Amplify Education

Examination Malpractice Policy

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April 2026		New policy	New over-arching policy for the Trust

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1. Introduction or Statement of Intent

Amplify Education is committed to ensuring the integrity, fairness and security of all examinations and assessments. This policy sets out the Trust's approach to preventing, identifying and responding to malpractice in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures* 2025–26, JCQ *General Regulations for Approved Centres* 2025–26, and all relevant awarding body requirements.

Malpractice undermines the validity of qualifications, the reputation of the Trust, and the achievements of pupils.

Amplify Education will maintain robust systems, training and oversight to safeguard the integrity of assessments, including digital assessments, online systems and the ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI). The Trust will ensure that all staff, pupils, parents and third-party providers understand their responsibilities in maintaining the highest standards of conduct.

2. Values, Principles and Standards

2.1 Values

Amplify is **a bold voice for Bristol** - speaking with ambition and channelling the city's spirit into a shared journey of belief, opportunity and citizenship.
We **build belief** in every young person, shaping a future where every voice matters, every story is heard, and every pupil moves forward with confidence.
We **expand opportunities** and nurture potential to enrich each pupil's journey with a passport of inclusive, academic, creative and musical experiences.
We **strengthen citizenship** through connecting communities, educating to build unity and pride. This is Bristol, represented.

Amplify's values of belief, opportunity and citizenship underpin this policy. The Trust is committed to ensuring that all assessments are conducted fairly, consistently and without discrimination. We uphold the principles of transparency, proportionality, procedural fairness and inclusion.

Amplify Education is committed to ensuring that this malpractice policy is applied equitably and does not disadvantage any pupils, including pupils with additional needs, pupils with disabilities and children who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL). The Trust recognises that some behaviours which may appear to

constitute malpractice can arise from unmet access needs, communication barriers, or misunderstanding of assessment rules.

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that assessment rules, expectations and consequences are communicated in accessible formats and clear language. Where concerns arise, investigations will take account of approved access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, SEND needs, language acquisition stage, and any relevant contextual factors, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No pupil will be penalised for behaviour arising directly from a disability, processing difficulty or language barrier, provided they have acted in good faith and within agreed access arrangements.

The Trust promotes a culture where academic honesty is expected, misconduct is challenged, and all pupils are supported to demonstrate their true abilities. The Trust recognises the importance of digital integrity, responsible use of AI, and secure handling of assessment materials in maintaining public confidence in qualifications.

3. Aims

- To protect the integrity and credibility of all examinations and assessments.
- To prevent malpractice through clear expectations, training and secure systems.
- To ensure that all staff, pupils and parents understand their responsibilities.
- To provide a fair, transparent and timely process for investigating suspected malpractice.
- To ensure compliance with JCQ and awarding body regulations.
- To ensure that AI misuse, digital breaches and cyber-security risks are effectively managed.
- To ensure that third-party providers meet the same standards of compliance as Trust staff.

4. Objectives and Scope

Centre malpractice includes any action by the centre, its staff, contractors or third-party providers that compromises the integrity, security or fair delivery of an examination or assessment, including failures in oversight, governance or compliance with JCQ regulations.

Providing knowingly inaccurate or misleading information to an awarding body, investigator or regulator constitutes malpractice.

The specific objectives of this policy are to:

- Define malpractice and maladministration in line with JCQ 2025–26.
- Set out preventative measures to minimise malpractice risk.
- Establish clear reporting and investigation procedures.
- Ensure secure handling of examination materials, including digital content.
- Ensure oversight of third-party providers involved in assessment delivery.
- Ensure that AI use is ethical, transparent and compliant with assessment rules.

4.1 Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2024)
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- JCQ 2025–26 suite of regulations
- Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition
- DfE Malpractice Statistics (2025)

4.2 Links to Trust policies

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- AI Use Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- NEA Policy
- Exam Contingencies Policy

This policy applies to:

- All candidates undertaking assessments
- All staff involved in assessment delivery
- Invigilators, contractors and third-party providers
- Parents/carers where relevant
- Any individual whose actions may impact the integrity of assessments

5. Communication

Trust schools will ensure that this policy is communicated clearly to staff, pupils and parents.

Annual briefings will be delivered to candidates and staff, including the distribution of JCQ *Information for Candidates*, *Social Media Guidance*, *Warning to Candidates* and *Unauthorised Items* notices.

Training will be provided annually for all staff involved in examinations, including updates on AI misuse, digital security and JCQ regulatory changes.

Parents will be informed of expectations and consequences relating to malpractice.

6. Responsibilities and accountabilities

6.1 Trust Central Team

- Ensure the policy is compliant, equitable and regularly reviewed.
- Provide oversight, training and support to schools.
- Monitor malpractice trends across the Trust.

6.2 Headteacher / Head of Centre

- Ensure full implementation of JCQ regulations.
- Ensure secure storage and handling of examination materials.
- Oversee reporting and investigation of malpractice.
- Ensure third-party providers comply with JCQ requirements.
- Ensure cyber-security measures protect assessment integrity.

6.3 School Leadership

- Ensure staff induction and training.
- Monitor compliance and risk.
- Ensure pupils and parents receive appropriate briefings.

6.4 All Staff

- Follow JCQ regulations and Trust procedures.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Maintain confidentiality and integrity of assessments.
- Use AI ethically, transparently and only where permitted.

6.5 Parents

- Support their child in meeting expectations.
- Raise concerns appropriately with the school.

6.6 Pupils

- Follow all examination rules and JCQ requirements.
- Avoid prohibited items and malpractice behaviours.
- Use AI ethically, transparently and only where permitted.

