



# Treorchy Comprehensive School

## Exams Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism Policy

<b>Date of policy:</b>	April 2026
<b>To be reviewed:</b>	April 2027
<b>Member of staff responsible:</b>	Sarah Bagshaw, Assistant Headteacher

## **Introduction**

Treorchy Comprehensive School is required to have in place a policy that addresses any issues regarding malpractice and maladministration including any issues regarding the authenticity of work submitted by a pupil for assessment. This policy applies to all staff and pupils at the school.

The school has an obligation to its pupils, employers and awarding bodies to ensure that the qualifications its pupils receive are a fair and accurate representation of their work, and of the knowledge and skills attained. If a pupil passes an assessment, or gains a qualification, by unfair means then this is unfair to those who have achieved the same qualification fairly. For these reasons the school will undertake all appropriate measures to ensure that pupil work is in fact their own, and that plagiarism, cheating or other forms of malpractice have not taken place.

The School will also ensure that appropriate action is undertaken where malpractice or maladministration has taken place. This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary in response to Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance, awarding bodies' requirements, changes in legislation, or trends identified from previous instances of assessment malpractice or maladministration.

## **Purpose and Aims of the Policy**

This policy covers all qualifications delivered by the school and its purpose is to ensure that all staff and students:

- are aware of what constitutes malpractice;
- understand how to prevent it occurring so that they can actively take steps to prevent it;
- where malpractice does occur, take prompt action to report it.

This policy outlines how students are informed and advised to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments, and how suspected malpractice issues should be escalated within the school 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).

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the exam processes to read, understand and implement the policy. The Malpractice Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Centre, the Exams Officer line manager and the Exams Officer. This policy covers all forms of assessment, including exams and non-exam assessment taken as part of students' GCSE and equivalent qualifications.

## **Key Definitions**

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; and/or

- 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; 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.

Malpractice may be:

- intentional, aiming to give a candidate or candidates an unfair advantage or disadvantage in an examination or assessment;
- due to a lack of awareness of the regulations, carelessness, or forgetfulness in applying the regulations(which may often be called 'maladministration'); and/or
- as a result of the force of circumstances which are beyond the control of those involved (e.g. a fire alarm sounds and the supervision of students is disrupted)

### **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.

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the school at its discretion:

- Cheating in an exam
- Plagiarism of any nature
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other pupils to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work;
- Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
- Deliberate destruction of another's work
- Fabrication of results or evidence
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.

### **Cheating**

Cheating is an attempt to deceive assessors or examiners. It includes but is not restricted to, situations when the pupil is in an examination situation and:

- Communicates or attempts to communicate with a fellow candidate or individual who is not the invigilator or a member of staff
- Copies or attempts to copy from a fellow candidate

- Attempts to introduce or consult during an examination any unauthorised printed or written material, or electronic, calculation or information storage devices, including mobile phones.
- Impersonates another or allows him or herself to be impersonated.

Cheating is considered to be gross misconduct by the school and will be treated as such. The penalties that could be imposed include down grading the result and specific disciplinary measure. In addition the relevant awarding body will be informed in line with the JCQ's Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures.

### **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

Examples of staff malpractice and maladministration.

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice and maladministration may be considered by the school at its discretion:

- Improper assistance to candidates prior to or during examination or assessment
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made
- Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure
- Fraudulent claims for certificates
- Inappropriate retention of certificates
- Assisting pupils in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves school staff producing work for the learner
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework/NEA
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where pupils are permitted support this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- Fraudulent application or administration of recognition of prior learning
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the theft or use of someone else's work without proper acknowledgement, presenting the material as if it were one's own. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and consequences are severe. Where there is doubt over the authenticity of work, an opportunity will be given to demonstrate that it is genuinely that of the learner claiming credit.

### **Guidelines on Plagiarism – for pupils**

Unacknowledged direct copying from the work of another person, or the close paraphrasing of somebody else's work, is plagiarism. This applies to copying both from other pupils' work, the work of staff and from published sources such as books, reports or journal articles.

Plagiarised material may originate from any source. It is as serious to use material from the World Wide Web, electronic encyclopaedia or literature archive as it is to use material from a printed source if it is not properly acknowledged.

Use of quotations or data from the work of others is entirely acceptable, and is often very valuable provided that the source of the quotation or data is given. Failure to provide a source or put quotation marks around material taken from elsewhere gives the appearance that the comments are a learner's own work. When quoting word-for-word from the work of another person quotation marks or indenting (setting the quotation in from the margin) must be used and the source of the quoted material must be acknowledged.

Paraphrasing, when the original statement is still identifiable and has no acknowledgement, this is plagiarism. Taking a piece of text, from whatever source, and substituting words or phrases with other words or phrases is plagiarism. Any paraphrase of another person's work must have an acknowledgement to the source. It is not acceptable to put together unacknowledged passages from the same or from different sources linking these together with a few words or sentences of your own and changing a few words from the original text: this is regarded as over-dependence on other sources, which is a form of plagiarism.

Direct quotations from an earlier piece of the pupil's own work, if unattributed, suggests that the work is original, when in fact it is not. The direct copying of one's own writings qualifies as plagiarism if the fact that the work has been or is to be presented elsewhere is not acknowledged.

