Malpractice Policy

2026/27

Approved/reviewed by	
Shumaila Latif	
Date of next review	01/09/2027

Key staff involved in the plan

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	**James Eldon**
Exams officer line manager (Senior leader)	**Shumaila Latif**

Exams officer EO	**Maryam Nasir / Amy Lyne-Bennett**
ALS lead/SENCo	**Kate Stead**

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at Manchester Academy 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 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 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 (regardless of how the incident might be categorised, as described in SMPP, section 19). (SMPP 2)

Purpose of the policy

To confirm Manchester Academy:

- 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 Manchester Academy 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

Manchester Academy 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 all staff involved in the delivery of assessments and examinations have a responsibility to report any potential malpractice and to 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
- 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 (SMPP 3.3.1)

Students will not be provided with assistance within in written examinations, apart from those outlined in their access arrangements (e.g. prompter, scribe). If any suspected assistance has been provided that is not part of an authorised access arrangement, this may be malpractice and must be reported as such, following the procedures below.

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

- Students are given a 'candidate handbook' created by the EO, and distributed in form time, prior to sitting their external exams, advising them how to avoid committing malpractice in examinations
- The Head of Year will regularly discuss exams in pastoral information through form tutors, in assemblies etc to ensure that students are away of their expectations
- Students sit internal examinations, called PPEs (pre public examinations), at least twice in Year 10 and twice in Year 11 before their terminal exam series. These internal examinations are run as true to the full external exam style as possible, so that students are rehearsed in how to have good conduct before, during and after their exams
- At the start of all exams, including internal examinations, students are read / watch the exam screen video on Appendix 3, about key information of how they must behave during the exam
- During exams, we operate a 'pink slip' policy where students receive a physical slip on their desk if they have committed malpractice, informing them of what the malpractice was
- The EO, along with support of SLT and the pastoral team, will log the 'pink slip' on Arbor and follow up any appropriate action, so that students understand the severity of malpractice during internal examinations and therefore do not commit any during external examinations

AI use in assessments

AI stands for Artificial Intelligence and is widely accessible via numerous online tools such as ChatGPT and Google Bard (Gemini/Copilot). AI can respond to commands or questions to generate answers, create documents or complete tasks by pooling and summarising information found online from various sources. A lot of the information provided by AI can be helpful, however there can often be inaccuracies.

The use of AI during an assessment may be classed as malpractice as it is not the students own work and therefore is a form of plagiarism. It is essential that staff are aware of the ever-growing use of AI and are vigilant about whether a student has used AI inappropriately. Students will be reminded in their candidate handbook that unless specifically approved by staff using AI is malpractice.

For examinations with word processors (laptops) as an access arrangement, students may not use AI and will be reminded that attempts to use AI would be classed as malpractice:

- Student using laptops as an access arrangement are closely monitored by the EO, IT team and HLTA for AA
- Students who use laptops have been fully briefed about their use and how to use them appropriately by the HLTA for AA, prior to the examination series
- Students who use laptops will have practised using them appropriately during internal examinations so that they know who to avoid committing malpractice in their external examinations
- During all examinations, the students' laptops will have the internet disabled at the start of the exam by the IT department to ensure students cannot use AI
- The EO and HLTA for AA, will ensure the IT team are aware of when an exam is starting to ensure the internet has been disabled

- During external examinations, students use Write Pad software, which is JCQ compliant, to write their answers, which prevents the use of any AI
- Each laptop used by students, is personally labelled and the device assigned to one student throughout the whole exam series. This ensures that should there be any malpractice on a device, it is traceable to the correct student

In general, for NEAs, students may not use AI:

- During assessments and coursework
- To complete homework, independent learning or class assignments, if the AI is being presented as their own work
- Staff will be present during the completion of coursework in computer rooms and will monitor students use of the internet and therefore AI tools
- Staff have been trained to use Senso to monitor student screens during lessons. Senso also allows staff to instantly turn on or off the internet for all / some student devices, therefore preventing students from using AI tools during assessments or coursework sessions, as desired. By using Senso, teachers can be assured that the work they accept for assessment is authentically students own work as they will have monitored their completion of the work

There may be some instances where the use of AI is permitted for example:

- To research new topics
- To help students to generate new ideas
- When creating work about AI itself (for example in an IT qualification)

In any of these instances, the following will happen:

- Staff will grant permission to students to use AI
- Staff will be accountable for managing the risk of AI misuse
- Students will record what AI they have used, what questions were asked, what responses where generated and credit the AI as the source

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)

- Any malpractice surrounding exams, whether by student, internal staff or external invigilator, will be reported to the EO
- As much detail should be provided as possible, the report should be made as soon as possible following the malpractice
- EO will keep a detailed record of the malpractice, and report this to SLT and the Head of Centre as soon as possible
- Head of Centre will report this to the associated exam board and regulatory body, where appropriate, according to JCQ requirements

- If there is suspected malpractice of the EO, reports can be made directly to the Head of Centre

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)

• Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non- examination assessment component prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication does not need to 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 (the candidate or the 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)

• All incidents of suspected staff and centre malpractice/maladministration and all incidents of suspected candidate malpractice identified **after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication** must be reported to the Awarding organisation

• Incidents of suspected candidate malpractice identified **before the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication** do not need to be reported to the Awarding organisation

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

Manchester Academy 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

Changes 2026/2027

Under headings What is malpractice, Candidate malpractice, Suspected Malpractice amended to reflect slight wording changes in SMPP.

Under heading 'Purpose of the policy: To confirm Manchester Academy: 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

(Amended to reflect the change in GR 5.3) To confirm Manchester Academy: 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)

Under heading General Principles, bullet point amended to reflect the change in GR 5.11: take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after examinations assessments have taken place Under heading Preventing Malpractice: Updated the list of JCQ documents.

Under the heading Informing and advising candidates how to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments updated the prompt in the insert field to: Detail the process in your centre which confirms how, when and by whom candidates are informed and advised to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments. Describe the process and 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). Confirm when this takes place and include the name(s) and/or role(s) of those staff involved in briefing candidates.

Centre-specific changes

- The systems around the tracking and monitoring of pink slips have been refined and updated

- There is a new flow chart for dealing with poor behaviour in PPEs

