Malpractice Policy

2026/27

Swakeleys School For Girls

This Policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations and reflects centre practice

Date Approved: November 2026
Date of next review: November 2027

Key Staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Ms K Stevenson
Senior Leader i/c of Exams & assessment	Mrs C Devereux – Deputy Headteacher
Exams Officer	Miss S Caldwell
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What Is 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 use 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 Organisation 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 Organisation or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any Awarding Organisation or centre. (SMPP1)

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. (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.
- 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 the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures - section 19).

Centre Malpractice

'Centre malpractice' normally involves malpractice where there is an element systemic failure a breach in policies or widespread malpractice such that a centre-level sanction is appropriate (SMPP2)

Suspected Malpractice

For the purpopses of this document suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice (regardless of how the incident might be categorised, as descreibed in SMPP, section 1.9), (SMPP2)

Purpose of the Policy

Swakeleys School For Girls has in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually, a written Malpractice Policy which covers all qualifications delivered by the centre with reference to the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures*

This policy **must** detail 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 Organisation; 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)

General Principles

In accordance with the regulations, Swakeleys School For Girls will:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place.
- Inform the Awarding Organisation 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.
- As required by an Awarding Organisation, 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 Organisation may reasonably require.

Preventing Malpractice

Swakeleys School For Girls has in place:

- Robust processes to prevent and identify malpractice, as outlined in section 3 of the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures. (SMPP4.3).
- This includes ensuring that staff involved in the delivery of assessments and examinations understand the requirements for conducting these as specified in the following current JCQ documents and any further Awarding Organisation 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 (this document)
  - Plagiarism in Assessments
  - AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
  - Post Results Services June 2026 and November 2027
  - A guide to the awarding organisations' appeals processes 2026 - 2027

The School's Responsibility

It is important that staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of Examinations, and our students are fully aware of the contents of this policy and that the centre has arrangements in place to prevent and investigate instances of suspected malpractice and maladministration.

A failure to report suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration cases including plagiarism, cheating and collusion or have in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may lead to sanctions being imposed on the school by the Awarding Organisation. Failure to comply with awarding body requirements, including JCQ regulations, may be treated as malpractice and could ultimately lead to the withdrawal of qualification or centre approval. (GR1.11) Where an action letter is issued by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, the head of centre must ensure that arrangements are put in place within the centre, in accordance with the timeframes and process set out in the action letter, to prevent any recurrence of the issue(s). (GR 1.10)

Swakeleys School For Girls compliance with this policy and how it takes reasonable steps to prevent and/or investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration will be reviewed by JCQ annually.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work, words, images, ideas, opinions or discoveries, whether published or not, as one's own, or alternatively taking for one's own use, the artwork, images or computer-generated work of others without properly acknowledging the source, with or without the owner's permission.

Plagiarism by students can occur in examinations, but is most likely to occur outside sat, unseen exams, i.e. in coursework, assignments, portfolios, and essays.

Examples of plagiarism may include:

- Directly copying from written physical, pictorial or written material without crediting the source
- Paraphrasing someone else's work without crediting the source
- Using AI, for example, ChatGPT to generate or modify content to evade plagiarism detection is deemed as malpractice

Work submitted for assessment must be the student's own efforts and must be their own work. Students are bound by their student code of conduct and are required to ensure that all submitted work is their own and valid for assessment purposes.

Brief quotations from the published or unpublished works of another person, suitably attributed, are acceptable. Details on how to reference material used can be obtained from your subject teachers.

AI use in assessments (and preventing AI misuse)

What is AI?

AI stands for artificial intelligence and using it is like having a computer that thinks. AI tools learn from data on the internet. It is important to note that there are a huge range of AI tools and they can now carry out a variety of tasks including writing text, making art and creating music. It is impossible to provide a comprehensive list of AI tools as new tools are emerging all the time, however, some of the most common tools are listed below:

AI chatbots currently for staff is available include:

- ChatGPT (https://chat.openai.com/auth/login)
- Gemini (https://gemini.google.com/)

What is AI misuse?

Whilst AI is a new tool, the principles behind misuse do not change. Pupils must submit work for assessments which is their own. This means both ensuring that the final product is in their own words, and isn't copied or paraphrased from another source such as an AI tool, and that the content reflects their own independent work.