6.7 Exams Officer

- Manage secure storage and distribution of materials.
- Train and oversee invigilators.
- Maintain records and evidence.
- Report malpractice to awarding bodies.

6.8 Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- To ensure that any concerns relating to exam malpractice with a safeguarding dimension (including coercion, exploitation, undue pressure, or wellbeing concerns) are identified, assessed and acted upon in line with the Trust's Safeguarding Policy.
- To work with the Exams Officer, Head of Centre and senior leaders where malpractice intersects with safeguarding risks, ensuring information is shared appropriately and proportionately.
- To provide advice to staff where concerns arise about a pupil's vulnerability, external influence, or potential risk factors linked to malpractice.
- To ensure that safeguarding considerations are incorporated into staff training, including awareness of how stress, external pressure or online risks may contribute to malpractice behaviours.
- To ensure that any safeguarding disclosures made during malpractice investigations are managed in accordance with statutory guidance and Trust procedures.
- Where allegations of malpractice involve staff conduct that may constitute a safeguarding concern, the centre must consider referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in line with statutory guidance.

6.9 Responsibilities of Third-Party Providers

- To comply fully with JCQ regulations and all requirements set by Amplify Education when delivering any part of the examination or assessment process.

- To ensure that all staff involved in examination delivery are trained, competent and operating in line with JCQ 2025–26 expectations.
- To maintain the security and confidentiality of examination materials, including digital content, in accordance with JCQ and Trust procedures.
- To provide the Trust with all required documentation, incident reports and evidence relating to the conduct of assessments.
- To cooperate fully with any investigation into suspected malpractice or maladministration.
- To notify the Trust immediately of any breach, concern or incident that may compromise the integrity of an assessment.
- To ensure that any subcontracted or partner organisations also meet these standards.

6.10 Responsibilities of Alternative Venue Staff

- To ensure that the alternative venue meets all JCQ requirements for examination conditions, security and accessibility.
- To follow all instructions issued by the Exams Officer and Head of Centre regarding the conduct of examinations.
- To maintain secure storage and handling of examination materials while they are on site.
- To ensure that invigilation, supervision and candidate conduct meet JCQ standards.
- To report any concerns, incidents or suspected malpractice immediately to the Exams Officer or Head of Centre.
- To cooperate fully with Trust staff and awarding bodies during any investigation.
- To ensure that the venue environment supports fairness, consistency and compliance with all regulatory expectations.

Third-party providers may be used for alternative venues, external invigilation, access arrangements, digital assessment platforms, vocational assessments, logistics, IT support, or where pupils are educated off-site. The Head of Centre retains full accountability for ensuring all third-party activity complies with JCQ regulations.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Trust will monitor malpractice incidents, trends and compliance across all schools.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if JCQ or regulatory updates require changes. Findings will be reported to the Education Committee of the Trust Board and used to strengthen practice.

8. Reporting and Use of Information

All suspected malpractice must be reported immediately through the appropriate channels. Investigations will follow JCQ 2025–26 procedures, ensuring fairness, confidentiality and evidence-based decision-making. The centre must report all notifiable malpractice incidents to awarding bodies immediately, including any breach of confidentiality, security failure or incident that may compromise the integrity of an assessment, even where evidence is incomplete or unconfirmed.

The Trust will retain evidence securely in line with data protection requirements, including digital logs, AI prompts and metadata where relevant. Confirmed cases will be reported to awarding bodies, and sanctions will be applied in accordance with JCQ regulations.

Whistleblowing protections apply to anyone raising concerns in good faith.

During any investigation involving a pupil with additional needs, a pupil with a disability of a pupil with English as an Additional Language, the centre will ensure that:

- information is shared in an accessible and appropriate format;
- additional time is allowed to explain events where needed;
- support from a familiar adult, interpreter or advocate is considered where appropriate;
- conclusions distinguish clearly between deliberate malpractice and misunderstanding or unmet need.

Appendices

Appendix A – Examples of Staff Malpractice

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Breach of security
- Improper assistance to candidates
- Falsification of records
- Failure to follow JCQ procedures
- AI misuse
- Digital tampering or cyber-security breaches
- Failure to oversee third-party providers appropriately

Appendix B – Examples of Pupil Malpractice

Prohibited items include smart devices such as smart watches, smart glasses, wireless earbuds and any device capable of digital communication or storage.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Plagiarism
- Collusion
- Impersonation
- Use of prohibited items
- AI-generated work presented as own
- Digital collusion or online impersonation
- Disruptive behaviour

Appendix C – Examples of Maladministration

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Failure to follow JCQ regulations
- Incorrect storage or handling of materials
- Inadequate invigilator training
- Cyber-security failures
- Failure to issue required JCQ notices
- Use of outdated assessment materials
- Inadequate oversight of third-party providers

Appendix D – Malpractice: information for pupils

What is malpractice?

Malpractice means breaking exam or assessment rules in a way that could be unfair. This includes doing something wrongly on purpose or letting someone else do work for you.

Examples of malpractice

- Copying someone else's work
- Using a phone, smartwatch or other banned item
- Using AI or online tools when they are not allowed
- Asking someone else to help you during an exam
- Pretending to be another person

If you have a disability or use extra support

If you have:

- access arrangements
- SEND support
- a disability
- a learning difficulty

then these **will be taken into account**. You will **not** be treated unfairly because of your needs.

If English is not your first language

If you are still learning English:

- staff will try to explain rules clearly
- misunderstandings will be considered
- this policy will not be used unfairly against you

Always ask if you are unsure.

What should you do if you are not sure?

- Ask your teacher or exams officer
- Ask before the exam if something is allowed
- Never guess

Remember

The rules are there to be fair to everyone.
The school will listen to you and take your needs seriously.