



Higham Lane School
Helping Learners Succeed

Malpractice Policy- (Exams / Assessments)

Policy Number	112
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Governors' Sub-Committee	Curriculum and Standards
Statutory Policy	No

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Smith', written over a faint circular stamp.

Chair of Governors

Date: April 2025

Key staff involved in the policy.

Role	Name
Head of Centre / Headteacher	Michael Gannon
Associate Assistant Headteacher (Line manager of Exams Manager)	Natalie Charnell
Exams Manager	Lisa Bromage
Other Staff	

This Policy is reviewed annually to ensure on-going compliance with current year regulations that are published in September each year.

Reference in the policy to **GR** and **SMPP** relate to relevant sections of the current JCQ publications - **General Regulations for Approved Centres** and **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures** https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Gen_regs_approved_centres_24-25_FINAL.pdf

and https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Malpractice_Sep24_FINAL.pdf

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
What is malpractice and maladministration	4
Candidate malpractice	4
Centre staff malpractice	4
Suspected malpractice	4
PURPOSE	5
SCOPE	5
General Principles	5
Preventing Malpractice	5
Informing and advising candidates how to avoid committing malpractice in examination/assessments	6
AI Use in assessments	6
Identification and reporting of malpractice	7
Identification of suspected malpractice by candidates	7
Escalating suspected malpractice issues	7
Reporting suspected malpractice to the awarding body	7
Communicating malpractice decisions	8

INTRODUCTION

What is 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
- 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
- damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre (SMPP1)

Candidate malpractice

"Candidate malpractice" means malpractice by a candidate in connections 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. (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)

Suspected malpractice

For the purposes of this document, suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice. (SMPP 2)

PURPOSE

To confirm Higham Lane School has in place a written malpractice policy which covers all qualifications delivered by the centre and details 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 (GR 5.3)

SCOPE

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

General Principles

In accordance with the regulations Higham Lane School will:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after examinations 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 4.11)
- 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

Higham Lane 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. (SMPP 4.3)
- 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:
 - *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2024-2025;*
 - *Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE) 2024-2025;*
 - *Instructions for conducting coursework 2024-2025;*
 - *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2024-2025;*
 - *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2024-2025;*
 - *A guide to the special consideration process 2024-2025;*
 - *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures 2024-2025;*
 - *Plagiarism in Assessments;*
 - *AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications;*
 - *Post Results Services June 2024 and November*
 - *A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes.*

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

- The Student Examination Booklet, published on the school website includes detailed information on examination regulations; examples of regulation breaches and potential sanctions; the JCQ Warning to Candidates and Unauthorised Items posters.
<https://www.highamlaneschool.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=2493&type=pdf>
- The Booklet also includes guidance about preparing assessments and coursework covering research materials and methods; using references and explains plagiarism and potential penalties that may be applied
- Trial examinations, held for both Year 10 and Year 11 students, are conducted under formal examination conditions using invigilators. Poor behaviour is noted and feedback / sanctions issued as appropriate. Feedback is provided to students and in some instances to parents / carers. Students have experienced 3 sets of trials before their GCSE examinations
- Letters are issued to students and parents /carers in the April before their GCSE / A 'Level examinations. Key requirements and links to The Student Examination Booklet are included in the letters
- Students are given the information in assemblies prior to each set of trial exams and their final exams

AI Use in assessments

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, students and parents / carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. The school recognises that AI has many uses to help students learn, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism. The schools Examination Policy and the Home Learning Policies have been updated to include

- Acceptable use of AI tools by students
- Details of when students cannot use AI tools
- Staff responsibilities to maintain awareness of the development of AI tools; the potential for them to include inaccurate, inappropriate or biased content; the need to continue to make students aware of the risks associated with the use of AI tools
- Reference to the JCQ guidance for Teachers & Assessors - *AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications*

At the time of the policy amendment all staff were provided electronic copies of the updated policy; and the following JCQ documents: AI Information Sheet for Teachers and the AI Senior Leader Presentation for Teachers. Briefings were delivered to all students on the acceptable use of AI. An update, issued in November 2024, to staff by the Assistant Headteacher / DDPL included a JCQ AI presentation, links to the above guidance and recommended AI detection tools.

Students complete the majority of their exams and a large number of other assessments under close staff supervision with limited access to authorised materials and no permitted access to the internet. The delivery of these assessments should be unaffected by developments in AI tools as students must not be able to use such tools when completing these assessments.

Identification and reporting of malpractice

Identification of suspected malpractice by candidates

Invigilators and exams office staff complete annual JCQ approved online training to ensure that they remain aware of the latest instructions for conducting examinations. These are designed to protect the integrity of all examinations and to ensure that invigilators can identify suspected malpractice. The Exams Officer also delivers centre specific training to ensure that procedures used by the school are understood and applied consistently. Vigilant observation of candidates during exams is key to identifying potential malpractice such as (but not limited to):

- cheating using notes or prompts which can be written on paper, hands/arms, stationery items, drinks containers
- using prohibited electronic devices
- communication attempts between students whilst in the examination room
- deliberate attempts to distract other students or disrupt the examination generally
- attempts to view other student answer papers and copy answers

All instances of any of the above are recorded on an incident log for every exam. These are reviewed by the exams officer and reported to the exams boards as appropriate. The exam hall has CCTV which can be requested and provided to the exam boards.

Students are also informed of possible student malpractice in the trial exam period and assemblies. The JCQ posters used in exams also support this.

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)

Any incidents of malpractice should be reported to the Exams Officer who will then instigate appropriate investigations and notify the Head of Centre.

Any concerns about the Exams Officer should be reported to the Head of Centre.

Any Concerns about the Head of Centre should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

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)
- 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 (SMPP 4.5)

- Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment component where the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication will 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 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 enquires (5.35)
- Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; 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 individual if they have the right to appeal. (SMP 11.1)