Students are also expected to demonstrate their own knowledge, skills and understanding as required for the qualification in question and set out in the qualification specification. This includes demonstrating their performance in relation to the assessment objectives for the subject relevant to the question/s or other tasks students have been set. While AI may become an established tool at the workplace in the future, for the purposes of demonstrating knowledge, understanding and skills for qualifications, it's important for students' progression that they do not rely on tools such as AI. Students should develop the knowledge, skills and understanding of the subjects they are studying.

To illustrate these principles, we have provided some examples below but, of necessity, the list of examples cannot be exhaustive.

Examples of AI misuse include:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work is no longer the student's own
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content
- Using AI to complete parts of an assessment so that the work does not reflect the student's own work, analysis, evaluation, or calculations
- Failing to acknowledge and reference the use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information
- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies

Work submitted for assessment must be the student's own efforts and must be their own work. Students are bound by their student code of conduct and are required to ensure that all submitted work is their own and valid for assessment purposes.

If any sections of a student's work are reproduced directly from AI generated responses, those elements must be identified by the student and they must understand that this does not allow them to demonstrate that they have independently met the marking criteria and therefore will not be rewarded.

Risks of using AI

There are many risks associated with using AI. A clear risk is that students' risk relying on incorrect information and so they reach incorrect conclusions. AI creates responses based upon the statistical likelihood of the language selected being an appropriate response and so the responses cannot be relied upon. In addition, AI chatbots often produce answers which may seem convincing but contain incorrect or biased information. AI may also present a safeguarding risk as some AI chatbots have been identified as providing dangerous and harmful answers to questions and some can also produce fake references to books/articles by real or fake people.

Students also run the risk of falsely presenting the knowledge, skills and understanding which they have acquired which would constitute malpractice leading to disqualification, debarment or penalty.

Referencing use of AI

If AI is allowed, students must reference AI in line with JCQ guidance (reproduced below).

- Name the AI tool you used
- Add the date you generated the content
- Explain how you used it
- Save a screenshot of the questions you asked and the answers you got

Informing and advising teachers

Prior to beginning their work, candidates are issued with the JCQ **Information for candidates** documents: **AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments)**, (as applicable to any of their qualifications) **Coursework assessments**, **Non-examination assessments** and **Social media** (GR 5.8)
Relevant subject staff ensure that all candidates have read the **Notice to candidates** within the relevant awarding body's **Candidate declaration form** (Authentication form) prior to beginning their work.
Candidates will not sign the declaration until they have completed their work and handed it in for final assessment.

The school will provide advice and tools to support teachers who are marking and assessing work. We will share with teachers the JCQ guidance on Artificial Intelligence in Assessments (updated for this year). In addition, we have regularly included reminders and updates in staff briefings and the staff bulletin.

We will make our teachers aware that identifying the misuse of AI by students requires a variety of assessment methods and is part of ongoing practice rather than a single action. Teachers must rely on their own knowledge of students' usual writing and ways of working to make informed judgements about the authenticity of work. Our teachers will also directly interact with pupils e.g. through pupil check-ins; verbal questioning so that they are familiar with pupils' work and their conceptual development. In addition, curriculum planning will ensure that pupils are given some time in supervised conditions so the teacher can authenticate each students' whole work with confidence

The school will also train teachers in the use of AI detection tools (see below), but will make staff aware that they cannot solely rely on this tool to detect malpractice.

Informing and Advising Candidates

Students will be reminded about accidental or intentional AI misuse via pre-season assemblies and during the coursework window, before signing candidate declaration forms. Candidates will also discuss AI within their PIE lessons and in tutorials. Students will be given time in supervised conditions so the teacher can authenticate each students whole work with confidence

GPT Zero – the AI and Plagiarism Checker

Swakeleys School For Girls subscribes to '**GPT Zero** '. GPT Zero is plagiarism detection software that scans student work for matched text by comparing the work to a large database of student work, publications, and materials on the internet.

All Teachers must only accept work for assessment which they consider to be the students' own and where teachers have doubts about the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment (for example, they suspect that parts of it has been generated by AI, but this has not been acknowledged), they must investigate and use the GPT Zero Software to highlight where the student has plagiarised work or made use of AI in the completion of their work.

Identification and Reporting malpractice (use of AI)

If a pupil has signed the declaration of authentication, the case must be reported to the relevant awarding organisation as detailed in JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures. All staff at Swakeleys School For Girls have a responsibility for reporting any potential malpractice that they may identify.

