

Examinations and Assessments Malpractice and Maladministration Policy 2025



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Signed	- Executive Headteacher
Signed	- Chair of governors
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Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Definitions and information
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Preventing malpractice
5. Identifying and reporting malpractice
6. Investigations
7. Sanctions
8. Appeals
9. Monitoring and review

Statement of intent

As an authorised centre for the delivery of public qualifications, The Horizon School is fully aware of the role it plays in supporting the appropriate delivery of assessments and upholding the integrity and security of the examination and assessment system.

Adopting this policy will ensure that the school is able to take all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice and, where malpractice does occur, take prompt action to address breaches and safeguard the integrity of qualifications.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

DfE (2021) Teachers' Standard

Equality Act 2010

- JCQ (2024) 'Instructions for conducting examinations'
- JCQ (2024) 'General Regulations for Approved Centres'
- JCQ (2024) 'AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications'
- JCQ (2024) 'Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Assessment and Examinations Policy
- Non-examination Assessment Policy
- Exam Appeals Policy
- Exam Contingency Plan
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Policy

2. Definitions and information

Malpractice and maladministration are related concepts, both of which involve a failure to follow the rules of an examination or assessment.

This policy and procedure will use the word malpractice to cover both malpractice and maladministration.

Malpractice and maladministration refer to any act, default or practice which constitutes:

- 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.

Incidents of malpractice may arise for a variety of reasons:

- Some incidents are intentional and aim to give an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment.
- Some incidents arise due to a lack of awareness of the regulations, carelessness, or forgetfulness in applying the regulations – maladministration.
- Some occur as a result of the force of circumstances which are beyond the control of those involved, e.g. a fire alarm disrupting the supervision of candidates.

The individuals involved in malpractice also vary and may include:

- Candidates.
- Teachers, lecturers, tutors, trainers, assessors.
- Staff responsible for the conduct, administration or quality assurance of examinations and assessments including
 - Examination officers.
 - Invigilators.
 - Those facilitating access arrangements, e.g. readers, scribes and practical assistants.
- Assessment personnel such as examiners, assessors, moderators or internal and external verifiers.
- Other third parties, e.g. parents/carers, siblings or friends of the candidate.

Malpractice may or may not relate directly to sitting an examination, as there is the possibility that novel or unexpected forms of malpractice may emerge as technologies and the nature and organisation of examination centres change.

Examples of malpractice

[Appendix 2](#) of the JCQs 'Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures' provides a list of examples illustrating what may constitute suspected malpractice. The list is not intended as an exhaustive list, and other instances of malpractice may be identified and considered by the awarding bodies at their discretion.

For the purposes of this policy, and to ensure school arrangements are effective, staff will be made aware of the contents of this document when preparing for exams and assessments, especially relating to **Centre staff malpractice** and **candidate malpractice**.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The management committee will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a culture in which all staff and learners are aware that malpractice will not be accepted and that any concerns of malpractice or other wrongdoing can be freely and confidently reported.
- Ensuring the security and integrity of all exams and assessments undertaken at the school.
- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis, in conjunction with relevant members of staff.

The Executive headteacher will be responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy complies with current legislation and guidance.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented, monitored and adhered to consistently across the school.
- Familiarising themselves with relevant guidance from awarding bodies and the JCQ.
- Ensuring the school complies with relevant guidance from awarding bodies and the JCQ.
- Ensuring that all staff involved in the delivery and assessment of qualifications have the appropriate skills and experience and have received appropriate training.
- Ensuring staff with responsibilities relating to assessment and examinations meet internal and external deadlines.
- Advising parents that they must not contact awarding bodies directly and that all queries must be directed to the school.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy in line with the school's Complaints Procedure Policy.
- Reviewing this policy as and when necessary to ensure practices are effective and consistent within the school.
- Notifying the appropriate awarding body immediately of all alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice.

The examinations officer will be responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with, and following, relevant guidance from awarding bodies and the JCQ.
- Carrying out tasks that support the administration and management of all examination assessments.
- Carrying out all necessary duties as directed by the headteacher.
- Ensuring subject leaders are kept up to date with JCQ regulations and information.
- Ensuring candidates are entered for the correct assessments and the entry forms reach the relevant awarding body at the specified time.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Identifying and assessing the candidate's requirements for access arrangements.
- Notifying the exams officer of any access arrangements required well in advance of the assessment.
- The administration of access arrangements and any special arrangements for candidates.
- Having in place trained personnel to assist access candidates with assessments where required.
- Keeping accurate and up to date records of all access arrangements.
- Determining all appropriate arrangements for pupils with SEND and coordinating appropriate support.

Invigilators will be responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with, and following, relevant guidance from awarding bodies and the JCQ.
- Ensuring non-examination assessments comply with JCQ's and the awarding body's specifications.
- Efficiently running all exams in a safe and secure environment and dealing with any issues that arise during an examination or assessment.
- Ensuring the security of the examination materials during examinations.
- Preventing and reporting possible pupil malpractice.
- Preventing possible administrative failures.
- Collecting papers and other material from the exams officer prior to the commencement of the exam.
- Contacting the exams officer for clarification of any issue.
- Collecting and returning papers in the correct order to the exam officer on completion of the assessment.
- Ensuring all pupils have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities, e.g. making sure no additional notes are brought into the examination room.

