TRUST IN LEARNING (ACADEMIES)

EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE POLICY

Approval Date: April 2025	Version: 01	Review: annual
Approval By: Directors	Lead: Director of School Improvement	Review date: January 2026
As part of the review process, this policy/procedure has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.		

History of Policy Changes:

Date	Page	Change	Reason for Change
April 2025		New policy	New over-arching policy for the Trust

Contents

1. Statement of Intent

At Trust in Learning (Academies), we are committed to ensuring the integrity of all examinations and assessments by upholding rigorous standards, as outlined in the **Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) "Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures" (2024)**. This policy also takes into account findings from the **Department for Education's (DfE) statistics and guidance on malpractice in the Summer 2023 exam series** to address trends and best practices.

Malpractice, whether by candidates, staff, or others involved in the examination process, undermines the validity of qualifications and the reputation of the school. This policy sets out clear expectations and procedures to prevent, detect, and respond to instances of malpractice, ensuring compliance with JCQ regulations and safeguarding the fairness of all assessments.

2. Values and Principles

This Trust Policy is set out with the following principles at its core:

Trust in Learning Academies is a family of schools each with a distinctive identity, collaborating to strengthen and support each other. We deliver high quality education with evidence-informed approaches to teaching, learning and the curriculum. Inclusion is at the heart of all we do. We actively listen to the voices of our pupils, staff and communities. Every school makes deliberate choices to be sustainable and globally focused.

The Trust vision is to:
- Inspire pupils to trust in learning and achieve their full potential
- To empower pupils to have confidence in their successes to make a positive contribution to the world
- To remove barriers to learning and help transform the lives of our pupils

Any data collected, stored or managed as a result of this policy is in accordance with UK and any relevant retained or assimilated EU law, and in line with the Trust's ethos and values.

This Policy has been framed in accordance with the guidance on best practice from the Department for Education (DfE).

3. Objectives and Scope

3.1 Objectives

The Examination Malpractice Policy aims to:

- Define malpractice in accordance with JCQ's "Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures," including examples of candidate, staff, and centre malpractice
- Prevent malpractice through robust policies, training, and communication of expectations
- Ensure a transparent and fair investigation process for all reported instances of malpractice, in compliance with JCQ's guidelines
- Protect the integrity of qualifications by maintaining robust security, confidentiality, and examination conduct standards

3.2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- **Candidates**: Covers actions during examinations, assessments, and coursework. Examples include cheating, plagiarism, or possession of unauthorized materials
- **Staff**: Includes inappropriate assistance to candidates, breaches of examination security, or falsification of assessment records
- **Others**: Covers impersonation, tampering with scripts, and actions undermining the examination process

The policy is aligned with the JCQ's "Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures," ensuring compliance with awarding body regulations. It also considers trends outlined in the **DfE report on GCSE, AS, and A-level malpractice in the Summer 2023 exam series**, emphasizing the need for secure digital practices and safeguarding against common breaches.

This policy works in conjunction with:

- **Safeguarding Policy**: Protecting pupils from undue pressure or coercion
- **Behaviour Policy**: Reinforcing conduct expectations during examinations
- **Data Protection Policy**: Ensuring the confidentiality of examination materials and records

For more information on JCQ regulations, refer to JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures.

4. Responsibilities and Accountabilities

4.1 Responsibilities of the Trust central team

- To ensure that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation
- To ensure the policy is well communicated to all Headteachers
- To ensure that the policy is regularly reviewed

4.2 Responsibilities of the Headteacher
- To oversee the consistent implementation of the Exam Malpractice Policy, ensuring that all staff follow procedures for identifying, reporting, and addressing suspected malpractice in line with awarding body regulations
- To regularly review and evaluate reporting systems, investigation procedures, staff training, and the impact of interventions to ensure malpractice risks are minimised and addressed effectively
- To coordinate the dissemination of the policy to all relevant staff and students through briefings, training, and written guidance, ensuring clarity on roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to malpractice
- To investigate and respond to complaints or allegations related to exam malpractice from students, parents, or staff, ensuring all cases are handled fairly, documented appropriately, and escalated when necessary

4.3 Responsibilities of school leaders
- To ensure staff are inducted into the procedures surrounding this policy and any updates
- To provide training to ensure policy compliance
- To hold sessions for staff and pupils as required, to ensure the policy is understood

4.4 Responsibilities of all staff
- To uphold the whole school approach to the policy through modelling expected standards and utilising appropriate procedures
- To keep up to date with policy changes over time
- To promote a collaborative and inclusive ethos where all pupils can thrive
- To feed back to school leaders where concerns may arise in the implementation of the policy

4.5 Responsibilities of parents
- To support the implementation of the policy with the child
- Where a parent has feedback on the implementation of the policy, to raise this directly with the school while continuing to work in partnership with the school
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4.6 Responsibilities of pupils
- To uphold school rules and expectations and thereby comply with the implementation of the policy
- To feed back on the implementation of the policy through appropriate means, such as school council, to school staff

