# Malpractice Policy (Exams) 2025 to 2026

Thomas Hall School

## Malpractice Policy (Exams) 2025 to 2026

| | |
|---|---|
| Centre name | Thomas Hall School |
| Centre number | 54214 |
| Date policy first created | 19/12/2023 |
| Current policy approved by | Phil Arnold |
| Current policy reviewed by | Michelle Spiess |
| Date of next review | 01/09/2026 |

## Key staff involved in the policy

| Role | Name |
|---|---|
| Head of centre | Phil Arnold |
| Senior leader(s) | Phil Arnold, Helen Towler-Williams, Joe Medland, Charlotte Webster |
| Exams officer | Michelle Spiess |
| Other staff (if applicable) | Invigilators |

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at Thomas Hall School 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 publications **General Regulations for Approved Centres** and **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures**.

## Introduction
**What is malpractice and maladministration?**

'Malpractice' and 'maladministration' are related concepts, the common theme of which is 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

• a breach of awarding body requirements regarding how a qualification should be delivered

• a failure to follow established procedures in relation to a qualification

• gives rise to prejudice to candidates

• compromises public confidence in qualifications

• compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate

• 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' means 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 writing of any examination paper. (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)

**Suspected malpractice**

For the purposes of this document, suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice. (SMPP 2)

## Purpose of the policy
To confirm Thomas Hall School:

• has in place a written malpractice policy which covers all qualifications delivered by the centre and details 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 (GR 5.3)

## General principles

In accordance with the regulations Thomas Hall School will:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after examinations 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 JCQ publication **Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures** and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require (GR 5.11)

## Preventing malpractice

Thomas Hall School has in place:

- Robust processes to prevent and identify malpractice, as outlined in section 3 of the JCQ publication **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures**. (SMPP 4.3)

- This includes ensuring that all 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; A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2025-2026 (SMPP 3.3.1)

Additional information:

Not applicable.

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

Candidates will be informed prior to the start of the examination by the Key Stage Head of the procedures for malpractice.

### AI Use in Assessments

Ensure that candidates completing coursework or non-examination assessments are aware of the need for the work to be their own and are provided with clear instructions on how to avoid plagiarism (including AI misuse).

AI use:

AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications. While the range of AI tools, and their capabilities, is likely to expand greatly in the near future, misuse of AI tools in relation to qualification assessments at any time constitutes malpractice. Teachers and students should also be aware that AI tools are evolving quickly but there are still limitations to their use, such as producing inaccurate or inappropriate content. AI chatbots are

AI tools which generate text in response to user prompts and questions. Users can ask follow-up questions or ask the chatbot to revise the responses already provided. AI chatbots respond to prompts based upon patterns in the data sets (large language model) upon which they have been trained. They generate responses which are statistically likely to be relevant and appropriate. AI chatbots can complete tasks such as the following: Answering questions • Analysing, improving, and summarising text • Authoring essays, articles, fiction, and non-fiction • Writing computer code • Translating text from one language to another • Generating new ideas, prompts, or suggestions for a given topic or theme • Generating text with specific attributes, such as tone, sentiment, or formality AI chatbots currently available include: • ChatGPT (https://chat.openai.com/auth/login) • Jenni AI (https://jenni.ai) • Jasper AI (https://www.jasper.ai/) • Writesonic (https://writesonic.com/chat/) • Bloomai (https://huggingface.co/bigscience/bloom) • Gemini (https://gemini.google.com/) • Claude (https://claude.ai/) There are also AI tools which can be used to generate images, such as: • Midjourney (https://midjourney.com/showcase/top/) • Stable Diffusion (https://stablediffusionweb.com/) • Dalle-E 2 (OpenAI) (https://openai.com/dall-e-2/) There are also AI tools which can be used to generate music. These include: • Soundraw (https://soundraw.io/) • wavtool (https://wavtool.com/) • Musicfy (https://create.musicfy.lol/) 3 The use of AI chatbots may pose significant risks if used by students completing qualification assessments. As noted above, they have been developed to produce responses based upon the statistical likelihood of the language selected being an appropriate response and so the responses cannot be relied upon. AI chatbots often produce answers which may seem convincing but contain incorrect or biased information. 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.

AI misuse:

As has always been the case, and in accordance with section 5.3(k) of the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres (https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ general regulations), students 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 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. Students must be able to demonstrate that the final submission is the product of their own independent work and independent thinking. • AI misuse is where a student has used one or more AI tools but has not appropriately acknowledged this use and has submitted work for assessment when it is not their own. Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to, the following: • Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work submitted for assessment is no longer the student's own • Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content • Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the student's own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations • Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information • Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools • Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies. AI misuse constitutes malpractice as defined in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures (https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/). The malpractice sanctions available for the offences of 'making a false declaration of authenticity' and 'plagiarism' include disqualification and debarment from taking qualifications for a number of years. Students' marks may also be affected if they have relied on AI to complete an assessment and, as noted above, the attainment that they have demonstrated in relation to the requirements of the qualification does not accurately reflect their own work.

