

St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Malpractice Policy

“We commit ourselves to love, respect and serve one another as disciples of Jesus Christ”

Date of Policy Review:	September 2025
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1. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm:

To confirm St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy 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)

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the exam processes to read, understand, implement the policy and report any potential malpractice they may identify.

The Malpractice policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that any malpractice at St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy 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.

This policy covers all forms of assessment, including exams and non -examination assessment (NEA) taught as part of the qualifications offered at the school. **It must be read in conjunction with the JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and procedures 2025-2026**

2. Learner Malpractice

2.1 Definition of learner malpractice

Any action instigated by a learner, which undermines the integrity and validity of assessment or certification of qualifications.

2.2 Examples of learner malpractice

Misconduct covers a range of offences, which can be collectively described as cheating. The following is not an exhaustive list and the Academy reserves the right to include any other type of cheating under the terms of this policy.

- a) Plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learners own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work, thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originators permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source.
- b) Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work. Learners should not be discouraged from teamwork however.
- c) Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.
- d) Fabrication of results and/or evidence.

- e) The deliberate destruction of another's work.
- f) Falsely claiming extenuating circumstances to gain an unfair advantage in assessment outcomes
- g) Trying to gain an unfair advantage in a written examination by use of communication or unauthorised items.

3. – Procedure

3.1 - Identifying Potential Malpractice

If a member of staff suspects malpractice they must;

- a) Report it immediately to the Head of Department/SLT Lead
- b) Document their findings and why they believe malpractice has taken place
- c) Provide the evidence so this can be reviewed as part of the investigation process

3.2 – Investigating Learner Misconduct

There will be an investigation if learner misconduct is suspected which may lead to disqualification.

- a) Learners who attempt to gain a vocational award by deceitful means will automatically have their result(s) suspended (held) pending a thorough investigation instigated by the Senior Leadership Team. The learner will be informed at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences.
- b) The outcome of the investigation will determine the appropriate course of action to be taken by the Academy. Any case where learner malpractice is found to be substantiated will be reported to the awarding body
- c) Incidents of suspected candidate malpractice identified **before** the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication **do not need to be reported** to the Awarding Body
- d) If no evidence is found that the learner cheated, then the benefit of the doubt should be given to the learner and the grade achieved should be awarded.

3.3 – Where a Learner is accused of malpractice NEA

- a) Should a learner be accused of malpractice they will be informed of the allegation made against him or her; know what evidence there is to support the allegation; know the possible consequences should malpractice be proven; be informed of the appeals procedure.
- b) The learner's parents/guardian will be contacted and informed of the allegation.
- c) The course leader will interview the learner affected by the alleged malpractice or other responsible member of staff appointed by the Headteacher.
- d) The learner has 48 hours in which to prepare a response to the allegations.
- e) A decision is made from:

- The learner has no case to answer, and the allegations are unfounded.
 - Warning. The learner is issued with a warning that if the offence is repeated within a set period of time, further specified sanctions will be applied. If applicable the discrete section of work subject to malpractice will be discounted and the assessment records updated with the details of improper assistance and the examination board informed.
 - Disqualification from certification for the specific unit subject to malpractice.
 - Assessment records will be updated
- f) Disqualification from the course.
- g) The learner may appeal against the decision. This must be done in writing within 7 working days of the decision.

3.4 – Where a Learner is suspected of malpractice during a Written/Practical live examination

- a) During a live examination, the invigilator should summon assistance from the Examinations Officer or Senior Leadership Team
- b) The invigilator or member of staff who has witnessed the malpractice should complete an incident log
- c) The incident should be referred to the awarding body by the Examinations Officer at the earliest opportunity
- d) The Senior Leadership team will inform the parent and student of the allegation and the outcomes within appropriate timeframes

3.5 – Preventing Learner Misconduct

St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy has:

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 (this document)
- 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)

The Academy will take positive steps to prevent and reduce the occurrence of malpractice by learners.

These will include:

- All students provided with the JCQ Information for Candidate document via email and also provided on the school website. All parents to be provided with this documentation
- Showing learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Learners should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed, evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the learner has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.
- Candidates will be reminded (via assemblies/displays around school)
- 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;
- that if they use AI so that they have not independently met the marking criteria, they will not be rewarded
- Students must acknowledge any use of AI to avoid misuse/malpractice.

Use of AI

Information provided to students includes a document detailing the risks of using AI, what AI misuse is, how it will be treated as malpractice, when it may be used and how it should be acknowledged (as per the JCQ document ***Teachers & Assessors - AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications***)

AI is the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications. Misuse of AI tools in relation to qualification assessments at any time constitutes malpractice.

AI - Use in Assessments

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 still being developed and there are often 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 format

What is AI Misuse

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.

Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 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 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.

Acknowledging AI Use

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/>), 25/01/2023.

The student must retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes, in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how it has been used.

This must be submitted with the work 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.

See https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/AI_Use_in_Assessments:Protecting_the_Integrity_of_Qualifications/ for further information.

- Introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, e.g. plagiarism, collusion, cheating, AI etc.

Examinations Officer to raise awareness with staff on how to identify Malpractice (AI), awareness to be delivered to staff via Staff Meetings, Staff Bulletins, Staff Training:

These procedures may include

- The requirement for interim work to be handed in before final deadlines to give a picture of the learner's progress.
- Periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework is produced by the learner.
- Altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis.
- the assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of learners.
- Using oral questions with learners to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc. within their work.
- Assessors getting to know their learners' styles and abilities (AI).
- Ensuring access controls are installed to prevent learners from accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.

3.5 Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice

St Bede's Catholic Voluntary academy 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***

4 Staff Malpractice

4.1 - Examples of malpractice by Academy staff

The list below is not an exhaustive or definitive list.

- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves Academy staff producing work for the learner.
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's work, to be included in a learner's portfolio/assignment.
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support such as a scribe. Support is only permissible up to the point where such support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.
- Failure to keep any awarding body mark schemes secure.
- Alteration of awarding body assessment and grading criteria.
- Failure to assess learner work within an appropriate timescale.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration or substitution; or by fraud.

4.2 - Investigating alleged staff malpractice

- The investigation will be conducted by the Head or his/her nominated representative.
- The Academy will make the accused fully aware of the alleged malpractice and of possible consequences should the malpractice be proven.
- The Academy will give the accused the opportunity to respond and the right of appeal should a judgment be made against them.
- All incidents of suspected staff and centre malpractice/maladministration and all incidents of suspected candidate malpractice identified after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication will be reported to the Awarding organisation by the Examinations Officer/Head of Centre

4.3 - Penalties and Sanctions

- Sanctions will follow the code laid down in the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.
- Where malpractice against the Academy member of staff is proven, the awarding body will be informed.