Candidates will be responsible for:

- Checking that their personal details and entries are correct.
- Signing declarations that authenticates course work and/or controlled assessment as their own.
- Conducting themselves in an appropriate manner by abiding by school and assessment rules in accordance with JCQ regulations.
- Lodging an appeal with the exam board for awarding grades or for reports of malpractice.
- Making a complaint to the exams officer regarding anything connected with the assessment process.

The site manager will be responsible for:

- Collaborating with the exam officer to ensure rooms allocated for assessments are set up in accordance with JCQ regulations.
- Ensuring that rooms used for assessments are clean, well-ventilated with all access and fire exits obstacle free.

The DPO will be responsible for:

- Managing data within the school in regard to assessments.
- Managing internal data protection activities.
- Ensuring risk and impact assessments are conducted in accordance with ICO guidance.

4. Preventing malpractice

The school will take all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice.

Centre staff malpractice and maladministration.

The school will ensure that:

- Staff involved in the delivery of assessments and examinations understand the requirements for conducting these as specified in the JCQ documents above and any further awarding body guidance.
- Staff involved in the delivery of assessments and examinations understand the key dates and deadlines and that there are robust procedures in place to ensure these are met.
- Examination officers are appropriately trained, resourced and supported.
- Exams at alternative sites are conducted in accordance with JCQ ICE requirements.
- Staff who manage and implement special consideration and access arrangements are aware of the requirements and are appropriately supported and resourced.
- Members of staff do not communicate any confidential information about examinations and assessment materials, including via social media.
- Examination clash arrangements are planned and managed effectively.
- Staff delivering or assessing coursework or non-examination assessments have robust processes in place for identifying and reporting plagiarism or other potential candidate malpractice.
- There is a culture of honesty and openness so that any concerns of potential malpractice can be escalated appropriately without fear of repercussion.

Candidate malpractice

The school will ensure that candidates

- Are informed verbally and in writing about the required conditions under which the assessments are conducted, including warnings about the introduction of prohibited materials and devices into the assessments, and access to restricted resources.
- Are aware of actions that constitute malpractice and the sanctions that can be imposed on those who commit malpractice.
- Understand the sanctions of passing on or receiving confidential assessment materials. If a candidate receives confidential information, they must report it to a member of centre staff immediately.
- Involved in examination clash arrangements are aware of appropriate behaviour during supervision, i.e. ensuring that candidates cannot pass on or receive information about the content of assessments, thereby committing candidate malpractice.
- Completing coursework or non-examination assessments are aware of the need for the work to be their own.

To ensure candidates are well informed and understand their responsibilities and expectations of behaviour the school will distribute all JCQ notices prior to assessments and examinations taking place. This will include notices and information on the following issues:

- Information for candidates
- Non-examination assessments
- Coursework
- On-screen tests
- Written examinations
- Social media
- Plagiarism

5. Identifying and reporting malpractice

Where there are any concerns or suspicions of malpractice the school will:

- Notify the appropriate awarding body immediately of all alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice.
- Report malpractice using the appropriate forms as provided by the JCQ.
- Be accountable for ensuring that school staff comply with the awarding body's instructions regarding an investigation.
- Ensure that the candidate's parents are kept informed of the progress of an investigation.
- Ensure that if it is necessary to delegate the gathering of information to a senior member of centre staff, the awarding body's agreement is obtained.
- Ensure that member of staff chosen is independent and not connected to the department or candidate involved in the suspected malpractice.
- Ensure there is no conflict of interests which might compromise an investigation into malpractice.
- Respond speedily and openly to all requests for an investigation into allegations of malpractice and provide information requested available in a timely manner.
- Co-operate with enquiries into allegations of malpractice.
- Ensure staff and candidates are informed of their individual responsibilities and rights.
- Forward any awarding body correspondence and evidence to members of staff and provide staff contact information to enable the awarding body to do so.
- Comply with data protection law.

- Pass on to the individuals concerned any warnings or notifications of sanctions and ensure compliance with any requests made by the awarding body as a result of a malpractice case.

If staff malpractice is discovered in coursework or non-examination assessments, the school will inform the awarding body immediately, regardless of whether the authentication forms have been signed by candidates.

The school is aware that failure to comply with the requirements above may itself constitute malpractice.

The school is aware that suspected malpractice can be identified and reported by any of the following:

- Centres, including by students, parents or centre staff.
- Awarding bodies, including by examiners, moderators and awarding body staff.
- Other individuals, such as funding agency staff, anonymous sources, or members of the public

6. Investigations

The school is aware that, following a report of suspected malpractice, an awarding body may decide to conduct an investigation in order to determine whether or not there is any evidence to support the allegation made. An allegation of malpractice will be considered unproven until the relevant information has been gathered and considered.

Gathering information

The school will cooperate with the awarding body in gathering and sharing the appropriate information required for an investigation.