<u>Acknowledging AI use:</u>

It remains essential that students are clear about the importance of referencing the sources they have used when producing work for an assessment, and that they know how to do this. Appropriate referencing is a means of demonstrating academic integrity and is key to maintaining the integrity of assessments. If a student uses an AI tool which provides details of the sources it has used in generating content, these sources must be verified by the student and referenced in their work in the normal way. Where an AI tool does not provide such details, students should ensure that they independently verify the AI-generated content – and then reference the sources they have used. In addition to the above, where students use AI, they must acknowledge its use and show clearly how they have used it. This allows teachers and assessors to review how AI has been used and whether that use was appropriate in the context of the particular assessment. This is particularly important given that AI-generated content is not subject to the same academic scrutiny as other published sources. Where AI tools have been used as a source of information, a student's acknowledgement must show the name of the AI source used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/ blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2024. The student must retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes, in a noneditable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how it has been used. This must be submitted with the work the student submits for assessment, so the teacher/assessor is able to review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used. Where this is not submitted, and the teacher/assessor suspects that the student has used AI tools, the teacher/assessor will need to consult the centre's malpractice policy for appropriate next steps and should take action to assure themselves that the work is the student's own. Further guidance on ways this could be done are set out in the JCQ Plagiarism in Assessments guidance document (see link below). The JCQ guidance on referencing can be found in the following: • Plagiarism in Assessments (https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/ plagiarism-inassessments---guidance-for-teachers assessors) • Instructions for conducting coursework (https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/ uploads/2022/08/Coursework_ICC_22-23_FINAL.pdf) • The Information for Candidates documents (https://www.jcq.org.uk/examsoffice/information-for-candidates-documents) Other actions which should be considered in relation to acknowledging AI use are: a) Students being reminded that, as with any source, poor referencing, paraphrasing and copying sections of text may constitute malpractice, which can attract severe sanctions including disqualification – in the context of AI use, students must be clear what is and what is not acceptable in respect of acknowledging AI content and the use of AI sources. For example, it would be unacceptable to simply reference 'AI' or 'ChatGPT', just as it would be unacceptable to state 'Google' rather than the specific website and webpages which have been consulted; b) Students should also be reminded that if they use AI so that they have not independently met the marking criteria, they will not be rewarded.

<u>Preventing AI misuse in assessments:</u>

While there may be benefits to using AI in some situations, there is the potential for it to be misused by students, either accidentally or intentionally. AI misuse, in that it involves a student submitting work for qualification assessments which is not their own, can be considered a form of plagiarism. JCQ has published guidance on plagiarism which provides guidance on what plagiarism is, how to prevent it, and how to detect it (https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/plagiarism-inassessments---guidance-forteachersassessors/). Teachers and assessors must be assured that the work they accept for assessment and mark is authentically the student's own work. They are required to confirm this during the assessment process. To prevent misuse, education and awareness of staff and students is likely to be key. Here are some actions which should be taken (many of these will already be in place in centres as these are not new requirements): a) Consider restricting access to online AI tools on centre devices and networks; b) Ensure that access to online AI tools is restricted on centre devices used for exams; c) Set reasonable deadlines for submission of work and providing reminders; d)Where appropriate, allocate time for sufficient portions of

work to be done in class under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate each student's whole work with confidence; e) Examine intermediate stages in the production of work in order to ensure that work is underway in a planned and timely manner and that work submitted represents a natural continuation of earlier stages; f) Introduce classroom activities that use the level of knowledge/understanding achieved during the course thereby making the teacher confident that the student understands the material; g) Consider whether it's appropriate and helpful to engage students in a short verbal discussion about their work to ascertain that they understand it and that it reflects their own independent work; h) Do not accept, without further investigation, work which staff suspect has been taken from AI tools without proper acknowledgement or is otherwise plagiarised – doing so encourages the spread of this practice and is likely to constitute staff malpractice which can attract sanctions. i) Issuing tasks for centre-devised assignments which are, wherever possible, topical, current and specific, and require the creation of content which is less likely to be accessible to AI models trained using historic data.

Potential indicators of AI misuse:

 If the following are seen in student work, it may be an indication that the student has misused AI: a) A default use of American spelling, currency, terms and other localisations* b) A default use of language or vocabulary which might not accord with the qualification level* c) A lack of direct quotations and/or use of references where these are required/ expected~ d) Inclusion of references which cannot be found or verified (some AI tools have provided false references to books or articles by real authors) e) A lack of reference to events occurring after a certain date (reflecting when an AI tool's data source was compiled), which might be notable for some subjects f) Instances of incorrect/inconsistent use of first-person and third-person perspective where generated text is left unaltered g) A difference in the language style used when compared to that used by a student in the classroom or in other previously submitted work 10 h) A variation in the style of language evidenced in a piece of work, if a student has taken significant portions of text from AI and then amended this i) A lack of graphs/data tables/visual aids where these would normally be expected j) A lack of specific local or topical knowledge k) Content being more generic in nature rather than relating to the student themself, or a specialised task or scenario, if this is required or expected l) The inadvertent inclusion by students of warnings or provisos produced by AI to highlight the limits of its ability, or the hypothetical nature of its output m)The submission of student work in a typed format, where their normal output is handwritten n) The unusual use of several concluding statements throughout the text, or several repetitions of an overarching essay structure within a single lengthy essay, which can be a result of AI being asked to produce an essay several times to add depth and variety or to overcome its output limit o) The inclusion of strongly stated non-sequiturs or confidently incorrect statements within otherwise cohesive content p) Overly verbose or hyperbolic language that may not be in keeping with the candidate's usual style. *Please be aware, though, that AI tools can be instructed to employ different languages, registers and levels of proficiency when generating content. ~However, some AI tools will produce quotations and references.

