Qualifications and Examinations Malpractice Policy

*All policies are electronically signed and available on Governor Hub
Ratified by the (Local Governing Body)
Signed by the (LGB): **Date Nov 2026**
To be reviewed (every year): **Date Nov 2027**

Contents

1. 1. Introduction and purpose 3
2. 2. Definitions 3
3. 3. Examples of malpractice 4
4. 4. Reporting and responding to suspected malpractice 5
5. 5. Investigation of allegations involving staff 5
6. 6. Candidate malpractice 6
7. 7. Prevention, records and review 7
8. 8. Relevant guidance and links 8
9. 9. Changes 8

1. Introduction and purpose

This policy sets out the procedures to be followed where there is an allegation or suspicion of malpractice or maladministration involving a candidate, member of staff or the Academy in connection with qualifications, assessments or examinations. It applies to internally assessed work, portfolios, coursework, non-examination assessments, practical assessments, on-screen assessments and written examinations.

The Academy is committed to maintaining the integrity, security and fairness of all qualifications and assessments. Allegations will be taken seriously, dealt with promptly and fairly, and handled in accordance with the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation and, where applicable, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

This policy should be read alongside the current JCQ regulations and guidance, the relevant awarding organisation's requirements and the Academy's safeguarding, whistleblowing, staff disciplinary and data protection procedures. Where a qualification is not covered by JCQ arrangements, the relevant awarding organisation's procedures will apply.

2. Definitions

2.1. Malpractice and maladministration

Malpractice and maladministration include any act, default or practice that breaches examination or assessment regulations, awarding organisation requirements or established procedures. This may prejudice candidates, compromise the assessment process or the validity of a result, or undermine public confidence in qualifications. Malpractice may be deliberate or may arise through error, poor practice or failure to follow required procedures.

2.2. Candidate malpractice

Candidate malpractice normally involves a candidate's actions in connection with an examination or assessment, including the preparation, authentication or submission of assessed work.

2.3. Centre staff malpractice

Centre staff malpractice may involve any employee, contractor, volunteer or other person appointed by the Academy to support or administer examinations and assessments, including invigilators and those facilitating access arrangements.

3. Examples of malpractice

The examples below are not exhaustive. The relevant awarding organisation will determine whether an incident constitutes malpractice and what action or sanction is appropriate.

3.1. Staff or centre malpractice

- Tampering with, altering, fabricating or falsifying candidates' work, assessment evidence, marks, internal verification records or authentication statements.
- Providing candidates with assistance that is not permitted by the qualification specification or awarding organisation guidance, including prompting, coaching or editing assessed work beyond permitted support.
- Failing to maintain the security or confidentiality of examination papers, assessment materials, candidate work, results or other restricted information.
- Failing to follow examination and assessment procedures, including inadequate invigilation or supervision, or permitting unauthorised communication or access to materials.
- Knowingly submitting inaccurate information, making a false declaration or failing to report suspected malpractice when required to do so.
- Failing to declare or appropriately manage a conflict of interest in assessment or examination arrangements.
- Using or permitting the use of artificial intelligence or other tools in a way that breaches the awarding organisation's assessment rules, or failing to authenticate candidates' work appropriately.

3.2. Candidate malpractice

- Copying, allowing work to be copied, colluding or sharing answers or information where this is not permitted.
- Submitting work that is not the candidate's own, including plagiarised work or work produced by another person or an unauthorised artificial intelligence tool.
- Using, attempting to use or having access to unauthorised materials, notes, mobile phones, watches or other electronic devices during an examination or assessment.
- Communicating with, disturbing or disrupting other candidates during an examination, or failing to follow the invigilator's instructions.
- Impersonating another candidate, allowing oneself to be impersonated, or falsifying assessment evidence or results documentation.

- Breaching the conditions of an assessment, including those relating to supervision, authentication, confidentiality or permitted assistance.

4. Reporting and responding to suspected malpractice

Any member of staff, candidate, parent/carer or other person who becomes aware of a possible malpractice incident should report the concern promptly to the Headteacher or the Examinations Officer. Staff must not attempt to investigate or resolve a suspected awarding organisation malpractice case independently, or make promises about the outcome.

The Headteacher, as Head of Centre, is accountable to awarding organisations for ensuring that suspected or actual malpractice is reported and managed in accordance with the applicable regulations. Suspected or actual malpractice must be reported to the relevant awarding organisation immediately, using its required process and forms. An internal investigation must not delay this notification.

For JCQ qualifications, the relevant forms normally include JCQ/M1 for suspected candidate malpractice and JCQ/M2 for suspected malpractice or maladministration involving centre staff. JCQ/M3 is used for the report into suspected malpractice or maladministration involving centre staff. The current forms and instructions must be obtained from the JCQ website. For non-JCQ qualifications, the relevant awarding organisation's reporting arrangements must be followed.