5. Policy

5.1 General Principles

Our schools 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)

5.2 Preventing malpractice

TiLA schools have:
- 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 2024-2025
- Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE) 2024-2025
- Instructions for conducting coursework 2024-2025
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2024-2025
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2024-2025
- A guide to the special consideration process 2024-2025
- Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures 2024-2025
- Plagiarism in Assessments
- AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
- A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes (effective from June 2024)

5.3 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT, MS CoPilot and Google Gemini.
We recognise that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.
Pupils may not use AI tools:
• During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
• To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

Pupils may use AI tools:
• As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas
• When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed
• Where a pupil uses an AI tool, the pupil should retain a copy of the question(s) asked and the AI-generated responses. Pupils must submit this along with the assessment

Staff should:

• Be aware that AI tools are still being developed and should use such tools with caution as they may provide inaccurate, inappropriate or biased content
• Make students aware of the risks of using AI tools and that they need to appropriately reference AI as a source of information to maintain the integrity of assessments

For more information on AI misuse, see JCQ's *AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications*. Any misuse of AI tools may be treated as malpractice.

5.4 Informing and advising candidates

A candidate briefing is held at the start of each academic year and, again, before the start of the summer exam season. This briefing will highlight best practice and also covers examples of learner malpractice (as outlined in appendix B).

5.5 Definition of Malpractice

This policy adopts the definitions and examples from JCQ's "Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures" document. Key forms of malpractice include:

- **Candidate Malpractice**: Copying, collusion, impersonation, or misuse of unauthorized devices such as smartwatches or phones
- **Centre or Staff Malpractice**: Failure to adhere to JCQ instructions, providing inappropriate assistance, or falsifying results
- **Systemic Malpractice**: Breaches of examination material confidentiality or tampering with scripts or assessments

5.6 Preventative Measures

To minimize malpractice risks:

- All candidates will receive a copy of JCQ's **"Information for Candidates"** and instructions on expected conduct
- Examination officers and invigilators will undergo regular training on JCQ regulations, including spotting signs of malpractice
- Examination materials will be stored securely, in compliance with JCQ standards, with access limited to authorized personnel

5.7 Reporting and Investigation

- Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre can report it using the appropriate channels (SMPP 4.3)
- Any suspected malpractice must be reported immediately to the head of the centre or examination officer
- Investigations will follow the JCQ's guidelines, ensuring fairness and transparency

- Confirmed cases will be reported to the awarding body for further action, with sanctions ranging from warnings to disqualification, as appropriate
- Concerns regarding the Exams Officer should be reported to the Head of Centre
- Concerns about the Head of Centre should be reported to the CEO

5.8 Monitoring and Trends

To strengthen examination processes, the Trust will:

- Analyse malpractice trends from DfE statistics (e.g., 2024 reports highlighted increases in technology misuse and staff-related breaches)
- Share findings and updates with staff and students to continuously improve compliance

5.9 Communication and Training

- Regular updates will be shared with candidates and staff on JCQ regulations and best practices
- Parents will be informed of the malpractice policy and its implications, ensuring a unified approach to examination integrity
- Training sessions will focus on practical steps to maintain security and recognize risks during assessments

Appendix A – Examples of Staff Malpractice

The following are examples of staff malpractice. This is not an exhaustive list. Other instances of malpractice may be identified and considered by the awarding bodies at their discretion.

Breach of security
- Any act which breaks the confidentiality of question papers or materials, and their electronic equivalents, or the confidentiality of candidates' scripts or their electronic equivalents.

It could involve:
- failing to keep examination material secure prior to an examination
- discussing or otherwise revealing secure information in public, e.g. internet forums
- moving the time or date of a fixed examination beyond the arrangements permitted within the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- Conducting an examination before the published date constitutes centre staff malpractice and a clear breach of security

o failing to supervise adequately candidates who have been affected by a timetable variation; (This would apply to candidates subject to overnight supervision by centre personnel or where an examination is to be sat in an earlier or later session on the scheduled day).

o permitting, facilitating or obtaining unauthorised access to examination material prior to an examination

o failing to retain and secure examination question papers after an examination in cases where the life of the paper extends beyond the particular session. For example, where an examination is to be sat in a later session by one or more candidates due to a timetable variation

o tampering with candidate scripts or controlled assessments or coursework after collection and before despatch to the awarding body/examiner/moderator

   o (This would additionally include reading candidates' scripts or photocopying candidates' scripts prior to despatch to the awarding body/examiner. The only instance where photocopying a candidate's script is permissible is where he/she has been granted the use of a transcript).

o failing to keep candidates' computer files secure which contain controlled assessments or coursework

