



# **Malpractice Policy (Exams/Assessments)**

Witchford Village College

## Malpractice Policy (Exams/Assessments)

Centre name	Witchford Village College
Centre number	22177
Date policy first created	15/01/2026
Current policy approved by	Nick Harrison
Current policy reviewed by	Jess Golding
Date of next review	03/09/2027

## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of centre	Nick Harrison
Senior leader(s)	Jess Golding
Exams officer	Adrian Grinnell
Other staff (if applicable)	

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at Witchford Village College 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 publications **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 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 (SMPP 1)

### **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. (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 of the policy**

To confirm Witchford Village College:

- 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)

## General principles

In accordance with the regulations Witchford Village College 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 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 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

Witchford Village College 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 2023-2024*, *Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE) 2023-2024*, *Instructions for conducting coursework 2023-2024*, *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2023-2024*, *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2023-2024*, *A guide to the special consideration process 2023-2024*, *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures 2023-2024*, *Plagiarism in Assessments*, *AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications*, *A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2023-2024* (SMPP 3.3.1)

Additional information:

To prevent misuse, education and awareness of staff and students, Witchford Village College has adopted the following procedures:

- a) considered restricting access to online AI tools on centre devices and networks
- b) ensured that access to online AI tools is restricted on centre devices used for exams
- c) set reasonable deadlines for submission of work and provided reminders
- d) where appropriate, allocated time for sufficient portions of work to be done in class under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate each student's whole work with confidence
- e) where appropriate, examined intermediate stages in the production of work in order to ensure that work is underway in a planned and timely manner and that work submitted represents a natural continuation of earlier stages
- f) introduced classroom activities that use the level of knowledge/understanding achieved during the course thereby making the teacher confident that the student understands the material
- g) considered whether it's appropriate and helpful to engage students in a short verbal discussion about their work to ascertain that they understand it and that it reflects their own independent work
- h) not accepted, without further investigation, work which staff suspect has been taken from AI tools without proper acknowledgement or is otherwise plagiarised
- i) established an AI working group for all schools in the Eastern Learning Alliance that offer JCQ-regulated qualifications
- i) Issued tasks for centre-devised assignments which are, wherever possible, topical, current and specific, and require the creation of content which is less likely to be accessible to AI models trained using historic data

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

Information to candidates documents sent to all candidates and their parents/carers at the start of the school year, reiterated at Y11 assemblies and at the start of the exam season. This includes information relating to the use of AI in NEAs and coursework.

### **AI Use in Assessments**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems performing tasks that typically need human intelligence, like learning, reasoning, problem-solving, perception, and language understanding, often using machine learning to find patterns in data, learn from experience, and make decisions or predictions.

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. There are some assessments in which access to the internet is permitted in the preparatory, research or production stages. The majority of these assessments will be Non-Examined Assessments (NEAs), coursework and internal assessments for General Qualifications (GQs) and Vocational & Technical Qualifications (VTQs). 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.

Students are expected to demonstrate their own knowledge, skills and understanding as required for the qualification in question and set out in the qualification specification. This includes demonstrating their performance in relation to the assessment objectives for the subject relevant to the question/s or other tasks students have been set. Any use of AI which means students have not independently demonstrated their own attainment is likely to be considered malpractice. The malpractice sanctions available for the offences of 'making a false declaration of authenticity' and 'plagiarism' include disqualification and debarment from taking qualifications for a number of years. Students' marks may also be affected if they have relied on AI to complete an assessment and, as noted above, the attainment that they have demonstrated in relation to the requirements of the qualification does not accurately reflect their own work

AI tools must only be used when the conditions of the assessment permit the use of the internet and where the student is able to demonstrate that the final submission is the product of their own independent work and independent thinking. Where AI tools have been used as a source of information, a student's acknowledgement must show the name of the AI source used and should show the date the content was generated. If a student uses an AI tool which provides details of the sources it has used in generating content, these sources must be verified by the student and referenced in their work in the normal way.

Where an AI tool does not provide such details, students should ensure that they independently verify the AI-generated content – and then reference the sources they have used. In addition to the above, where students use AI, they must acknowledge its use and show clearly how they have used it. This allows teachers and assessors to review how AI has been used and whether that use was appropriate in the context of the particular assessment. The student must retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes, in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how it has been used. This must be submitted with the work so the teacher/assessor is able to review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used. Where this is not submitted, and the teacher/assessor suspects that the student has used AI tools, the teacher/assessor will follow the malpractice policy for appropriate next steps and should take action to assure themselves that the work is the student's own.

