



South  
Nottinghamshire  
Academy

## **Malpractice Policy (Exams)**

South Nottinghamshire Academy

## Malpractice Policy (Exams)

Centre name	South Nottinghamshire Academy
Centre number	28370
Date policy first created	07/11/2023
Current policy approved by	Dan Philpotts
Current policy reviewed by	Laura Sharpe
Date of review	10/12/2025
Date of next review	31/10/2026

## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of centre	Dan Philpotts
Senior leader(s)	Laura Sharpe Mark Siviter Dave Watkins Pietro Melfi
Exams officer	Kirsty Hird
Other staff (if applicable)	Tracey Cadman

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at South Nottinghamshire Academy 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**.

## Introduction

### 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 word '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 of any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre (SMPP 1)

### 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. (SMPP 2)

### 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)

### 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 2)

### 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). (SMPP 2)

## Purpose of the policy

To confirm South Nottinghamshire Academy:

- 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 South Nottinghamshire Academy will:

- 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)
- 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

South Nottinghamshire Academy has in place:

- Robust processes to prevent and identify malpractice, as outlined in section 3 of the JCQ document **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures**. (SMPP 4.3)
- This includes ensuring that 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 2025-2026
  - Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE) 2025-2026
  - Instructions for conducting coursework 2025-2026
  - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2025-2026
  - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-2026
  - A guide to the special consideration process 2025-2026
  - Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures 2025-2026 (this document)
  - Plagiarism in Assessments
  - AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
  - Post Results Services June 2025 and November 2025
  - A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2025-2026
  - Guidance for centres on cyber security

(SMPP 3.2)

Additional information:

Not applicable.

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

Both the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Curriculum & Exams and the Head of School deliver exams assemblies to candidates explaining what constitutes malpractice, the consequence of committing malpractice and how to avoid it. Relevant JCQ documents will be utilised to support these assemblies. The initial assembly will happen in the Autumn Term in preparation for mock exams and this will be repeated several times after Christmas in preparation for JCQ examinations.

Additionally students are issued with an exams handbook in advance of the first set of mock examinations which references malpractice, its consequences and how to avoid. This includes relevant JCQ supporting documents. The handbook and JCQ guidance are also uploaded to the SNA website and students and parents are signposted to this information.

### **AI use in assessments**

Students complete the majority of their exams and a large number of other assessments under close staff supervision with limited access to authorised materials and no permitted access to the internet. The delivery of these assessments should be unaffected by developments in AI tools as students must not be able to use such tools when completing these assessments; particular care will be taken when a student is allowed to use a laptop or similar device for exams/assessments to ensure that they have no access to AI tools.

There are some assessments in which access to the internet is permitted in the preparatory, research or production stages. The majority of these assessments will be Non-Examination Assessments (NEAs), coursework and internal assessments for General Qualifications (GQs) and Vocational & Technical Qualifications (VTQs). JCQ's guidance (which is designed to help students and teachers to complete NEAs, coursework and other internal assessments successfully) is followed in relation to these assessments.

All relevant teaching staff have been made aware of the risks of misusing AI as documented in the JCQ document 'Teachers & Assessors - AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications'. The updated version of this document is circulated on an annual basis along with other relevant information. A member of SLT has been designated as the expert and co-ordinator of advice on AI. Staff training is delivered about the use of AI and latest developments in this area. This will cover the impact of AI on NEA and assessments and ensure that staff are fully aware of their role in managing the risk of AI misuse. The use of AI detector software is encouraged where appropriate to assist staff in recognising the use of AI. Vigilance in marking is also encouraged to spot the signs of undeclared AI use. Together with regular training this approach supports teaching staff in being assured that work accepted for assessment is authentically the student's own.

In preparing students for NEA and other forms of assessment staff are mindful to convey the requirement to ensure that the final product for assessment is in candidates' own words, and isn't copied or paraphrased from another source, including through the misuse of AI.

The following JCQ support resources are also used to help teachers understand and prevent AI misuse and to help students to better understand the rules for use of AI in assessments:

- Information Sheet for Teachers
- Poster for Students
- Teacher Presentation for Students.

The above approach ensures that students are aware that:

AI stands for artificial intelligence and can be used to create text, images, videos, music and artwork based on instructions given to an AI tool (applications such as ChatGPT, Snapchat My AI, Google etc)

AI tools cannot be used in an exam or any other assessment where exam rules apply. Using AI in these circumstances is considered AI misuse and is Malpractice.

There may be some assessments where some use of AI is permitted. Students should always check with their teacher.

When an AI tool is permitted candidates must acknowledge the AI tools, and the material produced by the AI tools, that has been used in their work. If a candidate does not acknowledge permitted use this is also

considered to be malpractice.

Candidates will be issued with of the JCQ **Information for candidates - AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments)** or similar centre document prior to completing their work/prior to signing the declaration of authentication.

## 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)

All staff have a responsibility to report any potential malpractice identified. Concerns should normally be raised initially with either the Exams Officer (Kirsty Hird) or the Assistant Head for Curriculum and Examinations (Laura Sharpe). They can be contacted in person in school, by e-mail (exams@snacademy.org.uk, l.sharpe@snacademy.org.uk) or by telephone (0115 911 0091).

Once a concern has been raised the Head of Centre will be informed and the concern will be handled in accordance with the approach outlined in 'JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures 2025-2026'.

If concerns involve the Exam Team they should be raised directly with the Head of Centre through his office.

In the circumstance where the concern involves the Head of Centre, advice will be sought from JCQ and the Board of Governors.

### 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)

Additional information:

Credit will not be given for any work submitted which is not the candidate's own. If any improper assistance has been given this will be reported to the awarding body (as detailed in the JCQ Malpractice Guidance) and a note made of this on the cover sheet of the candidate's work or other appropriate place.

### **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)

Additional information:

Where appropriate, the Exams Officer will communicate decisions on behalf of the head of centre.

### **Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice**

South Nottinghamshire Academy 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**

Additional information:

Further detail regarding appeals can be found in the Internal Appeals Procedure Policy.

## Changes 2025/2026

(Added) New heading **Centre malpractice** added.

(Added) Under heading **Preventing malpractice** added to the list of JCQ documents.

(Added/amended) Under heading **AI use in assessments**:

- additional/amended text added in bullet points to reflect slight changes in SMPP
- optional insert field added referencing the JCQ document **Information for candidates - AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments)** or similar centre document.

(Amended) Under heading **Reporting suspected malpractice to the awarding body** text amended to reflect wording changes/additions in SMPP.

## Centre-specific changes

Clarification that the Exams Officer may where appropriate communicate decisions on behalf of the head of centre.

Cross reference to Internal Appeals Policy.

Further detail regarding use of AI.