



Public Examination Procedures

**Malpractice/Maladministration
Policy
(incl. Appeals against
Malpractice/Maladministration)
2025/2026**

This procedure is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Lisa Richards, Principal	
Date of next review	February 2027

Key staff involved in the complaints and appeals procedure

Role	Name(s)
Principal	Lisa Richards
SLT members	Sheridan Lewis, Chris Cox
Examinations Manager	Cyanne Holt
PA to Principal	Kim Greeves

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Introduction

Ashton Sixth Form College (ASFC) is committed to managing any instance of suspected malpractice/maladministration in accordance with JCQ regulations (GR 5.3)

Malpractice/maladministration is defined as doing something wrong whether intentionally or unintentionally; a failure to follow the rules of an examination or assessment. This policy 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 (GR)
- a breach of awarding body requirements regarding how a qualification should be delivered
- a failure to follow established procedures in relation to a qualification

At ASFC malpractice may be applied to any or all of the following qualifications, or components, thereof, offered at ASFC. These include:

- GCSE L2
- A Levels
- BTEC Level 3/AAQ
- NCFE Cache L3
- T Levels
- Any other vocational L2 or L3

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 assessment; the presentation of any practical work, the compilation of portfolios of assessment evidence and the writing of any examination paper as per Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures (SMPP2)

The following items are unauthorised items in an exam venue and constitute malpractice if in the candidate's possession:

- Mobile phones (exception: medical requirement)
- A watch of any kind
- Fitness trackers worn on wrist or elsewhere
- Headphones, earbuds air pods etc.
- Any web-enabled device or any kind (exception: medical requirement)
- Subject notes /assessment material being removed from venue
- Calculator lids or cases
- Folded tissues / packets of tissues.

Candidates can also be cited for malpractice for poor and/or disruptive behaviour or communication of any kind once under exam conditions.

Centre staff malpractice tends to usually be aspects of maladministration:

- Failure to follow JCQ regulations regarding security of exam scripts
- Failure to report on suspected malpractice
- Inappropriate processes/procedures in conducting controlled assessments or non-examination assessments
- Misuse of exam materials / providing inappropriate assistance to candidates

Plagiarism and Misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by Candidates

Plagiarism and misuse of AI is malpractice and may result in loss of marks for the assessment or disqualification for the subject in question. The Centre to ensure that:

- Candidates are made aware of, and have access to JCQ regulations for written examinations and Instructions for Conducting Non-Exam Assessments, and understand the definition of plagiarism and misuse of AI, including penalties for not citing references of work which is not their own. Ref: AI use in assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
- Candidates understand the risk(s) of using AI;
- Candidates understand the importance of submitting their own independent work (a result of their own efforts, independent research, etc) for assessment and stress to them and to their parents/carers the risks of malpractice;
- Candidates are warned about the misuse of AI tools, and of the penalties for not citing AI tool references by name, date of use and how AI was utilised; as well as the potential dangers of relying on AI-produced information.
- Candidates understand how to reference their work, including when using websites and how to correctly reference AI sources, including taking screenshots;
- Candidates are required to sign and date declarations of Learner Authentication for work produced and/or submitted as part of controlled assessments and/or non-exam assessments
- Teachers and other staff are aware that they must not use AI tools as the sole marker of student work (see AI use and marking in AI Use In Assessment: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications).

Preventing Malpractice

The Centre will:

1. 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).

This will be done by informing candidates, teaching staff, support staff, invigilators and parents of JCQ rules, regulations and unauthorised exam materials. Dissemination of information will be via the following methods:

- i. Completion of National Centre Number (NCN) Declaration by Head of Centre, confirming the understanding of the teaching staff of the JCQ rules and regulations pertaining to malpractice;
- ii. Face-to-face student tutorials conducted by Examinations Manager to explain JCQ rules and regulations;
- iii. Distribution of Examinations Handbook to learners to relay JCQ rules and regulations and ASFC expectations and rules of conduct for exams;

- iv. Additional face-to-face student tutorials conducted by ASFC Senior Tutors to explain JCQ rules and regulations;
- v. Publication of JCQ rules and regulations on ASFC student information portal; ASFC staff portal and ASFC website;
- vi. Mandated annual training conducted for all current and new invigilators with a minimum of 2 additional refresher training courses throughout the academic year but prior to the summer exam series, including explanation of JCQ rules and regulations pertaining to malpractice;
- vii. Visual prompts of unauthorised exam materials by way of posters around the exam venues and public spaces, including full details on Exam Department Display Board;
- viii. Open-door policy to visit Exams Department and speak to any member of the team about JCQ rules and regulations;
- ix. Published email bespoke to Exams Department, with instructions where candidates and or parent/guardians can request information/clarification of JCQ rules and regulations.
- x. AI strategy and statement visuals in place in relation to assessment, to help staff and students understand the use of AI in assessments as defined in JCQ's [AI use in assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications](#)

2. Following initial investigations, the Examinations Manager will inform the awarding body (AB) immediately of any alleged, suspected or actual incident of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member or staff, by completing the appropriate documentation:

This will be facilitated by applying vigilance and methodical record keeping (Section3.) together with ongoing consultation with Senior Leaders, *particularly* in the case of suspected *staff* malpractice or maladministration.

