

# Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College

## MALPRACTICE POLICY FOR EXAM AND NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT

### Purpose and scope of the policy:

To ensure

- That assessment of all courses is carried out to the national standard for each course
- That there is equal and fair access to assessment for all learners
- To ensure that learners are given guidance on how to meet the assessment criteria
- That achievement is accurately recorded and tracked
- To ensure that assessment leads to accurate and valid certification claims.

### Aim:

- To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners.
- To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
- To standardise the investigation of malpractice.
- To protect the integrity of the college with regard to assessment.

### In order to do this, the college will:

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by ensuring that learners are aware of the ways in which malpractice can occur and of the possible penalties for malpractice.
- Provide all teaching staff with this policy and a copy of the JCQ publication “Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments – Policies and procedures”
- Provide all learners taking courses which involve external exams with a copy of the college’s two student guides: Examinations - regulations and guidance for students’. This guide contains:
  - JCQ Notice to Candidates for written examinations. This covers
    - rules for examinations
    - what learners should bring to examinations
  - College guidance and information on examinations. This includes
    - Information about exam sessions
    - how to access a marked script
    - how to obtain a re-mark
    - collection of results
- Provide all learners taking courses which include non-exam assessment or coursework with a copy of the college’s student guide: Coursework - regulations and guidance for students’. This guide contains:
  - JCQ Notice to Candidates for coursework. This gives guidance on
    - good practice with coursework
    - examples of possible malpractice
    - referencing
    - warnings on plagiarism
    - possible penalties for malpractice
  - College guidance on coursework. This includes
    - submission of coursework
    - guidance on referencing
    - warnings on cheating and plagiarism
    - how to appeal against coursework decisions or procedures

- Teachers on each course will do the following, in accordance with the requirements and good practice of the specifications and expectations of the course:
  - Inform learners about appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
  - ask learners to acknowledge all sources used in accordance with the requirements of the qualification
  - ask learners to declare that their work is their own
  - monitor learners' progress with assessment activities so that they, as teachers, remain confident that malpractice has not occurred
  - remain alert to the possibility of malpractice

### **When malpractice with coursework is suspected or alleged the college will**

- Conduct an investigation commensurate with the nature of the suspected or alleged malpractice.
- Such an investigation will be supported by the Deputy Principal and other appropriate members of staff.
- The investigation will proceed through the following stages:
  - The Deputy Principal must be informed of the allegation / potential malpractice.
  - The Deputy Principal will instruct appropriate personnel to investigate the allegation / potential malpractice.
  - All stages of the investigation and subsequent actions taken will be recorded in writing.
  - The investigation will be carried out in a fair and unbiased manner.
  - The results of this investigation will be reported back to the Deputy Principal within 5 working days.
  - The Deputy Principal will review the information and evidence presented.
  - The detail of subsequent stages will depend on the details of the alleged / potential malpractice including and its seriousness but will normally include the following :
    - The individual concerned will be informed about the allegation / potential malpractice and the possible consequences.
    - The individual concerned will be given details of the process of the investigation.
    - The individual will be informed of the evidence and outcome of the initial investigation and given an opportunity to respond both verbally and in writing.
    - In consultation with appropriate staff the Deputy Principal will decide appropriate actions or sanctions to be taken.
    - Any penalty, sanction or action taken will be appropriate to the nature and seriousness of the malpractice. The level of sanction will be informed by guidance and examples provided by exam boards.
    - The individual concerned will be informed of the action or sanction being taken and given an opportunity to respond.
    - The individual will be informed of their right to appeal in accordance with the college's coursework appeals policy.
    - Where the malpractice has compromised summative assessment or has breached exam board regulations for work submitted the exam board will be informed of the incident and of the action/sanction applied.

**Where malpractice is proven, the college may apply the following penalties / sanctions:**

- Require the learner to withdraw all or part of their assessment work and re-submit with the issue addressed.
- Require the learner to withdraw all or part of the work and submit new work to replace it.
- Require the learner to withdraw all or part of the work and accept a mark of zero or a fail grade for the section(s) withdrawn.
- Award the learner a mark of zero or a fail grade for the section(s) affected by the malpractice.
- Award the learner a mark of zero or a fail grade for the whole assessment.
- In the case of very serious malpractice further sanctions up to requiring the learner to withdraw from the college may be applied.

In the case of staff malpractice appropriate training/support and/or disciplinary actions will be taken. For gross staff malpractice, college disciplinary procedures will be instigated.

## Appendix: Examples of learner and staff malpractice

The following examples of learner and staff malpractice are taken from the JCQ publication “Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments – Policies and procedures”.

Readers should be aware that these are examples of malpractice and do not constitute a full list of actions which may be judged as malpractice.

### Examples of learner malpractice

- 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; 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, mp3/4 players, pagers, smartwatches 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.

## Examples of staff malpractice

### ***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.
- 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.)
- Permitting, facilitating or obtaining unauthorised access to examination material prior to an examination.
- 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.
- Tampering with candidate scripts or controlled assessments or coursework after collection and before despatch to the awarding body/examiner/moderator. (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.)
- 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, including but not limited to:

- 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.
- Manufacturing evidence of competence against national standards; fabricating assessment and/or internal verification records or authentication statements; entering fictitious candidates for examinations or assessments, or otherwise subverting the assessment or certification process with the intention of financial gain (fraud); 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. For example:

- Assisting candidates in the production of controlled assessments or coursework, or evidence of achievement, beyond that permitted by the regulations.
- Sharing or lending candidates' controlled assessments or coursework with other candidates in a way which allows malpractice to take place.
- Assisting or prompting candidates with the production of answers.
- Permitting candidates in an examination to access prohibited materials (dictionaries, calculators etc.).
- Prompting candidates in an examination/assessment by means of signs, or verbal or written prompts.
- 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.