If the suspicions are confirmed and the student has not signed the declaration of authentication, my centre doesn't need to report the incident to the appropriate awarding organisation. Steps to resolve such incidents are detailed in the centre's malpractice/plagiarism policy. Information regarding plagiarism has been handed out to the students to make them to be aware of what malpractice is, how to avoid malpractice, how to properly reference sources and acknowledge AI tools, etc. Teachers will not accept work which is not the student's own. If AI misuse is detected or suspected by the centre and the declaration of authentication has been signed, the case will be reported to the relevant awarding organisation.

# AI Identification and reporting of malpractice:

- Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre can report it using the appropriate channels (SMPP 4.3)

The incident is recorded on the yellow incident log and the Exams Officer and Deputy Head are informed immediately. The paper and any other materials are removed and the candidate isolated (if necessary) until the end of the exam. The Exam officer contacts the relevant exam board and completes JCQ form M1, M2 or M3 as appropriate and returns it to the exam board.

**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 publication **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures** (SMPP 4.1.3)

- The head of centre will ensure that where a candidate who is a child/vulnerable adult 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)

- Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non- examination assessment component prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to the awarding body but will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures. The only exception to this is where the awarding body's confidential assessment material has potentially been breached. The breach will be reported to the awarding body immediately (SMPP 4.5)

- If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual in malpractice, that individual (a candidate or a member of staff) will be informed of the rights of accused individuals (SMPP 5.33)

- Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information gatherer) will submit a written report summarising the information obtained and actions taken to the relevant awarding body, 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) Additional information:

Information relating to malpractice will be communicated to the students, their parents and carers by the Deputy Head or Head of Centre as soon as it becomes available.

## Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice

Thomas Hall 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 publication **A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes** Additional information:

Appeals can be made to the Deputy Head who will decide if there are grounds for appeal with the Head of Centre. If an appeal can be made the Deputy head and Exams Officer will work with the exam board, JCQ, student and parent and carers as appropriate.

**Changes 2025/2026**

Under heading **Purpose of the policy**: (Changed) The purpose of this policy is to confirm how Thomas Hall School manages malpractice under normal delivery arrangements in accordance with the regulations (To) To confirm Thomas Hall School has in place a written malpractice policy which covers all qualifications delivered by the centre and details 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 (GR 5.3)

Under heading **General Principles**: Moved subsections **Candidate malpractice** and **Centre staff malpractice** from this section and added under **Introduction** section

Under heading **Preventing Malpractice**: (Added) A new bullet point: This includes ensuring that all 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

- A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes 2025-2026 (SMPP 3.3.1)

(Added) New subheading **Informing and advising candidates** and an insert field to be populated according to the centre's process

Under heading **Identification and reporting of malpractice**: (Added) New subheading **Escalating suspected malpractice issues** and

- new bullet point: Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre can report it using the appropriate channels (SMPP 4.3)

- an insert field to be populated according to the centre's process

(Added) New subheading **Reporting suspected malpractice to the awarding body**

(Added) New bullet point: The head of centre will ensure that where a candidate who is a child/vulnerable adult 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)

(Changed) SMPP reference: If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual in malpractice, that individual (a candidate or a member of staff) will be informed of the rights of accused individuals (SMPP 5.32) (To) If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual in malpractice, that individual (a candidate or a member of staff) will be informed of the rights of accused individuals (SMPP 5.33)

(Changed) Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information-gatherer) will submit a written report summarising the case to the relevant awarding body, accompanied by the information obtained during the course of their enquiries (SMPP 5.34) (To) Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information-gatherer) will submit a written report summarising the information obtained and actions taken to the relevant awarding body, accompanied by the information obtained during the course of their enquiries (SMPP 5.35)

(Changed) SMPP reference: Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used (SMPP 5.36) (To) Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be used (SMPP 5.37)

(Changed) SMPP reference: 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 5.39) (To) 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)

Under heading **Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice**:(Changed) Provide the individual with information on the process for submitting an appeal, where relevant (To) Provide the individual with information on the process and timeframe for submitting an appeal, where relevant

Under each relevant section added **Additional information** fields to be populated by the user if applicable

(28/02/2024) Suggested policy title changed from **Malpractice Policy (Exams)** to **Malpractice Policy (Exams/Assessments)**

Under the section **Preventing malpractice**:

(Amended) Heading **Informing and advising candidates** to **Informing and advising candidates how to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments** (Added) Section entitled **AI Use in Assessments**

## Centre-specific changes

Not applicable.