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)

If a pupil has not signed the declaration of authentication, the case does not need to be reported to the awarding organisation. The teacher and, if necessary, other key leaders (Department Lead / Year Lead / SLT) will ensure that the pupil is aware of the possible significance of their actions. This should include not only the possible consequences for them if they were to submit this work but also that they fully understand their error. This should therefore include the teacher outlining: what malpractice is, how to avoid malpractice and how to reference sources / acknowledge AI tools. The teacher will also ensure that the final version submitted to the awarding organisation represents only work that is their own.

The school is aware that the support of parents is critical in this area and so has set up a notification for parents which highlights Misuse of AI to parents. This notification will also allow us to monitor pupils who are misusing AI for further focused teaching.

Definition of Cheating

The term cheating includes, without limitation:

- Being in possession of notes, 'crib notes', or text books during an examination other than an examination where the rules of the examination permits such usage
- Communicating during the examination with another candidate
- Having prior access to the examination questions unless permitted to do so by the rules of the examination
- Substitution of examination materials
- Unfair or unauthorised use of an electronic calculator/device during an exam where usage is not permitted.
- Impersonation
- Use of a communication device during the examination
- Any deliberate attempt to deceive

Definition of Collusion

Collusion is an example of unfair means because, like plagiarism, it is an attempt to deceive the examiners by disguising the true authorship of an assignment, or part of an assignment. Its most common version is that student A copies, or imitates in close detail, student B's work with student B's consent. But it also includes cases in which two or more students divide the elements of an assignment among themselves, and copy, or imitate in close detail, one another's answers.

It is an offence to copy, or imitate in close detail, another student's work, even with their consent (in which case it becomes an offence of collusion). It is also an offence of collusion to consent to having one's work copied or imitated in close detail. Students are expected to take reasonable steps to safeguard their work from improper use by others.

Collusion should not be confused with the normal situation in which students learn from one another, sharing ideas, as they generate the knowledge and understanding necessary for each of them to successfully and independently undertake an assignment. Nor should it be confused with group work on an assignment where this is specifically authorised in the assignment brief.

Identification and Reporting of Malpractice

Escalating Suspected Malpractice Issues

Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre **MUST** report it to the Head of Centre, the Deputy Headteacher i/c of Exams and the Exams Officer.

Reporting Suspected Malpractice within an Exam to the Awarding Organisation

- The Head of Centre will notify the appropriate Awarding Organisation 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) (*The only exception to this is candidate malpractice discovered in coursework or non-examination assessments where the offence relates to the content of candidate work (e.g. copying/collusion, plagiarism and/or AI misuse and the authentication forms have not been signed by the candidate)

- 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)

The following forms will be used to notify the Awarding Organisation of the incident of Malpractice:

- Form JCQ/M1 will be used to notify an awarding organisation of an incident of suspected candidate malpractice. Form JCQ/M2 will be used (**before** an investigation commences) to notify an awarding organisation of an incident of suspected staff malpractice/maladministration (SMPP 4.4, 4.6)

Reporting Suspected Malpractice with a Controlled Assessment, NEA and Coursework to the Awarding Organisation

- 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 organisation. 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 organisation. 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 information gatherer, 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 informed of their rights and responsibilities as the accused individual, prior to the submission of the report to the awarding organisation (SMPP 5.35-36, 40)

- Where it is identified that there is a need to exercise discretion in the light of the circumstances of the case in terms of how the evidence is presented to the accused individual (for example, if there are concerns about revealing the identity of a third party mentioned in the documentation), this will be discussed with the awarding organisation.

- If the accused individual is provided with a reduced or redacted set of case documentation by the information gatherer, then the awarding organisation will be provided with the same information as provided to the individual. Where there are multiple individuals involved in the same incident, copies of the redacted documents for each individual will be provided to the awarding organisation. (SMPP 5.36)

- Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information gatherer) will submit a written report to the relevant awarding organisation summarising the information obtained and actions taken, accompanied by the information obtained during the course of their enquiries (SMPP
- Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used (SMPP 5.39)
- The awarding organisation 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 5.42)

The Awarding Organisation 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.

Communicating Malpractice Decisions

Once a decision has been made by the awarding organisation, 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

Swakeleys School For Girls 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 process**