

Malpractice Policy (Exams)

2025/2026

Policy approved by	
Silvana D'Apollò, Director of MIS	
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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of Centre	Neil Coker, CEO and Principal
Senior leader(s)	Victoria Cornwell-Lyon, Deputy Principal Quality and Student Experience
Examinations Manager	Prabh Salaman, Examinations Manager Aarti Patel, Deputy Examinations Manager
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This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at Barnet & Southgate College - Barnet/Southgate Campuses 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 documents **General Regulations for Approved Centres** and **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures**.

Introduction

What is malpractice and maladministration?

'Malpractice' and 'maladministration' are distinct but 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)

Candidate malpractice

'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)

Centre staff malpractice

'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)

Suspected malpractice

For the purposes of this document, 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)

Purpose of the policy

To confirm Barnet & Southgate College - Barnet/Southgate Campuses:

- 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)

General Principles

In accordance with the regulations Barnet & Southgate College - Barnet/Southgate Campuses 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)

Preventing malpractice

Barnet & Southgate College - Barnet/Southgate Campuses 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 2025
- A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2025-2026
- Guidance for centres on cyber security (SMPP 3.2)

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

The centre provides clear information to candidates on the Barnet and Southgate College website where students can find appropriate official guidance and support:

<https://www.barnetsouthgate.ac.uk/exams-downloads>

Centre tutors and curriculum managers are provided with guidance to disseminate and

discuss with students within their individual classes in preparation for examinations.

Examples of Malpractice

Examples of malpractice can be found in the appendix at the end of this document

AI use in assessments

AI – or Artificial Intelligence, is when computers or machines are designed to think and learn like humans. Instead of just following fixed instructions, AI can analyse information, recognise patterns and make decisions. AI can be a useful tool to help students with learning – such as creating an essay plan and helping to improve the structure of an assignment. Providing learners are not attempting to pass off AI generated material as their own work or fail to make reference to its use in their assignments, AI can be a helpful tool for research and planning.

With reference to the JCQ guidance for **Teachers & Assessors - AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications**, students complete the majority of the 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 tools when completing these assessments, although care must be taken when a student is allowed to use a laptop or similar device for exams, to ensure they have no access to AI tools.

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 (NEA), coursework and internal assessments for general qualifications (GQs) and vocational & technical qualifications (VTQs). JCQ's guidance which is designed to help students and teachers complete NEAs, coursework and other internal assessments is followed in relation to these assessments.

The centre will issue guidance to students and centre staff on the safe use of AI ensuring it is consistent and aligned with the centre's safeguarding, inclusion and exams protocols, and its specific AI Policy. Work submitted for assessment must be learners' own and valid for assessment purposes. Using AI to create work without due reference is misconduct and malpractice.

The JCQ guidance **AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications** clearly states:

'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'.

JCQ further emphasise the responsibility of centre staff to be alert for incidents of suspected malpractice via AI use:

'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'.

Students must be able to demonstrate that their submitted work is the product of independent effort and not AI misuse. The use of AI tools in any submitted assessment must be appropriately acknowledged. Candidates will be issued with 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.

Identification and reporting of malpractice

Escalating suspected malpractice issues

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

A member of staff at the centre can report it to an Examinations Officer as a first point of contact. The staff member must provide a full and detailed statement of events including evidence where applicable.

If malpractice requires an escalation the following escalations channels will be followed:

- Second point of escalation: Examinations Manager
- Third point of escalation: Quality and Assurance Lead
- Fourth point of escalation: Head of Centre.

Incidents of alleged, suspected or actual malpractice will be recorded via a JCQ M1 / M2 / M3 Malpractice Form, which once escalated to the Head of Centre, will be submitted to the exam board further investigation.

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 document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures (SMPP 4.1.3)

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)

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)

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.

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)

If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence that an individual may have committed 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)

Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information gatherer) will submit a written report to the relevant awarding body summarising the information obtained and actions taken, 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)

As part of any malpractice investigation, Barnet and Southgate College will:

- be accountable for ensuring that the centre and centre staff always comply with the awarding body instructions regarding 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 and the senior member of centre staff chosen is independent and not connected to the department or candidate involved in the suspected malpractice. The Head of Centre should ensure there is no conflict of interest which might compromise the investigation
- respond speedily and openly to all requests for an investigation into an allegation of malpractice. This will be in the best interests of centre staff, candidates and any others involved make information requested by an awarding body available speedily and openly
- cooperate with an enquiry into an allegation of malpractice and ensure that their staff do so also, whether the centre is directly involved in the case or not
- ensure staff members and candidates are informed of their individual responsibilities and rights as set out in this document
- forward any awarding body correspondence and evidence to centre staff and/or provide staff contact information to enable the awarding body to do so at all times comply with GDPR/Data Protection

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)

Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice

Barnet & Southgate College - Barnet/Southgate Campuses 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**

A student may appeal against the outcome of a suspected assessment malpractice investigation and the sanction imposed on them. A student may also appeal against decisions to reject their work on the grounds of malpractice – procedures are outlined in the college's **Internal Appeals Procedure 2025-2026** document.

The Head of Centre may also appeal against the finding of malpractice and/or the sanction imposed on the centre, staff, and on behalf of students.

Appendix 1

Examples of Malpractice

Examples of malpractice by students

- plagiarism of any nature
- collusion by working collaboratively with other students to produce work that is submitted as individual student work
- copying (including the use of IT 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 to produce the work for another, or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test
- inappropriate behaviour during an internal or external assessment that causes disruption to others
- inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material in assessment evidence
- frivolous content - producing content that is unrelated to the examination paper/question in scripts or coursework
- unauthorised aids - physical possession of unauthorised materials (including mobile phones, electronic devices, etc.) in the examination room, unless a concession has been agreed in advance
- misuse or incorrect referencing of AI tools.

Examples of malpractice by assessors

- improper assistance to candidates
- inappropriate retention of certificates
- facilitating and allowing impersonation
- failure to record assistance provided to candidates on assessment records, coursework/NEA authentication and declaration forms and scribe cover sheets
- failure to provide information on improper assistance to candidates
- 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
- assisting students in the production of work for assessment where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment
- producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the student has not generated
- allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework
- misusing the condition for special student requirements e.g. support

- falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- failure to comply with awarding organisations procedures for managing and transferring accurate student data
- knowingly accepting, or failing to check, inauthentic work for qualification assessments, including the use of AI.

Examples of malpractice by centre staff

- facilitating and allowing impersonation
- misusing the condition for special student requirements e.g. support
- falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- fraudulent certificate claims i.e. claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment
- failure to comply with awarding organisations procedures for managing/transferring and storing accurate student data
- failure to distribute certificates.