



EXAMINATIONS – MALPRACTICE POLICY

Centre 17632

'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.

All students from year 10 and above are sent the following JCQ and awarding body documentation at the start of each academic year:

- JCQ Unauthorised Items poster
- JCQ Warning to Candidate poster
- JCQ AI Poster
- JCQ Social Media Infographic
- IFC Coursework
- IFC NEA
- IFC On Screen Examinations
- IFC Written Examinations

In addition to this, they are sent the relevant warning and information notices from JCQ and Cambridge within their Examination Book and sign a declaration confirming they have read and understood them.

Candidate Malpractice

'Candidate malpractice' means 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 writing of any examination paper. Candidates should be aware that the misuse of AI will be treated as malpractice and, if applicable, be reported to the relevant awarding body. Please refer to the school's AI policies for more guidance on how AI should be used and acknowledged. Please refer to the JCQ documentation sent to all students in year 10 and above for more guidance on the JCQ regulations. Additionally, all students taking one or more public exams this summer will also receive an Examination Pack outlining details of malpractice and the use of AI.

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.

Suspected malpractice

For the purposes of this document, suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice.

In accordance with the regulations Merchant Taylors' School will:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice before, during and after examinations have taken place.
- Inform the awarding body immediately of any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, involving a candidate or a member of staff, by completing the appropriate documentation.
- As required by an awarding body, gather evidence of any instances of alleged or suspected malpractice in accordance with the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures* and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require.
- Have in place robust processes to prevent and identify malpractice, as outlined in section 3 of the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures*. 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
 - A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2024-2025
 - Cambridge Handbook 2025

Informing and advising candidates

The candidate(s) will be informed before any case of malpractice against them is submitted. They will be shown the evidence used and be given the opportunity to write a supporting statement. The Head of Examinations will ensure they are signposted to the relevant JCQ and awarding body documentation.

Identification and reporting of malpractice

Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre can report it using the appropriate channels. The case should be reported to the Head of Examinations in the first instance unless the Head of Examinations is involved/conflicted. In this instance, it can be reported to the Head of Centre.

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**.

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.

Form JCQ/M1 will be used to notify an awarding body of an incident of candidate malpractice (Form 9C/D for Cambridge exams). Form JCQ/M2 will be used to notify an awarding body of an incident of suspected staff malpractice (Form 9A for Cambridge exams).

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.

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.

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.

Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used. 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.

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.

Merchant Taylors' School will provide the individual with information on the process and timeframe for submitting an appeal. Where relevant, we will refer to further information and follow the process provided in the JCQ publication **A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes**.

Head of Examinations

October 2025

To be reviewed October 2026