The school will cooperate with the awarding body in designating who should gather information – i.e. the information gatherer - for the investigation from the following list:

- Headteacher
- Chair of Governors of the centre
- The responsible employer or their nominee, e.g. Director of Education, the Chief Executive Officer of a MAT
- Awarding body staff from the malpractice investigation team
- Another suitably qualified individual such as an Ofsted Inspector or the head of another school in the same MAT

The school will ensure that the information gatherer:

- Has no personal or other conflict of interest in the outcome of the investigation.
- Reports to the awarding body by the time specified and providing all the requested evidence.

In situations where the school wishes to appoint a staff member to gather information, the headteacher will obtain the agreement of the awarding body first.

The head of centre will oversee the process of information gathering in accordance with the deadlines and requirements set by the awarding body.

The school will ensure that the appointed information gatherer will obtain the information specified by the awarding body, in the formats and to the timescales required, regardless of their assessment of the matter.

Conflicts of interest

The headteacher will confirm to the awarding body the identity of the individual who will gather information and guarantee that the individual is:

- Appropriately senior.
- Experienced in conducting similar types of investigations.
- Has no conflict of interest.

Gathering information from individuals

Staff will conduct interviews with staff or students in accordance with the school's own internal policy for conducting enquiries, ensuring the rights of accused individuals are observed.

The information gatherer will take dated notes or a transcript of the interview and provide this to the interviewee for a signature to confirm its accuracy.

Any statements obtained will be in the witness' own words and be signed and dated

Any member of staff being interviewed may be accompanied by a friend or advisor, who may be a representative of a teacher association or other association.

Although the involvement of legal advisors is not necessary, at least where there is no allegation of criminal behaviour, the school will ensure that, if an interviewee wishes to be accompanied by a legal advisor, the other parties must be informed beforehand to give them the opportunity to be similarly supported.

All interviewees will be informed that the person accompanying the interviewee should not take an active part in the interview, and must not answer questions on the interviewee's behalf.

All those being interviewed or making a statement will be made aware that awarding bodies reserve the right to share their statements, records or transcripts of any interviews that are undertaken. This information may be shared at any stage during or after the investigation.

The rights of accused individuals

If the information-gatherer feels that there is sufficient evidence that an individual may have committed malpractice, the school will ensure that the candidate or the member of staff in question is:

- Informed of the allegation made against them, preferably in writing.
- Provided with a copy of the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>.
- Made aware of all evidence that has been obtained during the investigation which supports the allegation.

- Knows the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Afforded the opportunity and time to consider their response to the allegations.
- Given an opportunity to submit a written statement in response to the allegations.
- Provided with a complete set of case documentation, in the event of the case being referred to the awarding body's Malpractice Committee.
- Informed that in the event of the case being referred to the awarding body's Malpractice Committee, they will:
 - Be provided with a complete set of case documentation.
 - Have the opportunity to read, and make a statement in response to, the case documentation.
 - Have the opportunity to seek professional advice and to provide a supplementary statement.
 - Be made aware of their right to appeal should a sanction be applied to them, as set out in the JCQ document A Guide to the Awarding Bodies' Appeals Processes.

The headteacher will ensure that any individual accused of malpractice is informed of their rights and responsibilities.

Completing and submitting the report

Once the information gathering has concluded, the school will submit a written report to the relevant awarding body summarising the information obtained and actions taken, along with any information obtained during the course of their enquiries.

The report will contain a statement of the facts of the case, including a detailed account of the circumstances of the alleged malpractice and an objective description of the information gathered during the course of the investigation. It will also include details of any exculpatory information, or mitigating factors, found during the investigation process.

7. Sanctions

A permanent record will be kept of the impact of any sanctions on an individual candidate's results.

The headteacher will inform those individuals found guilty of malpractice that information may be passed on to other awarding bodies or appropriate authorities. This information will typically include the names, offences and sanctions applied to those found guilty of breaching the published regulations

Where an allegation of malpractice is upheld awarding bodies may choose to apply one or more sanctions, as outlined in the [appendices](#) of JCQs 'Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures'.

Depending upon the nature of the malpractice allegation and the parties concerned, the school is aware that sanctions may be applied against:

- The school
- School staff

- Candidates

The headteacher will assume responsibility for communicating the decision to the individuals concerned and to pass on details of any sanctions and action in cases where this is indicated.

The headteacher will inform candidates if they have the right to appeal.

The headteacher will notify the awarding body:

- If a member of staff moves to another centre while being subject to a sanction.
- If a centre changes awarding body for a qualification, and a member of staff involved in the delivery or assessment of the qualification is subject to a sanction

8. Appeals

The school is aware that all awarding bodies have established procedures for considering appeals against sanctions arising from malpractice decisions.

The school will ensure that the following individuals are informed of their right to appeal against decisions of the Malpractice Committee or officers acting on its behalf:

- Heads of centre, who may appeal against sanctions imposed on the school or on school staff, as well as on behalf of candidates entered or registered through the school.
- Members of school staff, or examining personnel contracted to a school, who may appeal against sanctions imposed on them personally.
- Private (external) candidates.
- Third parties who have been barred from taking or delivery of the awarding body's examinations or assessments

9. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing board, head of school and examinations officer on an annual basis.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2026.