

WHISTLEBLOWING &
MALTPRACTICE

POLICY

CRUMLIN
INTEGRATED
COLLEGE



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EACH LEARNER, EACH JOURNEY, Every SUCCESS

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What is Malpractice?

Malpractice

'Malpractice', which includes maladministration and non-compliance with the Regulations, means any act, default or practice which is a breach of the Regulations or which:

- 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.

Failure by a centre to notify, investigate and report to an awarding body all allegations of malpractice or suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice in itself.

Also, failure to take action as required by an awarding body, as detailed in this document, or to co-operate with an awarding body's investigation, constitutes malpractice. This includes providing knowingly inaccurate or misleading information during the course of an investigation.¹

Examples of Malpractice

- Failure to comply with exam regulations as set out by JCQ.
- A security breach of the examination paper.
- Conduct of centre staff which undermines the integrity of the examination.
- Unfair treatment of candidates by either giving an advantage to a candidate or disadvantaging candidates by not providing access to the appropriate conditions.
- Possible fraud and corruption.
- Abuse of authority.
- Other conduct which may be interpreted as malpractice/maladministration.

Suspected malpractice

For the purposes of this document suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice.

¹ JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures 2025-26 (Page 4)

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, an Oral Language Modifier, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader or a scribe.²

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.

Crumlin Integrated College staff are made aware that they have a duty to report any concerns they have about the conduct of examinations. The head of centre and governing board aim to create and maintain an approach to examinations that maintains the integrity and security of examinations.

Purpose of the Policy

² JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures 2025-2026 Page 7

This policy:

- Identifies how to report concerns.
- Explains how such concerns will be investigated and sets expectations regarding the reporting of outcomes.
- Provides details of relevant bodies to whom concerns about potential malpractice can be reported, including Awarding Organisations and Regulators
- Includes a commitment to do everything reasonable to protect the reporter's identity.
- Sets out how those raising concerns will be supported.

Prevention of Malpractice

Crumlin Integrated College is committed to ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to prevent malpractice. Strategies employed to prevent malpractice are listed below:

The Head of Centre and Examinations Officer will ensure that:

- An Examinations Policy is in place to ensure that staff, parents and candidates are aware of the requirements for conducting examinations, assessments, controlled assessment laid out in the JCQ documentation and other relevant awarding body guidance.
 - Including:
 - direction on ensure that confidential information relating to examinations and assessment materials is not breached.
 - Clashes of timetabled exams are managed effectively.
 - All JCQ notices, e.g. Information for candidates, nonexamination assessments, coursework, on-screen tests, written examinations, social media, plagiarism are distributed to parents and candidates prior to assessments/examinations taking place.
 - Candidates are informed verbally and in writing about the required conditions under which the assessments are conducted, including warnings about bringing prohibited materials and devices into the assessments, and access to restricted resources.
 - Candidates are aware of actions that constitute malpractice and the sanctions that can be imposed on those who commit malpractice.
 - Candidates are aware of the sanctions of passing on or receiving (even if the information was not requested) confidential assessment materials. If a candidate receives confidential information, they must report it to a member of centre staff immediately.
 - Candidates involved in examination clash arrangements are aware of appropriate behaviour during supervision, i.e. ensuring that candidates cannot pass on or receive information about the content of assessments, thereby committing candidate malpractice.
- Staff, parents and candidates are made aware of key dates and deadlines.
- Appropriate training, resources and support are maintained for those responsible for and involved in the delivery of external examinations.
- Exams are conducted in accordance with JCQ ICE requirements.
- Staff who manage and implement Special Consideration and Access Arrangements are aware of requirements and are appropriately supported and resourced.
- A Controlled Assessment Policy is in place to ensure that robust processes are in present.

- The policy will also 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).
- There is a culture of honesty and openness is nurtured to allow for concerns to be handled appropriately without fear for repercussions.

The Allegation

If a member of staff, a student or a member of the public such as a parent/guardian has a concern or reason to believe that malpractice has or will occur in an examination or assessment, concerns should be raised initially with the Head of Centre.

However, there may be times when it may be more appropriate to refer the issue direct to the Board of Governors, most often when the allegation is against the Head of Centre.

Whistleblowing procedure

If the individual does not feel safe raising the issue/reporting malpractice within the centre, or they have done so and are concerned that no action has been taken, that individual could consider making their disclosed to a Malpractice Expert at the Awarding Body for the qualification where malpractice is suspected. For members of centre staff, it is likely that the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA NI) offer you legal protection from being dismissed or penalised for raising certain serious concerns.

In order to investigate concerns effectively, the awarding body should be provided with as much information as possible/is relevant, which may include:

- The name of the centre involved
- The qualifications and subjects involved
- The names of staff/candidates involved
- The regulations breached/specific nature of suspected malpractice
- When and where the malpractice occurred
- Whether multiple examination series are affected
- If the issue has been reported to the centre and what the outcome was
- How the issue became apparent

Members of the public are not protected by PIDA, but the awarding body will make every effort to protect their identity, unless the awarding body is legally obliged to released it.

Anonymity

In some circumstances, the whistle blower might find it difficult to raise concerns with the nominated member of the Senior Leadership Team. If a concern is raised anonymously, the issue may not be able to be taken further if insufficient information has been provided. In such instances, and if appropriate, the allegation may be disclosed to a Union Representative who could then be required to report the concern without disclosing its source. Alternatively, whistleblowers or others with concerns about potential malpractice can report the matter direct to the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation, who is identified as a 'prescribed body'.

A whistleblower can give his/her name but may also request confidentiality; the person receiving the information should make every effort to protect the identity of the whistleblower.

The Investigation

Investigations carried out by the head of centre/appointed investigator.

