



**WOODLANDS**  
**SCHOOL**

ASPIRATION, RESILIENCE, OPPORTUNITY, EXCELLENCE

# Malpractice Policy

Amended: November 2025

Approved by Governors: December 2025

Review date: November 2026

Woodlands School is part of The Compass Education Trust Ltd, a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales Company number 07686213.  
Registered Office: The Billericay School, School Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LH

### Key Staff Involved in the Policy

Role	Name
Head of Centre	David Wright
Senior Leader(s)	Emma Jordan, Seddeer Amran, Nicola White, Dean O'Connor, Dominic Riste, Katie Heseltine, Katie Lee Sang
Exams Officer	Honor Roth
Other Staff (if applicable)	

## **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 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 as 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 Woodlands School:

- 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, Woodlands School 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

Woodlands School 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
  - 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)

## Informing and Advising Candidates how to Avoid Committing Malpractice in Examinations/Assessments

How we Support Pupils to Avoid Exam Malpractice

At Woodlands School we are committed to helping pupils succeed and ensuring exams are fair for everyone. To achieve this, we have a clear process to make sure pupils understand the rules and how to avoid mistakes that could lead to malpractice.

#### When and How we Inform Pupils

- Assemblies – pupils are reminded of exam rules during year group assemblies, especially before mock exams (PPEs) and GCSEs.
- Before exams – teachers and exam staff give pupils a final reminder before they enter the exam hall.
- Posters and notices – clear JCQ posters are displayed in all exam rooms to reinforce the rules.

#### What Pupils are Told

- Pupils are told about nationally set regulations, including the strict ban on mobile phones, electronic devices, notes and talking during exams.
- Why it matters – breaking these rules is called malpractice and can lead to serious consequences, such as losing marks or being disqualified.
- Support available – we encourage pupils to ask for help if they are unsure about any rule.

#### AI and Technology

- Using AI responsibly – pupils are advised that while AI tools (like ChatGPT) can help with learning, they must not use them to create work for exams or assessments.
- Why this is important – submitting AI-generated work without saying so is considered plagiarism and will be treated as malpractice.
- Risks of AI – AI can give incorrect answers and does not show a pupil's own understanding, which is essential for exams.

Miss Emma Jordan (Exams Officer) and Heads of Department lead these briefings, supported by subject teachers. Pupils have opportunities to ask questions and get advice.

#### **AI Use in Assessments**

At Woodlands School, we follow JCQ guidance on AI use in assessments: protecting the integrity of qualifications to ensure fairness and compliance.

#### Supervised Assessments

The majority of exams and formal assessments are completed under close staff supervision, with limited access to authorised materials and no access to the internet.

These conditions mean that the delivery of these assessments should remain unaffected by developments in AI tools, as pupils are not permitted to use AI during exams.

Where pupils are allowed to use a laptop or similar device (e.g. for access arrangements), staff take extra care to ensure the device is secure and cannot access AI tools or the internet.

#### Assessments Allowing Internet Access

Some assessments, such as Non-Examined Assessments (NEAs), coursework, and internal assessments for General Qualifications (GQs) and Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs), may allow internet access during preparatory, research, or production stages.

For these assessments, pupils are reminded that:

- AI tools must not be used to generate content that is submitted as their own work.
- Any use of AI for research or drafting must be acknowledged and referenced, in line with JCQ rules.
- Failure to declare AI use will be treated as malpractice, with sanctions applied according to JCQ regulations.

#### JCQ Guidance

We adhere strictly to JCQ's published guidance for teachers and assessors to ensure NEAs, coursework, and internal assessments are completed successfully and honestly. This includes:

- Clear instructions to pupils on what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable use of AI.
- Monitoring and verification processes to protect the integrity of qualifications.
- All have access to the AI information sheet for teachers, AI poster for pupils, AI Senior Leader presentation for teachers and AI teacher presentation for pupils.

Candidates will be issued with 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.)

At Woodlands School, we follow JCQ regulations to ensure all suspected malpractice incidents are handled promptly, fairly, and in line with national standards.

#### 1. Identification of Malpractice

Malpractice may include possession of prohibited items (e.g. mobile phones), communication during exams, plagiarism or misuse of AI tools.

Any member of staff who observes or suspects malpractice during an exam or assessment must act immediately.

#### 2. Immediate Action

The invigilator or supervising teacher should:

- Record the details of the incident (time, nature of breach, candidate name, and any evidence).
- Remove any prohibited items if applicable.
- Allow the candidate to continue the exam if appropriate, without confrontation that could disrupt others.

### 3. Reporting

The incident must be reported as soon as possible to:

- Miss Emma Jordan – Deputy Head Teacher (primary point of contact)
- Mrs Honor Roth – Exam Officer (for oversight and record keeping)

A written report should be completed using the centre's Malpractice Incident Form, including statements from staff and any supporting evidence.

### 4. Escalation

The Exams Officer will:

- review the report and evidence
- notify the Head of Centre of the severity of the incident or if it involves multiple candidates
- submit a formal report to the relevant Awarding Body via JCQ's malpractice procedures.

### 5. Communication

Parents/guardians will be informed of the incident and the next steps.

The candidate will be advised of the process and potential outcomes, in line with JCQ guidance.

### 6. Record Keeping

All documentation is retained securely by the Exams Office for audit and compliance purposes.

#### 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)


### 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)


### Appeals Against Decisions Made in Cases of Malpractice

Woodlands School 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*

Signed:   
Head Teacher

Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Signed:   
Vice Chair of Governors

Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025