Deception

- Any act of dishonesty in relation to an examination or assessment, but not limited to:
   o inventing or changing marks for internally assessed components (e.g. coursework) where there is no actual evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks awarded
   o manufacturing evidence of competence against national standards
   o fabricating assessment and/or internal verification records or authentication statements
   o entering fictitious candidates for examinations or assessments, or otherwise subverting the assessment or certification process with the intention of financial gain (fraud)
   o substituting one candidate's controlled assessment or coursework for another

Improper assistance to candidates

- Any act where assistance is given beyond that permitted by the specification or regulations to a candidate or group of candidates, which results in a potential or actual advantage in an examination or assessment
   o For example: assisting candidates in the production of controlled assessments or coursework, or evidence of achievement, beyond that permitted by the regulations
   o sharing or lending candidates' controlled assessments or coursework with other candidates in a way which allows malpractice to take place
   o assisting or prompting candidates with the production of answers
   o permitting candidates in an examination to access prohibited materials (dictionaries, calculators etc.)
   o prompting candidates in an examination/assessment by means of signs, or verbal or written prompts
   o assisting candidates granted the use of an Oral Language Modifier, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader, a scribe or a Sign Language Interpreter beyond that permitted by the regulations. Failure to co-operate with an investigation
   o failure to make available information reasonably requested by an awarding body in the course of an investigation, or in the course of deciding whether an investigation is necessary; and/orfailure to investigate on request in accordance with the awarding body's instructions or advice; and/or failure to investigate or provide information according to agreed deadlines; and/or failure to report all suspicions of malpractice.

Appendix B – Examples of Learner Malpractice

The following are examples of learner malpractice. This is not an exhaustive list. Other instances of malpractice may be identified and considered by the awarding bodies at their discretion. For example:

- the alteration or falsification of any results document, including certificates
- a breach of the instructions or advice of an invigilator, supervisor, or the awarding body in relation to the examination or assessment rules and regulations
- failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to maintain the security of the examinations or assessments
- collusion: working collaboratively with other candidates, beyond what is permitted
- copying from another candidate (including the use of IT to aid the copying)
- allowing work to be copied e.g. posting written coursework on social networking sites prior to an examination/assessment
- the deliberate destruction of another candidate's work
- disruptive behaviour in the examination room or during an assessment session (including the use of offensive language)
- exchanging, obtaining, receiving, passing on information (or the attempt to) which could be examination related by means of talking, electronic, written or non-verbal communication
- making a false declaration of authenticity in relation to the authorship of controlled assessments, coursework or the contents of a portfolio
- allowing others to assist in the production of controlled assessments, coursework or assisting others in the production of controlled assessments or coursework
- the misuse, or the attempted misuse, of examination and assessment materials and resources (e.g. exemplar materials)
- being in possession of confidential material in advance of the examination
- bringing into the examination room notes in the wrong format (where notes are permitted in examinations) or inappropriately annotated texts (in open book examinations)
- the inclusion of inappropriate, offensive or obscene material in scripts, controlled assessments, coursework or portfolios
- impersonation: pretending to be someone else, arranging for another person to take
  one's place in an examination or an assessment
- plagiarism: unacknowledged copying from published sources or incomplete referencing
- theft of another candidate's work; For further information see Appendix E Plagiarism
- bringing into the examination room or assessment situation unauthorised material, for example: notes, study guides and personal organisers, own blank paper, calculators (when prohibited), dictionaries (when prohibited), instruments which can capture a digital image, electronic dictionaries (when prohibited), translators, wordlists, glossaries, iPods, mobile phones, earphones/earbuds, Airpods, watches or other similar electronic devices
- the unauthorised use of a memory stick or similar device where a candidate uses a word processor
- behaving in a manner so as to undermine the integrity of the examination
- Improper use of AI

Appendix C – Examples of Maladministration

The following are examples of maladministration. This is not an exhaustive list. Other instances of maladministration may be identified and considered by the awarding bodies at their discretion.

Failure to adhere to the regulations regarding the conduct of controlled assessments, coursework and examinations or malpractice in the conduct of the examinations/assessments and/or the handling of examination question papers, candidate scripts, mark sheets, cumulative assessment records, results and certificate claim forms, etc.

For example:

- failing to ensure that candidates' coursework or work to be completed under controlled conditions is adequately monitored and supervised
- inappropriate members of staff assessing candidates for access arrangements who do not meet the criteria as detailed within Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- failure to use current assignments for assessments
- failure to train invigilators adequately, leading to non-compliance with the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- failing to issue to candidates the appropriate notices and warnings, e.g. JCQ Information for candidates documents
- failure to inform the JCQ Centre Inspection Service of alternative sites for examinations
- failing to post notices relating to the examination or assessment outside all rooms (including Music and Art rooms) where examinations and assessments are held
- not ensuring that the examination venue conforms to the requirements as stipulated in the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- the introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room, either prior to or during the examination; (N.B. this precludes the use of the examination room to coach candidates or give subject-specific presentations, including power-point presentations, prior to the start of the examination)