MALPRACTICE, MALADMINISTRATION AND PLAGIARISM POLICY 2026-2027

Overall responsibility:	Deputy Principal
Implementation:	Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning & Quality
Date issued:	June 2026
Date for review:	July 2027

Endorsed and approved by The Senior Leadership team Group
Date: July 2026

Jason Lancaster `

Principal and CEO



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1. INTRODUCTION

Malpractice/Maladministration means a contravening of the regulatory requirements pertaining to the assessment process (including the conduct of examinations), which puts at risk the integrity, credibility and validity of a qualification, its assessment and student certificates.

Malpractice/Maladministration may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems, to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

Plagiarism is the incorporation by a student of material which is not their own for purposes of assessment. This may include copying all or substantial parts of their assessed work from other sources and presenting this work as their own, whether intentional or not.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all programmes at Northampton College including academic and vocational further education programmes, apprenticeships and University Level programmes

3. RESPONSIBILITY

Deputy Principal

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Northampton College is committed to upholding the integrity of its qualifications. This policy is aimed at staff and students within the assessment and examination process.

5. KEY PRINCIPLES

1. At the start of their programme all students will have a clear introduction into Northampton College's Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism policy and procedures and the possible consequences through College and Course Handbooks.

2. All Northampton College staff will have a clear introduction into the policy and the possible consequences via the Staff Handbook.

3. College staff will be expected to read and understand the Awarding Organisation's policy of Assessment Malpractice to which the qualification pertains. This will include the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

4. Any disciplinary action will follow the procedures laid down in the College’s Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy and the College’s Staff Disciplinary Policy.

5. THE PROCEDURE

a) College Staff

Malpractice (incorporating maladministration) means to contravene or ignore awarding organisations' regulatory requirements pertaining to the assessment process (including the conduct of examinations), which puts at risk the integrity, credibility and validity of a qualification, its assessment and student certifications, or the effective operation of the centre as a whole.

Breach of examination or assessment rules, regulations and requirements

Examples could include:

- failing to keep mark schemes secure.
- falsification/alteration of assessment records or results documentation.
- assisting students 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 college staff.
- producing work for the student.
- facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- fraudulent certificate claims, i.e., claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment.
- obtaining unauthorised access of assessment/examination/test material prior to an assessment/examination test.

copying from another student (including the use of ICT to aid copying) or allowing work to be copied. **This list is not exhaustive, and staff should refer to the qualification awarding organisation rules, regulations and quality procedures and the JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policy and Procedures guidance.**

Awarding organisations expect Northampton College staff to co-operate fully with any investigations into cases of suspected or actual malpractice.

Staff who discover or suspect malpractice must immediately report this to the Quality Office.

b) College Students

Malpractice means to break a rule or ignore the awarding organisations' (for example City & Guilds, Pearson, or NCFE etc) legal requirements regarding the assessment process, (including the conduct of examinations), which puts at risk the quality, value and validity of a qualification, its assessment and student certifications, or the effective operation of the centre as a whole. Examples could include:

- Having mobile phones switched on during examinations or controlled assessments.
- Wearing a watch during an exam or controlled assessment.
- Sitting an exam for someone else or asking someone else to sit an exam for you.
- Misuse of assessment/examination material for example sharing information about examinations or controlled assessments if you have sat your exam earlier than other students.
- Using notes during a closed book assessment.

- Working with other students to produce work that is submitted as individual student work.
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment/examination.
- Deliberate destruction of another's work.

The above list is not exhaustive and students should listen to exam invigilators, tutors and assessors when instructions are given. Students should also ask if instructions do not seem clear.

c) Plagiarism

Before submitting any work for assessment students must sign a Declaration of Authenticity, stating that the work is their own and any sources of information have been accurately referenced.

Plagiarism is where a student incorporates material that is not their own (this will include copying all or substantial parts of their assessed work from other sources, such as books, CDs, internet sources or other people's work) into their assessment(s), and presenting it as their own, whether intentional or not.