Witchford Village College has adopted the following approach to the use and misuse of AI:

- a) explained the importance of students submitting their own independent work (a result of their own efforts, independent research, etc) for assessments and stressed to them and to their parents/carers the risks of malpractice
- b) updated the centre's malpractice/plagiarism policy to acknowledge the use of AI
- (c) ensured the centre's malpractice/plagiarism policy includes clear guidance on how students should reference appropriately

- d) ensured the centre's malpractice/plagiarism policy includes clear guidance on how students should acknowledge any use of AI to avoid misuse
- e) ensured that teachers and assessors of KS4 are familiar with AI tools, their risks and AI detection tools by directly emailing them the relevant documentation and placing it onto the staff shared drive and sent by email for future reference
- f) ensured that each student is issued with a digital copy of, and understands, the appropriate JCQ Information for Candidates ([www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents));
- g) reinforced to students the significance of their (electronic) declaration where they confirm the work they're submitting is their own, the consequences of a false declaration, and that they have understood and followed the requirements for the subject;
- h) reminded students that awarding organisation staff, examiners and moderators have established procedures for reporting and investigating malpractice

When reviewing a given piece of work to ensure its authenticity, it is compared against other work created by the student. Where the work is made up of writing, the following characteristics are considered: spelling and punctuation; grammatical usage; writing style and tone; vocabulary; complexity and coherency; general understanding and working level; the mode of production (i.e. whether handwritten or word-processed). Teachers also compare newly submitted work with work completed by the student in the classroom, or under supervised conditions. Any improper assistance in the coursework or NEA must be noted on the assessment record and reported to the exam officer.

The following JCQ support resources will also be 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 Teachers, Poster for Students, Teacher Presentation for Students.

## **Identification and reporting of malpractice**

### **Escalating suspected malpractice issues**

**All staff have a responsibility to report any potential malpractice.**

**See internal appeals policy.**

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

The Head of Centre must be advised immediately of any suspected malpractice. The Head of Centre will liaise with Exams Officer to ensure correct reporting procedures are followed to alert the awarding bodies of any suspected malpractice.

### **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)
- 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 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)

Additional information:

Not applicable

### **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) Additional information:

Not applicable

### **Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice**

Witchford Village 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 publication **A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes**

Additional information:

Not applicable

## Changes 2025/2026

Under heading **Purpose of the policy**: (Changed) The purpose of this policy is to confirm how Witchford Village College manages malpractice under normal delivery arrangements in accordance with the regulations To confirm Witchford Village College 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)

Under heading **General Principles**: Moved subsections **Candidate malpractice** and **Centre staff malpractice** from this section and added under **Introduction** section

Under heading **Preventing Malpractice**: (Added) A new bullet point: 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 2025-2026
- Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE) 2025-2026
- Instructions for conducting coursework 2025-2026
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2025-26
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-2026
- A guide to the special consideration process 2025-2026
- Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures 2025-2026
- Plagiarism in Assessments
- AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
- A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2023-2024 (SMPP 3.3.1)

(Added) New subheading **Informing and advising candidates** and an insert field to be populated according to the centre's process

Under heading **Identification and reporting of malpractice**: (Added) New subheading **Escalating suspected malpractice issues** and

- new bullet point: Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre can report it using the appropriate channels (SMPP 4.3)
- an insert field to be populated according to the centre's process

(Added) New subheading **Reporting suspected malpractice to the awarding body**

(Added) New bullet point: 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)

(Changed) SMPP reference: 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 5.32) (To) 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)

(Changed) Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information-gatherer) will submit a written report summarising the case to the relevant awarding body, accompanied by the information obtained during the course of their enquiries (SMPP 5.34) (To) 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 (SMPP 5.35)

(Changed) SMPP reference: Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used (SMPP 5.36) (To) Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used (SMPP 5.37)

(Changed) SMPP reference: 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 5.39) (To) 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)

Under heading **Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice**: (Changed) Provide the individual with information on the process for submitting an appeal, where relevant (To) Provide the individual with information on the process and timeframe for submitting an appeal, where relevant

Under each relevant section added **Additional information** fields to be populated by the user if applicable

Suggested policy title changed from **Malpractice Policy (Exams)** to **Malpractice Policy (Exams/Assessments)**

Under the section **Preventing malpractice**:

(Amended) Heading **Informing and advising candidates** to **Informing and advising candidates how to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments** (Added) Section entitled **AI Use in Assessments**

## **Centre-specific changes**

Not applicable