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Malpractice Policy

2026-2027

Malpractice Policy

Centre name	George Eliot Academy
Centre number	31180
Date policy first created	Spring 2025
Date policy reviewed	Autumn 2026
Date of next review	Autumn 2027

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	**Name**
Head of centre	Homeira Zakary
Senior leader(s)	Hannah Jenkins/David Eyres
Exams Manager	Zeenat Memon
Exams Officer:	Claire Manns

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at George Eliot 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 publications General Regulations for Approved Centres and Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures.

Introduction. This policy should be read in conjunction with the latest version of SMPP.

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)

The individuals involved in malpractice may include:

- candidates
- teachers, lecturers, tutors, trainers, assessors or others responsible for the conduct; administration or quality assurance of examinations and assessments, including heads of centre, members of the senior leadership team (SLT), examinations officers, invigilators and 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.)

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 George Eliot 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 (GR 5.3)

General principles

In accordance with the regulations George Eliot Academy 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

George Eliot Academy 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 Centrres*;
- *Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE)*;
- *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments*;
- *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*;
- *A guide to the special consideration process*;
- *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures*;
- *Plagiarism in Assessments*; *AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications*;
- *A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes*

Additional information:

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

A candidate briefing is held at the start of each academic year and, again, before the start of the summer exam season.
This briefing will highlight best practice and also covers examples of learner malpractice (as outlined in appendix B).

AI Use in Assessments

Pupils may not use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
- To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

Pupils may use AI tools:

- As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas

- When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed
- Where a pupil uses an AI tool, the pupil should retain a copy of the question(s) asked and the AI-generated responses. Pupils must submit this along with the assessment.

Staff should:

- Be aware that AI tools are still being developed and should use such tools with caution as they may provide inaccurate, inappropriate or biased content
- Make students aware of the risks of using AI tools and that they need to appropriately reference AI as a source of information to maintain the integrity of assessments

For more information on AI misuse, see JCQ's 'AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications'. Any misuse of AI tools may be treated as malpractice.

Informing and advising candidates

A candidate briefing is held at the start of each academic year and, again, before the start of the summer exam season.

This briefing will highlight best practice and also covers examples of learner malpractice (as outlined in appendix B).

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)

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- Suspected malpractice should be reported to the Exams Officer and/or Head of Centre o Concerns regarding the Exams Officer should be reported to the Head of Centre o Concerns about the Head of Centre should be reported to the Head of Governors.

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 4.1.1)

- 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:

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:

Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice

George Eliot 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 publication A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes