



Malpractice Policy (Exams) 2025/26

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Contents

Introduction	3
Purpose of the policy	4
Key staff involved in the policy	4
General principles	4
Preventing malpractice	4
Examples of Malpractice	5
Identification and reporting of malpractice.....	6
Additional information.....	7

Introduction

What is malpractice and maladministration?

'Malpractice' and 'maladministration' are distinct but 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, and/or
- 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, and/or
- compromises public confidence in qualifications, and/or
- 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 (SMPP 1)

Candidate malpractice

'Candidate malpractice' normally involves 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 completion of any examination. (SMPP 2)

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 (SMPP 2)

Centre malpractice

'Centre malpractice' normally involves malpractice where there is an element of systemic failure, a breach in policies or widespread malpractice such that a centre-level sanction is appropriate (SMPP 2)

Suspected malpractice

For the purposes of this document, suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice (regardless of how the incident might be categorised, as described in SMPP, section 19). (SMPP 2)

Purpose of the policy

To confirm Stocksbridge High School:

- has in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually, a written malpractice policy which covers all qualifications delivered by the centre detailing how candidates are informed and advised to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments, how suspected malpractice issues should be escalated within the centre and reported to the relevant awarding body; it must also acknowledge the use of AI (e.g. what AI is, when it may be used and how it should be acknowledged, the risks of using AI, what AI misuse is and how this will be treated as malpractice) (GR 5.3)

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at Stocksbridge High School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

Reference in the policy to **GR** and **SMPP** relate to relevant sections of the current JCQ documents **General Regulations for Approved Centres** and **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures**.

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	D Williams
Exams Officer	D Moss
Senior leader(s)	H Storr

General principles

In accordance with the regulations Stocksbridge High School will:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place (GR 5.11)
- 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 (GR 5.11)
- 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 (GR 5.11)

Preventing malpractice

Stocksbridge High School has in place:

- Robust processes to prevent and identify malpractice, as outlined in section 3 of the JCQ document **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures**. (SMPP 4.3)
- This includes ensuring that 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:
 - General Regulations for Approved Centres 2025-2026
 - Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE) 2025-2026
 - Instructions for conducting coursework 2025-2026
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2025-2026
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-2026
 - A guide to the special consideration process 2025-2026
 - Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures 2025-2026
 - Plagiarism in Assessments
 - AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
 - Post Results Services June 2025 and November 2025
 - A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2025-2026
 - Guidance for centres on cyber security
 - (SMPP 3.2)

Examples of Malpractice

The following are examples of malpractice by candidates during non-exam assessments. This list is not exhaustive:

- Plagiarism: the copying and passing off as the candidate's own work the whole or part of another person's work (including the internet and artificial intelligence (AI) tools).
- Collusion: working collaboratively with other learners to produce work which is submitted as the candidate's only.
- Failing to abide by the instructions of an assessor: this may refer to the use of resources which the candidates have specifically been told not to use.
- The alteration of any results document.

The following are examples of malpractice by candidates during externally assessed **examinations**. This list is not exhaustive:

- Talking during an examination.
- Taking a mobile phone into an examination.
- Taking any item other than those accepted by the Awarding Body into an examination such as electronic devices, books or notes.
- Leaving the examination room without permission.
- Passing notes or papers or accepting notes or papers from another candidate.
- Removing any exam materials from the exam room (e.g. exam papers, inserts)

Informing and advising candidates how to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments

Candidates are advised at the beginning of the academic year of the JCQ regulations regarding coursework, NEA, and Written examinations through assemblies and communications home. All the

JCQ notices to candidates in a booklet, including privacy notice and social media are displayed on our website. During the examination period, notices are displayed outside of every examination room prior to entry to the exam. Candidates are reminded at the beginning of every exam.

AI use in assessments

AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications.

While the range of AI tools, and their capabilities, is likely to expand greatly in the near future, misuse of AI tools in relation to qualification assessments at any time constitutes malpractice. Teachers and students should also be aware that AI tools are still being developed and there are often limitations to their use, such as producing inaccurate or inappropriate content.

AI chatbots are AI tools which generate text in response to user prompts and questions. Users can ask follow-up questions or ask the chatbot to revise the responses already provided. AI chatbots respond to prompts based upon patterns in the data sets (large language model) upon which they have been trained. They generate responses which are statistically likely to be relevant and appropriate. AI chatbots can complete tasks such as the following:

- Answering questions
- Analysing, improving, and summarising text
- Authoring essays, articles, fiction, and non-fiction
- Writing computer code
- Translating text from one language to another
- Generating new ideas, prompts, or suggestions for a given topic or theme
- Generating text with specific attributes, such as tone, sentiment, or format

What is AI Misuse

AI misuse constitutes malpractice as defined in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/>). The malpractice sanctions available for the offences of 'making a false declaration of authenticity' and 'plagiarism' include disqualification and debarment from taking qualifications for a number of years. Students' marks may also be affected if they have relied on AI to complete an assessment and, as noted above, the attainment that they have demonstrated in relation to the requirements of the qualification does not accurately reflect their own work.

Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work is no longer the student's own
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the student's own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools

- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies.

Acknowledging AI Use

If a student uses an AI tool which provides details of the sources it has used in generating content, these sources must be verified by the student and referenced in their work in the normal way. Where an AI tool does not provide such details, students should ensure that they independently verify the AI-generated content – and then reference the sources they have used.

In addition to the above, where students use AI, they must acknowledge its use and show clearly how they have used it. This allows teachers and assessors to review how AI has been used and whether that use was appropriate in the context of the particular assessment. This is particularly important given that AI-generated content is not subject to the same academic scrutiny as other published sources.

Where AI tools have been used as a source of information, a student's acknowledgement must show the name of the AI source used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>), 25/01/2023. The student must retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication Malpractice Policy 5 purposes, in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how it has been used.

This must be submitted with the work so the teacher/assessor is able to review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used. Where this is not submitted, and the teacher/assessor suspects that the student has used AI tools, the teacher/assessor will need to consult the centre's malpractice policy for appropriate next steps and should take action to assure themselves that the work is the student's own

See <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/artificial-intelligence/> for further information.

As a centre we make sure students are aware of the appropriate and inappropriate use of AI, the risks of using AI, and the possible consequences of using AI inappropriately in a qualification assessment. We make students aware of the centre's approach to plagiarism and the consequences of malpractice. The approach directed by JCQ is followed:

- Explain the importance of students submitting their own independent work (a result of their own efforts, independent research, etc) for assessments and stress to them and to their parents/carers the risks of malpractice.
- Ensure that teachers and assessors are familiar with AI tools, their risks and AI detection tools (see the What is AI use and what are the risks of using it in assessments? and What is AI misuse? sections)
- Each student is issued with a copy of, and understands, the appropriate JCQ Information for Candidates (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents)
- Provide staff with the correct procedures to follow for reporting and investigating AI malpractice.

Candidates will be issued with of the JCQ Information for candidates - AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments) or similar centre document prior to completing their work/prior to signing the declaration of authentication.

Identification and reporting of malpractice

Escalating suspected malpractice issues

- Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre can report it using the appropriate channels (SMPP 4.3)
- If a member of staff suspects a candidate of malpractice during an examination, the candidate will be informed and the allegation will be explained. The candidate will have the opportunity to give a statement before any final decision is made. If the candidate is found guilty of malpractice, the Awarding Body will be informed and the candidate will be informed of any penalty to be applied in writing.
- If a member of staff suspects a candidate of malpractice during non-exam assessments the candidate will be informed and the allegation will be explained. The candidate will have the opportunity to give their side of the story before any final decision is made. If the candidate accepts that malpractice has occurred, she/he will be given the opportunity to repeat the assignment as long as the candidate has not already signed the authentication form. If found guilty of malpractice following an investigation, the member of staff may decide to re-mark previous assignments and these could also be rejected if similar concerns are identified.
- **Should the candidate be found guilty of malpractice after having signed the authentication form then the matter is no longer subject to internal school behaviour system and must be reported to the relevant awarding body.**

The Exams Officer and a member of the Senior Leadership team are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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** (SMPP 4.1.3)
- 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 (SMPP 4.1.3)
- 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 (SMPP 4.4, 4.6)
- Candidate malpractice offences relating to the content of work (i.e. inappropriate/offensive content, copying/collusion, plagiarism (including AI misuse) and/or false declaration of authentication) which are discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment component prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication, do not need to be reported to the awarding body. Instead, they will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures.

Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment where the offence does not relate to the content of candidates' work (e.g. possession of unauthorised materials, breach of assessment conditions) or where a candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, must be reported using a JCQ M1 to the relevant awarding body. If, at the time of the malpractice, there is no entry for that candidate (who the centre intended to enter), the centre is required to submit an entry by the required entry deadline. (SMPP 4.5)

- **Improper assistance to candidates**

Any act where assistance is given beyond that permitted by the specification or regulations to a candidate or group of candidates which results in a potential or actual advantage in an examination or assessment.

For example:

- assisting candidates in the production of controlled assessment, coursework, nonexamination assessments or portfolios beyond that permitted by the regulations;
- sharing or lending candidates' controlled assessments, coursework or non-examination assessments with other candidates in a way which allows malpractice to take place;
- assisting or prompting candidates with the production of answers;
- permitting candidates in an examination to access prohibited materials (dictionaries, calculators etc.);
- prompting candidates in an examination/assessment by means of signs or verbal or written prompts;
- assisting candidates granted the use of a Communication Professional, a Language Modifier, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader or a scribe beyond that permitted by the regulations

If Improper assistance is reported this will be detailed on the candidate declaration sheet. (SMPP 4.1.3)

- 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 (SMPP 5.33)
- 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 (5.35)
- Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used (SMPP 5.37)
- 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 (SMPP 5.40)

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. (SMPP 11.1)

Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice

Stocksbridge High School will:

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