



The Thomas Hardye School

# Malpractice Policy (Exams) 2025/26

Approved/reviewed by

R. Turberville-Smith

Date of next review

Autumn Term  
2026

## Key staff involved in the exams policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	<b>Mr N Rutherford</b>
Exams Manager line manager (Senior leader)	<b>Mrs L Morrison</b>
Exams Manager	<b>Mrs C Boyles</b>
SENCo	<b>Ms H Rowden</b>
SLT member(s)	<b>M J Dean, Mrs C Noble, Ms C Tanner, Mr R Nicholls, Mrs R Glennie, Mr S Walker</b>

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at The Thomas Hardy School 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.

### What are malpractice and maladministration?

“Malpractice” and “maladministration” are distinct but 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 work “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 or any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre (SMPP1).

## **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 non-examination assessments, the presentation of any practical work, the compilation of portfolios of assessment evidence and the completion of any examination (SMPP2).

## **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 (SMPP2).

## **Centre malpractice**

“Centre malpractice” normally involves malpractice where there is an element of systemic failure, a breach in policies or widespread malpractice such that a centre-level sanction is appropriate (SMPP Ap 2 Part 1).

## **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 1.9) (SMPP2).

## **Purposes of the policy**

To confirm that The Thomas Hardy School 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, The Thomas Hardy School will:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place (GC 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**

The Thomas Hardy School has in place robust processes to prevent and identify malpractice, as outlined in section 3 of the JCQ document **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures**.

This includes ensuring that staff involved in the delivery of assessments and examinations understand the requirements for conducting these as specified in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures (SMPP 3.2).

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

At the start of each year, the exams office sends all teachers the all the information for candidates documents as well as all the documents referred to above (SMPP3.2) to explain the exam process in its entirety, and display then in their classroom, as a constant reminder. This message is repeated in the mocks and in assembly before the exams start.

In Year 10, at the start of the GCSEs, candidates are informed of the appropriate/inappropriate use of AI. This is reinforced at the start of mocks and in an assembly before the start of exam season.

Candidates are made aware of the malpractice process, including the escalation to the awarding body and the sanctions which might be imposed if malpractice is found to have taken place.

In addition, candidates are given the opportunity to hand in mobile phones or other electronic devices which are kept in the main school reception.

A member of SLT is in place to provide effective support and supervision for the examination officer to ensure the integrity and security of examinations and assessments are maintained.

### **AI use in assessments**

- AI misuse is plagiarism of written content. It is commonly misused in education when writing non-examination assessment (NEA) and coursework components. Candidates use AI to copy or paraphrase existing work without reference to the work of others
- Students who misuse AI such that the work they submit for assessment is not their own will have committed malpractice, in accordance with JCQ regulations. Students and staff are made aware of the risks of using AI and students are informed to make sure the work they submit is their own work. Teachers and assessors are aware they must not accept work which they consider not the work of any individual student. Staff must investigate and take appropriate action for any misuse of AI
- Candidates are made aware, by their subject teacher, of appropriate and inappropriate use of AI, the risks of using AI, and the possible consequences of using AI inappropriately in a qualification assessment:
  - Having to re-do NEA/coursework if AI has been used before a declaration has been signed.

- Work not being submitted to the awarding body as AI misuse is discovered and the declaration has been signed.
- The awarding body identifies AI misuse when marking/moderating NEA/coursework and the candidate's work is not counted
- AI misuse affects other components for the same qualification awarding body
- AI misuse affects a candidate's option to take exams with any awarding organisation
- Teachers and assessors are trained in AI (in particular Chatbox) in order to identify misuse by students but are aware that they cannot solely rely on this to detect malpractice. Staff are trained and remain vigilant in looking for inconsistencies in student work (i.e. use of advanced terminology, change of tone, unrealistic references, abrupt changes in performance etc.).

*See Appendix 1 for more information on AI.*

## **Identification and reporting of malpractice**

### **Escalating suspected malpractice issues**

Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre has a responsibility to report it to the Head of Centre, the Deputy Headteacher and the Exams Officer.

Any malpractice found in coursework/NEA will be investigated and all records updated accordingly.

*Note: should a candidate's work (i.e. coursework, NEA...) be rejected by the centre on grounds of malpractice, the candidate in question can request an internal appeal against this decision.*

### **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)
- Candidate malpractice offences relating to the content of work (i.e. inappropriate/offensive content, copying/collusion, plagiarism (including AI misuse) and/or false declaration of authentication) which are discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment component prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication, do not need to be reported to the awarding body. Instead, they will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures.
- Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment where the offence does not relate to the content of candidates' work (e.g. possession of unauthorised materials, breach of assessment conditions) or

where a candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, must be reported using a JCQ M1 to the relevant awarding body. If, at the time of the malpractice, there is no entry for that candidate (who the centre intended to enter), the centre is required to submit an entry by the required entry deadline. (SMPP 4.5)

- If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence that an individual may have committed malpractice, that individual (the candidate or the member of staff) will be informed of all the required information and the accused individual informed of their rights and responsibilities (SMPP 5.33-3.4)
- Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information-gatherer) will submit a written report to the relevant awarding body summarising the information obtained and actions taken, 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)

### **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**

The Thomas Hardy School 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**

## Appendix 1

### AI – Additional Information

AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications.

While the range of AI tools, and their capabilities, is likely to expand greatly in the near future, misuse of AI tools in relation to qualification assessments at any time constitutes malpractice.

Teachers and students should also be aware that AI tools are still being developed and there are often limitations to their use, such as producing inaccurate or inappropriate content.

AI chatbots are AI tools which generate text in response to user prompts and questions. Users can ask follow-up questions or ask the chatbot to revise the responses already provided. AI chatbots respond to prompts based upon patterns in the data sets (large language model) upon which they have been trained. They generate responses which are statistically likely to be relevant and appropriate. AI chatbots can complete tasks such as the following:

- Answering questions
- Analysing, improving, and summarising text
- Authoring essays, articles, fiction, and non-fiction
- Writing computer code
- Translating text from one language to another
- Generating new ideas, prompts, or suggestions for a given topic or theme
- Generating text with specific attributes, such as tone, sentiment, or format.

### What is AI Misuse

AI misuse constitutes malpractice as defined in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/>). The malpractice sanctions available for the offences of ‘making a false declaration of authenticity’ and ‘plagiarism’ include disqualification and debarment from taking qualifications for a number of years. Students’ marks may also be affected if they have relied on AI to complete an assessment and, as noted above, the attainment that they have demonstrated in relation to the requirements of the qualification does not accurately reflect their own work.

Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work is no longer the student’s own
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the student’s own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools
- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies.

### Acknowledging AI Use

If a student uses an AI tool which provides details of the sources it has used in generating content, these sources must be verified by the student and referenced in their work in the normal way.

Where an AI tool does not provide such details, students should ensure that they independently verify the AI-generated content – and then reference the sources they have used.

In addition to the above, where students use AI, they must acknowledge its use and show clearly how they have used it. This allows teachers and assessors to review how AI has been used and whether that use was appropriate in the context of the particular assessment. This is particularly important given that AI-generated content is not subject to the same academic scrutiny as other published sources.

Where AI tools have been used as a source of information, a student's acknowledgement must show the name of the AI source used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>), 25/01/2023. The student must retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes, in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how it has been used. This must be submitted with the work so the teacher/assessor is able to review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used. Where this is not submitted, and the teacher/assessor suspects that the student has used AI tools, the teacher/assessor will need to consult the centre's malpractice policy for appropriate next steps and should take action to assure themselves that the work is the student's own.

*See <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/artificial-intelligence/> for further information.*