



Examination Malpractice Policy

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School

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Centre name	Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School
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Current policy approved by	Jason Jones
Current policy reviewed by	Sam Crompton
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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of centre	Nigel Bielby
Senior leader(s)	Jason Jones
Exams officer	Sam Crompton
Other staff (if applicable)	

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at Holmes Chapel Comprehensive 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.

Introduction

What are malpractice and maladministration?

'Malpractice' and 'maladministration' are distinct but related concepts, the common theme being 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 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 1.9). (SMPP 2)

Purpose of the policy

To confirm Holmes Chapel Comprehensive 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)

General principles

In accordance with the regulations Holmes Chapel Comprehensive 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 current JCQ document Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require (GR 5.11)

Preventing malpractice

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive 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 (this document)
 - 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)

Additional information:

Staff at Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School are made aware of all the information published by JCQ by the school leader with responsibility for examinations.

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

The school leader responsible for examinations distributes all information published by JCQ in regard to

malpractice and instructs teaching staff to inform students of the nature and consequences of malpractice. Students are also reminded in assemblies of what constitutes malpractice and possible consequences. In mock exams, 'mock' consequences are given to any student who breaks any regulations.

AI use in assessments

Students must make sure that work submitted for assessments is their own. If sections of their work are reproduced directly from AI generated responses, those elements must be identified by the student and the student must understand that this will not allow them to demonstrate that they have independently met the marking criteria and therefore they will not be rewarded.

If teaching staff have doubts that the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment, and if the use of AI has not been properly acknowledged, they must investigate and take appropriate action.

HCCS uses Turnitin as a plagiarism detection tool for all NEA and BTec coursework. This will form part of a process for capturing plagiarism.

Identification and reporting of malpractice

Escalating suspected malpractice issues

Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre must report it using the appropriate channels. (SMPP 4.3)

The member of staff or invigilator must report directly to the Exams Officer. The Exams Officer will then -

- Gather facts and evidence.
- Issue the candidate with the details of the alleged malpractice using the appropriate JCQ forms.
- The candidate will be asked to provide a written statement to be sent to the relevant awarding body.
- Centre staff and/or invigilator(s) will be asked to provide a written statement and supply any evidence.

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 document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures (SMPP 4.1.3)
- The head of centre will ensure that, where a candidate is a child or an adult at risk and 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)

- If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence that an individual may have committed malpractice, that individual (the candidate or the member of staff) will be informed of all the required information and the accused individual informed of their rights and responsibilities (SMPP 5.33-3.4). Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information-gatherer) will submit a written report to the relevant awarding body summarising the information obtained and actions taken, 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)

Additional information:

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)

Additional information:

Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School will:

- Provide the individual with information on the process and timeframe for submitting an appeal, where relevant

Who Can Appeal?

- **Heads of Centre:** Must appeal on behalf of internal candidates or members of centre staff.

Note: Candidates and parents/carers **cannot** appeal directly to the awarding body. They must appeal internally to the centre first, and the Head of Centre decides whether to support and submit the appeal to the exam board.

What Can You Appeal Against?

You may appeal against:

- A **finding** of malpractice (i.e., you dispute that malpractice occurred).
- A **sanction** imposed (i.e., you accept malpractice occurred but believe the penalty is disproportionate).

You cannot appeal against:

- A decision to take no further action.
- A sanction that you perceive as too lenient.
- Administrative decisions (unless they directly affect the malpractice case).

Deadlines

- **Submission Deadline:** The appeal application must be submitted within **14 calendar days** of receiving the malpractice decision.
- **Stage 1 Outcome:** The awarding body aims to complete the preliminary appeal within **42 calendar**

days.

- **Stage 2 Outcome:** If progressed, the appeal hearing is usually completed within **70 calendar days** of the original receipt of the appeal application.

The Two-Stage Process

Stage 1: The Preliminary Appeal

This is a review of the case by a senior officer at the awarding body who has had **no previous involvement** in the case.

