

**MALPRACTICE POLICY (EXAMS)**

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| **Recommended by:** |  Senior Vice Principal |
| **Recommendation Date** |  12th December 2024 |
| **Ratified by:** |  Chair of Governors |
| **Signed:** | A close-up of a word  Description automatically generated |
| **Position on the board** |  Chair of Governors |
| **Ratification Date** |  19th December 2024 |
| **Next Review:** |  December 2025 |
| **Policy Tier (Central/Hub/School):** |  School |

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at Gospel Oak 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 is malpractice and maladministration? ‘Malpractice’ and ‘maladministration’ are 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 nonexamination assessments, the presentation of any practical work, the compilation of portfolios of assessment evidence and the completion of any examination. (SMPP2)

**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 (regardless of how the incident might be categorised, as described in SMPP, section 19). (SMPP 2

**Purpose of the policy**

To confirm Gospel Oak 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 Gospel Oak 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**

Gospel Oak 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 2024-2-25
* 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 (this document)
* Plagiarism in Assessments
* AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
* Post Results Services June 2024 and November 2024
* A guide to the awarding bodies’ appeals processes 2024-2025 (SMPP 3.3.1)

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

The candidates are informed in assemblies and IFC (Information for Candidates) documents of what Malpractice is and how it can affect them in line with current JCQ policy guidance (Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures). For any assessments that could be affected by the use of AI, the teaching staff will inform the candidates of the regulations of if/when AI technology can be used, and also the consequences of its misuse. Staff have been directed towards the AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications guidance. Candidates are informed of the ‘Warning to Candidates’ and ‘Unauthorised Items’ posters which are also outside all exam rooms in exam assemblies. The Suggested wording for invigilators’ announcements at the beginning of written examinations also details what can and cannot be done in the exam environment and is read out at the beginning of every exam by either the exams officer or invigilators.

**AI use in assessments**

All teaching staff will be sent the JCQ guidance for Teachers and Assessors – AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the integrity of Qualifications for them to understand and to pass on the information to students that will be performing any assessments. Students complete most 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. There are some assessments in which access to the internet is permitted in the preparatory, research or production stages. Most of these assessments will be NEAs, coursework and internal assessments for GQ and Vocational and Technical qualifications. JCQ's guidance which is designed to help students and teachers to complete NEAs, coursework and other internal assessments successfully is followed in relation to these assessments. All school computers have software installed which enables all use of the computers to be monitored at all times

The following JCQ support resources are also used to help teachers understand and prevent AI misuse and to help students to better understand the rules for use of AI in assessments;

* Information sheet for teachers
* Senior leader presentation for leaders

**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)

Suspected malpractice is reported to either the Exams officer or the Senior Leader over exams as soon as possible. They will then complete an investigation and fill in the appropriate forms and report as outlined below.

**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)
* Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non- examination assessment component prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication does not need to 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)
* If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual in malpractice, that individual (the candidate or the 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**

Gospel Oak 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 document A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes