



**Alleged, suspected or actual
incidents of malpractice**

2026/27

Introduction

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)

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. (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 (SMPP 2)

Suspected malpractice

For the purposes of this document, suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice. (SMPP2)

Purpose of the policy

To confirm Barnhill Community High School School:

- 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 Barnhill Community High School 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

- 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 Centres 2026-2027; Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE) 2026-2027; Instructions for conducting coursework 2026-2027; Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2026-2027; Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2026-2027; A guide to the special consideration process 2026-2027; Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures 2026- 2027; Plagiarism in Assessments; AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications; A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2026-2027 (SMPP 3.3.1)

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

Malpractice, and how to avoid committing it, is explained to candidates in briefings prior to the Year 11 Mock examinations and the live summer exams. Information is also included in the Candidate Exam Handbook, and the various JCQ publications regarding malpractice are displayed on the Exams section of Firefly early in the Autumn term each academic year.

AI Use in Assessments

Students complete the majority of assessments under close centre supervision with access only to authorised materials.

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)

Suspected malpractice should be reported to the Exams Officer in the first instance. Suspected malpractice or maladministration on the part of the Exams Officer should be reported to the Deputy Headteacher in charge of Exams.

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 4.1.3)
- 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 informationgatherer) 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)

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

Barnhill Community High 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 publication A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes

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.

Alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice

- ▶ Malpractice, as defined by the JCQ, is:
“any act, default or practice which is a breach of the Regulations or which:
 - compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result of certificate;
 - and/or**
 - damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer employee or agent of any awarding body or centre”[JCQ Suspected Malpractice 2026-27, p. 4]
- ▶ Examples of malpractice include, but are not limited to: plagiarism (copying); communication with other candidates; possession of unauthorised materials eg electronic or web-enabled devices (such as mobile phones or smart watches), notes, books, etc; failure to follow the instructions of the invigilator/s; disruptive behaviour in the exam room; Use of AI in NEA, GQ and VTQs
- ▶ A broader list of examples can be found on p.39-42 of the *JCQ Suspected Malpractice 2026-27* document (appendix 2)
- ▶ AI policy is a separate document where details of Malpractice and actions are recorded – The internal AI Exam policy is available on school website and more information from JCQ can be found on https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/AI-Use-in-Assessments_Apr26_FINAL.pdf
- ▶ Centres have an obligation to report any incident of suspected malpractice to the relevant awarding body
- ▶ Barnhill exam team will ensure that any reports of malpractice are digitally collated into a Malpractice folder online.
- ▶ Consequences of malpractice include: an official warning; loss of all marks for a section; loss of all marks for a unit; loss of all marks for a component; disqualification from the whole qualification; disqualification from all qualifications in that series; candidate debarred (where a candidate is not permitted to sit any exams for a set period of time)

Leaked papers

A leaked paper can simply be a hint or a question from the paper, no matter how minor. Any information from the paper should NOT be seen by anyone until the moment that the students are allowed to open the paper as instructed by their invigilator.

With regards to the advancement of technology, the spread of any information from any centre or paper can easily happen.

Whether you are a student or a member of staff, you HAVE TO report any possible leak. Failure to do so can involve the police and be considered as a crime.

Possible signs of a leaked paper are:

- A student repeatedly mentioning a certain subject that s/he read on the internet or hear from the peers than can come up in the exam. At this point the member of staff / teacher needs to take this serious and report this to the Head of the school and the exams officer.
- Unusual focus on a specific subject
- Lack of interest in a wider area of study for the subject.

Examples of leaked papers

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jun/25/two-arrested-a-level-exam-leak-investigation-edexcel>

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/jun/23/police-investigate-leak-of-gcse-religious-studies-exam-paper>

Barnhill Community High School

At Barnhill Community High School we take any Malpractice very seriously, hence students and staff are made aware of any possibility of Malpractice.

- **It is essential that both the candidates and teachers all understand the what constitutes Malpractice, and their responsibility to report instances of Malpractice. Candidates should report suspected Malpractice to a teacher, curriculum leader, member of SLT, or the Exams Officer, as soon as possible.**
- **The members of staff at the school also have a duty to immediately report any instances of Malpractice to the Head of Centre or the Exams Officer. If the Head of Centre or Exams Officer is not available, they should notify the relevant awarding body.**
- **Any other suspicious conduct, not matter how Minor. Any mean of communication which would make the student aware of the paper before the start of the exam needs to be immediately reported.**

The candidates are instructed to report any suspicions of leaked papers to senior authorities at school such as:

- **Head of the centre (head of school)**
- **Examinations officer**
- **Deputy Head teacher or assistant head teachers**
- **To any other staff member**
- **If any other staff member is informed, the staff member must report to the persons above immediately or as soon as it is reasonably possible.**
- **Candidates who wish to report malpractice will be given immediate access to the key staff cited above.**
- **If, due to circumstances, it is not possible to for the candidates to report to any of the above personnel, the candidate should then report the suspicion to the examination board.**

Equally important, at Barnhill Community High school, we make sure the staff are aware of any Malpractice, such as the possibility of leaked papers:

- **Staff are given awareness training as to leaked papers, and guidance on how best to recognise them.**
- **A formal means of reporting via a proforma will be used to ensure staff understand how to report and that there is a clear record of them having done so in a formal format.**
- **A signed declaration to report any suspicions of malpractice, no matter how minor**

Appendix 1: Malpractice Report form

Malpractice Report form

FOR CENTRE USE ONLY	
Date received	
Reference No.	

Name	Name (if different to appellant)
Candidate name if different	
Please state the Malpractice you believe has taken place.	
If your statement is lengthy please write as bullet points; please keep to the point and include relevant detail such as dates, names etc. and provide any evidence you may have to support what you say <i>If necessary, continue on an additional page if this form is being completed electronically or overleaf if hard copy being completed</i>	
Appellant signature:	Date of signature:

This form must be completed in full; an incomplete form will be returned

Appendix 2: Malpractice Report log

On receipt, all complaints/appeals are assigned a reference number and logged electronically in a secure area. Outcome and outcome date is also recorded.

Ref No.	Date received	Appeal	Outcome	Outcome date

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