



Malpractice Policy

2025/26

Updated: October 2025

Approval: November 2025

Implementation: November 2025

Review: September 2026

1 Introduction

1.1 What is malpractice and maladministration?

1.1.1 '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)

1.2 Candidate malpractice

1.2.1 '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 (SMPP 2).

1.3 Centre staff malpractice

1.3.1 '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)

1.3.2 '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)

1.4 Suspected malpractice

- 1.4.1 For the purposes of this policy, 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).

2 Purpose of the Policy

- 2.1 To confirm Reigate College 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).

3 General Principles

- 3.1 In accordance with the regulations Reigate College 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)

4 Preventing Malpractice

- 4.1 Reigate College 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 2026
- A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2025-2026 (SMPP 3.3.1)
- Guidance for centres on cyber security (SMPP 3.2)

5 Informing and Advising Candidates How to Avoid Committing Malpractice in Examinations/Assessments

5.1 All students are provided with a copy of the Exam Candidate Handbook which explains what constitutes malpractice and the potential penalties. Students are provided with a copy of the NEA and BTEC assessment policies which include an explanation of appropriate use of AI and potential penalties.

5.2 Teachers are responsible for ensuring students and parents are aware of this prior to beginning assessments.

5.3 Banners informing candidates of exam regulations outside exam rooms are clearly displayed. The JCQ Unauthorised items poster is displayed in a prominent place outside each examination room.

5.4 AI use in assessments

5.4.1 Teachers must be familiar with The JCQ document www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/AI-Use-in-Assessments_Feb24_v6.pdf

5.4.2 Teachers must make sure that students have clear guidance on how they should acknowledge any use of AI and how to reference websites properly (see Exam Handbook).

5.4.3 Teachers must reinforce to students the significance of their declaration where they confirm the work, they are submitting is their own, the consequences of a false declaration, and that they have understood and followed the requirements for the subject.

5.4.4 Teachers must remind students that awarding organisation staff, examiners and moderators have established procedures for reporting and investigating.

5.4.5 Teachers must set interim internal deadlines across the department and make these clear on their Subject Specific Assessment Plan.

- 5.4.6 Teachers must examine intermediate stages in the production of work to ensure that work is underway in a planned and timely manner and that work submitted represents a natural continuation of earlier stages.
- 5.4.7 The JCQ document AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications emphasises the following requirements: As has always been the case, and in accordance with section 5.3(j) of the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres all work submitted for qualification assessments must be the students' own.
- 5.4.8 Students who misuse AI such that the work they submit for assessment is not their own will have committed malpractice, in accordance with JCQ regulations, and may attract severe sanctions.
- 5.4.9 Students and centre staff must be aware of the risks of using AI and must be clear on what constitutes malpractice; Students must make sure that work submitted for assessment is demonstrably their own.
- 5.4.10 If any sections of their work are reproduced directly from AI generated responses, those elements must be identified by the student, and they must understand that this will not allow them to demonstrate that they have independently met the marking criteria and therefore will not be rewarded (please see the Acknowledging AI Use section below)
- 5.4.11 Teachers and assessors must only accept work for assessment which they consider to be the students' own (in accordance with section 5.3(j) of the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres) and where teachers have doubts about the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment (for example, they suspect that parts of it have been generated by AI but this has not been acknowledged), they must investigate and take appropriate action.
- 5.4.12 Teachers must not use AI as the sole means of marking a candidate's work.
- 5.4.13 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.

6 Identification and Reporting of Malpractice

6.1 Escalating suspected malpractice issues

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

6.1.2 Incidents of suspected malpractice must be reported to the Exams Officer, preferably in writing, as soon as possible. The Exams Officer must escalate this to the Associate Principal and Head of Centre who will appoint an appropriate Senior Leader to investigate.

7 Reporting Suspected Malpractice to the Awarding Body

7.1 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).

7.2 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).

7.3 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).

7.4 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.

7.5 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)

7.6 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 all the required information and the accused individual informed of their rights and responsibilities (SMPP 5.33-3.4)

7.7 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).

7.8 Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used (SMPP 5.37).

7.9 The awarding body will decide based on 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).

8 Communicating Malpractice Decisions

8.1 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).

9 Appeals Against Decisions Made in Cases of Malpractice

9.1 Reigate College 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