- i. Staff awareness and understanding of the current JCQ Suspected Malpractice-Policies and Procedures
- ii. Electronic access to JCQ Malpractice forms;
- iii. SLT consultation, support, approval pertaining to any alleged, suspected or actual incidence of malpractice;
- iv. Examinations Manager (EM) to contact the relevant AB immediately to advise of alleged, suspected or actual incident with explanation of documentation to follow;
- v. Witness statements to be gathered immediately, at the time of the incident and perpetrator to be advised of process of recording and reporting.

3. As required by an AB, gather evidence of any instances of alleged or suspected malpractice (which includes maladministration) in accordance with the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice-Policies and Procedures and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require:

This will be facilitated by applying vigilance and methodical record keeping in the following ways:

- i. Ensuring that invigilators and staff accurately record all incidents of concern in exam venue when under exam conditions pertaining to suspected or actual malpractice;
 - ii. Ensuring that teaching / moderating staff are particularly vigilant in reviewing/monitoring candidate work, particularly pertaining to rules about identifying resources, and checking for the potential of inappropriate use of AI technology;
 - iii. Comprehending what exam resources are required for each exam, controlled assessment or non-exam assessment and ensuring there is no unauthorised access to materials, including the internet when not allowed.
4. Candidates or staff suspected of malpractice must be advised of the possible sanctions that could be applied for the suspected malpractice, given the opportunity to include a personal statement to be in the malpractice submission and are referred to the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice-Policies and Procedures and updated JCQ Appeals Against Suspected Malpractice information. Parents/guardians of candidates to be contacted by the Examinations Manager after the Candidate's Senior Tutor has been informed/advised of suspected candidate malpractice, as appropriate.
5. Malpractice/Maladministration outcomes from Awarding Body to be communicated via college email to students and parents/guardians as appropriate. Senior Tutors and Heads of Department to be updated via college's online information/communication platform, Cedar. Any actions required to be addressed by EM, authorised by Principal and forwarded, within requested timeframe to AB, as required.

Appeals against Malpractice Decisions

Ashton Sixth Form College is committed to ensuring that all cases of suspected malpractice are handled fairly, consistently and in accordance with both JCQ and individual examination board procedures (as relevant).

If a student feels that this has not happened in relation to their case, they should in the first instance discuss this with the Examinations Manager to be clear about the process by which the decision was reached. This should normally satisfy any concerns. However, if not, the student may make use of this internal appeals procedure. It should be noted that both the internal appeals procedure and appeals to the awarding body may only be based on 'reasonable grounds', defined as:

- the incident was not dealt with in accordance with the published procedures in the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments / other exam board regulations as relevant.
- the decision was unreasonable in light of the evidence presented
- further evidence (including medical evidence) has come to light which changes the basis of the awarding body's decision
- the sanction imposed is disproportionate to the seriousness of the malpractice

This JCQ guidance on appeals is available on request.

1. Appeals should be made as soon as possible and before the date stated in the outcome letter.
2. Appeals should be made in writing to the Principal but should be sent care of the Examinations Manager in view of the tight deadlines in operation.
3. The Principal will nominate a senior member of staff who was not involved in the initial investigation to review the case. A conclusion should be reached as a matter of urgency bearing in mind, where relevant, the deadline for an appeal to be submitted to the relevant Examination Board.
4. The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the student in writing.
5. If the appeal is in relation to an exam board decision, and it is agreed that there are grounds for it to be challenged, the Examinations Manager will liaise with the Principal to ensure that the correct paperwork is submitted as quickly as possible.
6. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they have the opportunity to request a meeting with the Principal. The request must be received care of the Examinations Manager within two working days of the outcome being communicated.
7. The student may attend the meeting with their parents/carers. The Principal may also invite the Examinations Manager and/or other members of staff as appropriate.
8. At the end of the meeting, if the student is not happy with the outcome, the matter will be considered by the *whole* of the Senior Leadership Team. Their decision will be final.
9. The outcome of the appeal and any meeting will be held on record in the Examinations Department for a period of at least two years.
10. A written record of the appeal will be made available to the Examination Board at their request.