- It will normally be expected that investigations into allegations of malpractice will be carried out by the head of centre. The head of centre must deal with the investigation in accordance with the deadlines and requirements set by the awarding body.
 - supervise personally, and as directed by the awarding body, all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice unless the investigation is being led by the awarding body or another party;
 - ensure that if it is necessary to delegate an investigation to a senior member of centre staff, the senior member of centre staff chosen is independent and not connected to the department or candidate involved in the suspected malpractice. The head of centre should ensure there is no conflict of interest which can otherwise compromise the investigation.
 - Where a conflict of interest may be seen to arise, investigations into suspected malpractice should not be delegated to the manager of the section, team or department involved in the suspected malpractice. In the event of any concerns regarding conflicts of interest or the suitability of the potential investigator, the head of centre must contact the awarding body as soon as possible to discuss the matter.
 - the head of centre retains overall responsibility for the investigation.

- Those responsible for conducting an investigation should seek evidence from which the full facts and circumstances of any alleged malpractice can be established. It should not be assumed that because an allegation has been made, it is true.
 - respond speedily and openly to all requests for an investigation into an allegation of malpractice. This will be in the best interests of centre staff, candidates and any others involved.
 - speedily and openly make available information as requested by an awarding body.
 - co-operate and ensure their staff do so with an enquiry into an allegation of malpractice, whether the centre is directly involved in the case or not.
 - inform staff members and candidates of their individual responsibilities and rights set out in JCQ guidelines.
 - forward any awarding body correspondence and evidence to centre staff and/or provide staff contact information to enable the awarding body to do so.

- The head of centre should consider that both staff and candidates can be responsible for malpractice.

- Notify the appropriate awarding body immediately of all alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice*. If staff malpractice is discovered in coursework or non-examination assessments, the head of centre must inform the awarding body immediately, regardless of whether the authentication forms have been signed by the candidate(s);
 - complete Form JCQ/M1 (suspected candidate malpractice) or Form JCQ/M2a (suspected malpractice/maladministration involving centre staff) to notify the awarding body/bodies whose qualifications are involved in an incident of malpractice. Notifications in letter format will be accepted providing the information given covers the same points as Form JCQ/M1 or JCQ/M2a;
- pass on to the individuals concerned any warnings or notifications of penalties and ensure compliance with any requests made by the awarding body because of a malpractice case.

*Malpractice by a candidate in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment component discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication or if a candidate has not been entered with an awarding body need not be reported and internal procedures are detailed in the Controlled Assessment Policy.

Rights of the accused individuals

If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual in malpractice, responsibility for informing the accused individual rests with the head of centre. The individual (a candidate or a member of staff) accused of malpractice must:

- be informed (preferably in writing) of the allegation made against him or her;
- provide the accused individual(s) with a completed copy of the form or letter used to notify the awarding body of the malpractice.
- be advised that a copy of the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures can be found on the JCQ website - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>
- know what evidence there is to support that allegation;
- know the possible consequences should malpractice be proven;
- Have an opportunity to consider their response to the allegations (if required);
- have an opportunity to submit a written statement;
- be informed that he/she will have the opportunity to read the submission and make an additional statement in response, should the case be put to the Malpractice Committee;
- have an opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a supplementary statement (if required);
- be informed of the applicable appeals procedure, (see paragraph 14.1) should a decision be made against him or her;
- be informed of the possibility that information relating to a serious case of malpractice may be shared with other awarding bodies, the regulators and other appropriate authorities.

In certain circumstances it may be necessary for the head of centre to exercise discretion, in the light of all the circumstances of the case, as to the timing and how an allegation of malpractice and the supporting evidence is presented to the individual(s) involved.

Reporting the Outcome

After investigating an allegation of candidate malpractice, or gathering evidence for a staff malpractice investigation, the head of centre must submit a full written report of the case to the relevant awarding body.

The report should be accompanied by the following documentation, as appropriate:

- a statement of the facts, a detailed account of the circumstances of the alleged malpractice, and details of any investigations carried out by the centre;
- the evidence relevant to the allegation, such as written statement(s) from the teacher(s), invigilator(s), assessor, internal verifier(s) or other staff who are involved;
- written statement(s) from the candidate(s);
- any exculpatory evidence and/or mitigating factors;
- information about the centre's procedures for advising candidates and centre staff of the awarding bodies' regulations;
- seating plans showing the exact position of candidates in the examination room;
- unauthorised material found in the examination room or photographs of material which cannot be submitted to an awarding body;
- any candidate work and any associated material (e.g. source material for coursework) which is relevant to the investigation;
- any teaching resources/material relevant to the investigation.

Form JCQ/M1 or Form JCQ/M2b should be used as the basis of the Report.

The forms are available from the JCQ website - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

Reports in letter format will be accepted provided the information given covers the same points as the form.

Communicating decisions

Once a decision has been made, it will be communicated in writing to the head of centre as soon as possible.

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate the decision to the individuals concerned and to pass on details of any sanctions/penalties and action in cases where this is indicated.

Appeals

The awarding bodies have established procedures for considering appeals against penalties arising from malpractice decisions.

The following individuals have a right to appeal against decisions of the Malpractice Committee or officers acting on its behalf.

- Heads of centre, who may appeal against sanctions imposed on the centre or on centre staff, as well as on behalf of candidates entered or registered through the centre.
- Members of centre staff, or examining personnel contracted to a centre, who may appeal against sanctions imposed on them personally.
- Private candidates.
- Third parties who have been barred from examinations or assessments of the awarding body.

Information on the process for submitting an appeal will be sent to all centres involved in malpractice decisions.

Further information may be found in the JCQ publication A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/appeals>

The Malpractice and Whistleblowing policy for external examinations will be reviewed annually.

Date of next review: Summer 2026

JCQ Form M1

JCQ Form M2

JCQ Form M3