- **Grounds for Stage 1:** You must explain why the finding of malpractice or the sanction is unreasonable or procedurally flawed.
- **Outcome:** The appeal will be *upheld*, *partially upheld*, or *not upheld*.
- **Next Step:** If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you can proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: The Appeal Hearing

If the Stage 1 appeal is not upheld, the appellant can request an appeal hearing.

- **The Panel:** The case is heard by a panel comprising at least one **independent member** (someone not employed by the awarding body or a Centre).
- **The Hearing:** The appellant (Head of Centre or Private Candidate) and awarding body representatives present their cases. This can often be face-to-face or remote (video link).
- **Outcome:** The panel will decide whether the original decision was unreasonable or if procedures were not followed. They can confirm the decision, remove the malpractice finding, or adjust the sanction.
- **Finality:** This is the final stage of the awarding body's internal process.

Further Options (EPRS)

If the internal appeals process (Stage 1 and Stage 2) is exhausted and you remain dissatisfied, you may be able to apply for a procedural review to the relevant qualification regulator's **Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS), Ofqual**.

Note: The EPRS generally looks at whether the awarding body followed its own procedures correctly, not the academic judgment or the facts of the malpractice itself.

Important Considerations

- **Fees:** Awarding bodies may charge a fee for appeals (per stage). This fee is usually reimbursed if the appeal is upheld.
 - **New Evidence:** New evidence can generally be submitted at Stage 1. However, at Stage 2, the panel primarily reviews the reasonableness of the previous decisions based on the evidence available at the time.
 - **Representation:** At a hearing, the Head of Centre (or private candidate) may be accompanied by a friend or colleague, but legal representation is generally not encouraged or standard.
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- Refer to further information and follow the process provided in the JCQ document A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes

Definitions

Malpractice

"Malpractice" means any act, default, or practice which is a breach of the Regulations or which:

- 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.

Maladministration

"Maladministration" generally refers to malpractice committed by centre staff (e.g., failing to follow exam administration rules). The term "malpractice" in this policy covers both malpractice and maladministration.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the ability of computer systems to perform tasks that typically need human intelligence, like learning, problem solving, understanding language and visual perception, using algorithms to analyze data and make decisions.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Misuse

In the context of assessments, AI misuse is defined as the use of AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Jasper, Grammarly-GO, etc.) to generate content (text, code, images, audio) which is then submitted as the candidate's own work without appropriate acknowledgement.

AI Misuse constitutes malpractice. It is a form of plagiarism where the source is a computer system rather than another human.

Specific Guidance on AI Use and Misuse

Permitted Use of AI

AI tools may **only** be used in assessments where the specific awarding body's specification and the centre's instructions explicitly permit their use.

- If AI is used for research or idea generation, it must be properly referenced.
- Candidates must keep a copy of the questions asked and the AI-generated responses for reference and authentication purposes (e.g., screenshots).

Prohibited Use (AI Misuse)

Examples of AI misuse that will be treated as malpractice include, but are not limited to:

- **Direct Copying:** Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work submitted is no longer the candidate's own.
- **Complete Submission:** Submitting a whole response or coursework entirely generated by AI.
- **Incomplete/Misleading Referencing:** Using AI to complete parts of an assessment (e.g., coding, translation, mathematical calculations) without acknowledging its use.
- **False Authorship:** Failing to sign the declaration of authentication or signing it falsely when AI tools have been used significantly to produce the work.

Candidate Responsibilities regarding AI

- Candidates must not use AI tools to generate work for assessment unless explicitly told otherwise.
- Candidates must acknowledge *all* sources used, including AI.
- Candidates are responsible for ensuring their work is their own "independent work" and "independent thinking."

Turnitin

Turnitin is a widely used online plagiarism detection and academic integrity tool that helps students and educators ensure originality by comparing submitted papers against vast databases of web pages, academic journals, and other student work, generating an "Originality Report" highlighting text matches to guide proper citation and prevent cheating.