to alleged malpractice. Also, as required by the regulator, the Awarding Body may report to the regulatory authorities certain cases (e.g. where members of staff are found to have committed malpractice) and include details of the action taken by the Head of Centre or the Governing Body or the responsible employer. It may be necessary during this process to notify the funding authorities and for the Awarding Body to share information with other Awarding Bodies. The Awarding Body may have to notify the police in some cases of malpractice

9. Penalties and sanctions applied by the Awarding Bodies

Where malpractice against a centre/member of staff/learner is proven, the Awarding Body will have to consider whether the integrity of its assessments might be jeopardised if the centre/member of staff/learner in question were to be involved in future assessments. The Awarding Body may take action to protect the integrity of its assessments/examinations/tests in the future. This action may include:

- refusing to accept assessment/examination entries from a centre in cases where malpractice is established
- reserving the right to withdraw programme approval from centres where malpractice has been identified
- reserving the right to refuse to issue or to withdraw certificates.

Where malpractice against a centre/member of staff/learner is proven, the Academy will have to consider whether the integrity of its assessments might be jeopardised if the centre/member of staff/learner in question were to be involved in future assessments. The Academy will take action to protect the integrity of its assessments in the future. This action will include:

- disciplinary action
- the right to withdraw certificates.

10. Appeals

Awarding Bodies have established procedures for centres that are considering appeals against penalties and sanctions arising from malpractice. (see also the Academy policy on Examination Appeals – Assessment and Malpractice)

Appeals against a decision made by an Awarding Body will normally be accepted only from Heads of Centres (on behalf of learners and/or members of staff) and from individual members of centre staff (in respect of a decision taken against them personally).

Further information on appeals may be found in the qualification policy statement on Appeals

11. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Senior Leadership [Ms KJ Ratcliffe] will work with the Schools Examination Office to ensure that Examinations policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.