The Academy will preserve relevant evidence, maintain confidentiality as far as possible, cooperate fully with the awarding organisation and provide accurate information within the required timescales. Failure to report, investigate or cooperate as required may itself constitute malpractice.

5. Investigation of allegations involving staff

5.1. Responsibility and impartiality

The Headteacher, Mounir Meghalsi, will normally coordinate the Academy's response and ensure that appropriate information is gathered. The person leading any internal information-gathering exercise will depend on the nature of the allegation and the qualification involved. Anyone with a personal interest or potential conflict of interest must not lead or influence the investigation.

If an allegation concerns the Headteacher, the matter must be referred to the Chair of the Local Governing Body and the Trust, who will arrange an appropriately independent response and liaise with the awarding organisation. Where an allegation raises a safeguarding concern, the

Academy's safeguarding procedures must also be followed, including referral to the appropriate external agency where required.

5.2. Fair process

The Academy will establish the facts promptly and objectively. An allegation must not be treated as proven simply because it has been made. Where appropriate and consistent with the awarding organisation's instructions, the staff member concerned and relevant witnesses will be invited to provide information. A written record will be kept of meetings, evidence considered and decisions made.

The member of staff concerned will, as appropriate and in accordance with the JCQ procedure and any direction from the awarding organisation:

- Be informed in writing of the allegation and the process being followed.
- Be given sufficient information about the evidence and allegation to enable a meaningful response, subject to any lawful restrictions or directions from the awarding organisation.
- Be informed of the possible consequences if malpractice is established.
- Have a reasonable opportunity to respond, provide a written statement and identify relevant evidence or witnesses.
- Be given information about available support and the relevant Academy or awarding organisation review/appeal arrangements.
- Be informed, where appropriate, that information may be shared with the relevant awarding organisation, other awarding organisations, regulators, the police or professional bodies in accordance with applicable requirements.

The Academy will consider the wellbeing and safeguarding needs of all individuals involved and will communicate in an accessible and appropriate way. Any employment related action will be managed separately under the relevant Trust procedures. The awarding organisation retains responsibility for decisions and sanctions relating to its qualifications.

6. Candidate malpractice

Where candidate malpractice is suspected, the concern must be reported promptly to the Headteacher or Examinations Officer (Andrew Blakeley). The Academy will follow the relevant awarding organisation's instructions, including immediate notification where required, and will gather and submit the required information and evidence.

Candidates will be informed of the concern and the process in a manner they can understand. Given the needs of learners at Calthorpe Academy, communication must take account of the candidate's age, special educational needs, communication profile and any reasonable adjustments or support required. A parent/carer or appropriate supporter may be involved where appropriate, while respecting the candidate's rights and the awarding organisation's requirements.

Candidates will be given an appropriate opportunity to provide their account and relevant information. The Academy will not assume that an allegation is proven. The awarding organisation will determine whether malpractice has occurred and any resulting action, which may include a warning, loss of marks, disqualification or other sanction, depending on its rules and the circumstances.

7. Prevention, records and review

7.1. Preventing malpractice

The Academy will take reasonable steps to prevent malpractice by ensuring that relevant staff understand the current examination and assessment requirements; candidates are made aware of the rules and permitted support; confidential materials are stored and handled securely; assessment and authentication processes are followed; and staff receive appropriate information, guidance and training.

The Headteacher, senior leaders and Examinations Officer must be familiar with the current JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, Instructions for Conducting Examinations and Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures, together with any other relevant JCQ and awarding organisation guidance.

7.2. Records and confidentiality

Records of allegations, notifications, evidence, investigation activity, correspondence and outcomes will be retained securely in accordance with the Trust's records retention schedule and data protection requirements. Information will be shared only with those who need it for the proper handling of the case or where disclosure is required by law, an awarding organisation or a regulator.

7.3. Review

This policy will be reviewed every year, or sooner if there are significant changes to JCQ requirements, awarding organisation procedures or relevant legislation. The Academy will check the current guidance at least annually

and ensure that operational procedures and staff information remain up to date.

8. Relevant guidance and links

JCQ – Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures:
https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/
JCQ – General Regulations for Approved Centres:
https://www.jcq.org.uk/knowledge-hub/general-regulations-for-approved-centres/
JCQ – Instructions for Conducting Examinations:
https://www.jcq.org.uk/knowledge-hub/intructions-for-conducting-examinations/
Ofqual – General Conditions of Recognition, including Condition A8 (Malpractice and maladministration):
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook

9. Changes

The policy has been updated in November 2026 to reflect the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures effective from September 2026, current JCQ centre regulations and examination instructions. The scope, examples, reporting requirements, investigation arrangements, candidate support, record keeping and review arrangements have been expanded.

Description	Date	Page	Section
Updated and expanded policy to reflect JCQ 2026–27 guidance	Nov 2026	All	All sections