Source of quotations used should be listed in full either as a footnote or in a bibliography at the end of the piece of work and in a style required by the pupil's curriculum area.

Coursework/NEA (including assignments, essays, skills assessments and management reports) must be the pupil's own work unless in the case of group projects a joint effort is expected and is indicated as such. Pupils must acknowledge assistance given from fellow pupils, staff and work-based mentors to avoid suspicion of plagiarism.

Major plagiarism is a serious offence and in deciding upon the penalty, the school will take into account factors, such as the stage of the study, the extent and proportion of the work that has been plagiarised and the apparent intent of the pupil. The penalties that will be imposed include zero marks for the work (with or without allowing resubmission), the down grading of a result and reporting to the awarding body.

It is important to distinguish between minor plagiarism and those cases in which the plagiarism is major. Staff assessing pupils' work will use their own professional judgement to decide when an

instance of plagiarism is significant, i.e. when action needs to be taken over the case. The unattributed use of several words or a single sentence would not normally require significant action (other than appropriate staff advice).

### **Minor Plagiarism**

Plagiarism that is minor includes the unattributed use of a few sentences, or a short paragraph.

Cases of minor plagiarism will normally be handled within the faculty area and should be treated in a way which first of all provides clear guidance to pupils over what they have done; pupils should receive instructions from their teacher (or other members of the department) about plagiarism: that it amounts to cheating; and is regarded by the school as very serious. The teacher should explain to the pupil the necessity of properly acknowledging and referencing the work of others and should provide appropriate examples.

Incidents of minor plagiarism must be noted and the Standards Manager for the year group should be informed.

### **Major Plagiarism**

All cases not covered by the definition above are deemed to be major:

- Extensive copying or plagiarism committed by pupils
- Plagiarism which is the pupils' second (or subsequent) offence of minor plagiarism
- Cases of such seriousness or such blatancy committed by pupils that to deal with them within the department would be inappropriate;
- Any case, regardless of extent, where it is inappropriate to deal with it within a department

Major Plagiarism is considered to be gross misconduct and will be treated as such. The penalties that will be imposed range from awarding a zero mark for the work (with or without allowing resubmission), down grading the result, reporting to the awarding body.

It is the teacher's responsibility to identify and report Cheating and Major Plagiarism to both the Head of Faculty and the Assistant Headteacher. Any uncertainties should also be recorded. A written report must be submitted which clearly states the outline of the assignment, how it was presented to the pupils, and the areas where the pupils were considered to have cheated or that were considered to be plagiarised.

### **General Principles**

In accordance with the regulations, the school will:

- take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after examinations have taken place; Informing and advising candidates how to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments pupils have briefing assemblies where this is explained. Subject teachers will also advise them how to avoid this in within their subjects.
- 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; and
- 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

## **Preventing Malpractice**

The school aims to prevent malpractice by pupils through:

- Seeking to avoid potential malpractice by informing parents and pupils of the School's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- Ensuring staff who carry out assessments inform pupils of the appropriate formats to record texts and other materials or information sources prior to production of their Non- examined assessments or coursework
- Asking pupils to declare that their work is their own
- Asking pupils to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- Conduct a thorough investigation into the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be undertaken under the school's policy.

## **AI use in Assessments**

Students are informed on the regulations with AI when in their lessons with their subject teachers being briefed on coursework/NEA work. They also have an AI use assessment help sheet by the JCQ in their exam packs.

## **Responsibilities**

Heads of Faculty are responsible for ensuring that all new staff in their department are aware of, and understand, the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy. Any day-to-day concerns identified by an individual should be raised with their Head of Faculty.

The Exams Officer will ensure that all JCQ requirements are adhered to and will maintain appropriate records accordingly.

All parents and pupils will annually receive a copy of the relevant JCQ documentation with regards to this. They will be expected to read and understand the regulations.

## **The following JCQ documents are signposted for guidance:**

- Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures. (SMPP 4.3, Section 3)
- 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

### **Escalating suspected malpractice issues**

Any suspected instances of staff malpractice or maladministration should be reported immediately to the relevant Head of Faculty, the Examinations Officer and the Head of Centre.

Once reported any suspected malpractice or maladministration will be reviewed in line with school procedures and awarding body guidelines. This may result in referrals regarding to suspected malpractice prior to any investigation where this is required by the awarding body.

Any allegations of staff malpractice or maladministration will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Staff Disciplinary Procedures.

The HOC will record any actions arising from incidents of alleged malpractice or maladministration and pass these onto relevant staff to help prevent such issues from reoccurring. Relevant third parties (e.g. awarding bodies) will be informed of findings in line with the nature of the incident and individual funding or awarding body requirements.

### **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.

#### [Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures – Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

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 JCQ/M2 will be used to notify an awarding body of an incident of suspected staff malpractice/maladministration.

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 according

### **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.

### **Appeals against Decisions made in Cases of Malpractice**

The school will:

- provide the individual with information on the process and timeframe for submitting an appeal, where relevant; and
- refer to further information and follow the process provided in the JCQ publication A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes

### **Related policies, procedures and guidelines**

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy

JCQ Suspected Malpractice Regulations

JCQ General Regulations

Assessment Policy

Exam Policy

Whistleblowing Policy