

EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE

POLICY 2022-23

Approving Body	Trust
Date of Last Review	May 2023
Statutory (Y/N)	No
Responsible Officer	BMAT CEO for and on behalf of the Trust

1.1 Staff Malpractice Policy

This policy sets out to define the procedures to be followed in the event of any dispute or allegation regarding staff malpractice in the assessment of internally marked qualifications and examinations invigilated at the school and marked externally.

It is expected that staff will make themselves familiar with the regulations and procedures for administering A-level, GCSE, BTEC and other vocational qualifications as laid out by JCQ, AQA, Edexcel, OCR, WJEC and NCFE, plus other bodies as needed. Attempted or actual malpractice activity will not be tolerated. The following are examples of malpractice by staff with regards to portfolio-based or externally assessed qualifications. This list is not exhaustive:

- Tampering with Students work prior to external moderation/verification
- Assisting Students with the production of work outside awarding body guidance
- Fabricating assessment and/or internal verification records or authentication statements
- Deliberate or consistent failure to follow exam board regulations or procedures
- Making false claims for verification / claims
- Failure to maintain proper records
- Failure to correctly invigilate external assessments
- Tampering with scripts prior to external marking taking place

1.2 Staff Malpractice Procedure

Investigations into allegations will be coordinated by a designated member of the senior leadership team, who will ensure the initial investigation is carried out within ten working days. The person responsible for coordinating the investigation will depend on the qualification being investigated. The investigation will involve establishing the full facts and circumstances of any alleged malpractice. It should not be assumed that because an allegation has been made, it is true. Where appropriate, the staff member concerned and any potential witnesses will be interviewed and their version of events recorded on paper. The member of staff will be:

- informed in writing of the allegation made against them
- informed what evidence there is to support the allegation
- informed of the possible consequences, should malpractice be proven
- given the opportunity to consider their response to the allegations
- given the opportunity to submit a written statement
- given the opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a supplementary statement (if required)
- informed of the applicable appeals procedure, should a decision be made against him/her
- informed of the possibility that information relating to a serious case of malpractice will be shared with the relevant awarding body and may be shared with other awarding bodies, the regulators Ofqual, the police and/or professional bodies

If work is submitted for moderation/verification or for marking which is not the student's own work, the awarding body may not be able to give that student a result.

The senior leadership team is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

1.3 Malpractice Allegations

Any allegation of malpractice by members of staff must be reported to the head teacher or principal or senior leadership team, the relevant exam board, the JCQ and the exams officer. This allegation must detail the learner(s) involved, the nature of the breach including dates, and details of any investigation carried out within the centre.

Allegations must be made in writing.

Where a member of staff is found guilty of malpractice, sanctions may be applied in line with the Trust's disciplinary policy:

The member of staff may appeal against sanctions imposed on them. Appeals will be conducted in line with the Trust's Appeals Policy.

2.1 Student Malpractice Policy

This policy sets out to define the procedures to be followed in the event of any dispute or allegation regarding student malpractice in internally marked assessments and examinations marked externally.

Attempted or actual malpractice activity will not be tolerated. The following are examples of malpractice with regards to portfolio-based qualifications. This list is not exhaustive:

- Plagiarism: the copying and passing of as the student's own work, the whole or part of another person's work
- Collusion: working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as the student's own
- Failing to abide by the instructions of an assessor – This may refer to the use of resources which the student has been specifically told not to use
- The alteration of any results document
- The following are examples of malpractice with regards to examinations. This list is not exhaustive:
 - Talking during an examination
 - Taking a mobile phone or watch into an examination
 - Taking any item other than those accepted by the Awarding Body into the examination, such as a book or notes
 - Leaving the examination room without permission
 - Passing notes or papers or accepting notes to, or accepting notes or papers from another student

The following procedure will be followed if malpractice is suspected in an examination:

- The invigilators who identify malpractice will alert the exams officer as soon as possible, preferably during exam but without stopping it, and provide as full a report as possible.
- The exams officer will ask the student(s) to stay at the end of the exam and speak to them to obtain a brief verbal report, emphasising seriousness and inviting (encouraging) them to write a statement. This meeting must be witnessed by at least one member of staff, including teaching staff. This meeting will highlight the possible penalties.
- The exams officer completes the JCQ Malpractice form and writes a formal report, collecting statements from the Student(s), invigilators and other witnesses. Copies of all are retained in the exams office.

- The forms are sent to the head teacher or principal for the decision to send to the awarding board. The relevant Head of Year is copied in.
- If the decision is yes, the form and all evidence is sent to the awarding body and a copy with a covering letter to the parent/carer.
- If the decision is no, the relevant Head of Year or member of the Senior Leadership Team deals with it internally in the usual manner.
- The exam board will communicate their decision to the school, usually directly to the head teacher or principal. Copies are sent to the parent/carer (with covering letter), Head of Year and Head of Department.

2.2 Statement on use of AI bots in Exams and NEA

This statement has been produced with specific reference to the JCQ document: “AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications”.

The Beacon Multi-Academy Trust (BMAT) policy for malpractice states that all Non-Examined Assessment work, including coursework and controlled assessments, will be completed to JCQ standards and in compliance with JCQ regulations.

This includes that all work produced will be the students’ own, with any work they produce with the aid of others clearly cited within the work.

This statement is to clarify that this includes the use of AI bots in the completion of NEAs. They are not to be used by students unless their use is clearly and explicitly stated within the specification for that NEA.

This includes all qualifications offered by the schools in the Trust, including A-levels, GCSE, BTECs, Projects, Cambridge Nationals, and any others not covered by the JCQ, including those offered by NCFE, AAT and LIBF.

AI bots are not permitted in exams as access to the internet is not allowed during exams, and students with the use of a laptop may not bring any material into the exam. Any laptops used in the exam are provided by the school not the student and are clean of any material or programs that could be used in this manner.

Any use of AI bots in the production of work will be considered malpractice and treated in the same manner as any other work produced by another and passed off as their own, as per BMAT’s Malpractice Policy.

2.3 Malpractice Allegations

Any allegation of malpractice by members of staff must be reported to the head teacher or principal or senior leadership team, the relevant exam board, the JCQ and the exams officer. This allegation must detail the learner(s) involved, the nature of the breach including dates, and details of any investigation carried out within the centre.

Allegations must be made in writing.

2.4 Appeals Policy

In the event that a malpractice decision is made that the student feels is unfair, the student has the right to appeal. The Trust is committed to ensuring that investigations of malpractice are conducted by staff with the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills; evidence provided has been produced and authenticated; and staff with responsibility for investigating malpractice attends any relevant training sessions.

Appeals to the JCQ or awarding body must be made by following the respective procedures of that body, and in line with their requirements and timeline.

Internal appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the investigation and judgement processes involved in instances of malpractices. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded as a result, or sanctions placed on the student, unless the investigation or judgement processes are at fault.

Appeals must be made in writing to the head teacher or principal who will decide with the Senior Leadership Team, Head of Department and Head of Year whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements. The student will be notified of the head teacher or principal's findings in writing, which will be copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for inspection by the awarding body. The enquiry into internal process will be led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team who played no part in the original investigation.

The student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal. If the student is unhappy about the response they can ask for a personal hearing, where the panel will consist of two persons not previously involved, normally the head teacher or principal and a member of the Governing body. They are permitted to be accompanied by a parent or other advocate.