Examples include:

- The deliberate (intentional) copying of work from other students or sources and presenting it as your own work in formal assessment situations.
- Using extracts and / or quotations and / or diagrams and pictures from the work of other students or sources without any citation or referencing (maybe unintentional plagiarism).

d) AI Misuse

The increase in Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini) has led to the need for addition to the Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism Policy. AI-Assisted plagiarism is the use of AI generated text in assignments and assessments that are submitted towards achievement of qualifications and that has not been appropriately referenced. AI is a powerful tool that can have benefits, for example to help to overcome linguistic barriers, but when used to generate the bulk of an assignment or assessment, could be a form of plagiarism and subject to the same sanctions as standard plagiarism.

For example, AI may be used for the below tasks and support can be provided by teachers, the DARC, teaching assistants and other staff

- Supporting research and idea generation.
- Administrative efficiency (e.g., scheduling, summarizing notes).
- Accessibility support (e.g., text-to-speech, translation).

AI must not be used for:

- Completing assessments or assignments without explicit permission.
- Generating content that is submitted as original work without acknowledgement that AI has been used.

In line with guidance from Awarding organisations, teachers and assessors will only accept work for qualification assessments (for example formative, summative or controlled) which is the students' own and includes an authenticity declaration signed by the student.

The College will follow the guidance from JCQ in the document titled "AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications" (April 2025) which provides essential guidance for schools, teachers, and assessors on how to manage and regulate the use of artificial intelligence in coursework and non-exam assessments. College staff will explain to students how they can and can't use AI tools relating to their specific programmes and assessments and will ensure that all students understand these rules. The "AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications" document includes the following information:

Key Guidance

- Transparency: Students must clearly state if and how AI tools were used in their work.
- Permissible Use: AI can be used for support (e.g., idea generation or grammar checks), but not for completing tasks that assess core knowledge or skills.
- Originality: Work submitted must be the student's own. Use of AI that results in work not being demonstrably the student's own may be treated as malpractice in line with awarding organisation rules.
- Teacher Responsibility: Teachers and assessors must be vigilant in identifying AI-generated content and ensure students understand the rules.
- Policy Alignment: Centres must align their internal policies with JCQ regulations and ensure all staff and students are informed.

Integrity Measures

- Centres are encouraged to use plagiarism detection tools and maintain clear records of suspected misuse.
- You can access the full document directly from the JCQ Website here. Students must make sure that work submitted for assessment is demonstrably their own. If any sections of their work are reproduced directly from AI generated responses, those elements must be identified by the student, and they must understand that this may not allow them to demonstrate that they have independently met the marking criteria and therefore they will need to evidence in the work that they have fully understood the AI generated response or the work may not be marked.
- Students using any AI tool (where allowed) must reference this clearly by:
    - Naming the AI tool used
    - The date the content was generated
    - Explain how the tool was used
    - Save a screenshot of any questions asked and the answers received.
- Students should not sign the assessment authenticity declaration until they have made sure that they have added all references to the use of any AI tools.
- Students who misuse AI so that the work they submit for assessment cannot be evidenced as their own will have committed malpractice and may attract severe sanctions for example they may be disqualified from the assessment or even the whole qualification.

If any form of plagiarism (including AI-assisted) of assessments or assignments is suspected, the Quality Office should be contacted to confirm the actions that will be taken. If there are still concerns that work has been subject to malpractice or plagiarism, this will be treated as academic misconduct and will be subject to investigation and possible action under the College Disciplinary procedure as defined in the Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy.

Confirmed misuse of AI assisted plagiarism will be reported to the relevant awarding organisation in line with JCQ guidance.

All students will receive a study skills session at the beginning of their course which will explain how to use and how not to use AI tools, how to reference AI use, how to keep evidence and what is allowed on their specific course(s). Students are also able to ask staff members at any time for advice on the use of AI tools in their work and assessment.

6. Reporting

- Any suspected maladministration or malpractice, including all forms of plagiarism (including inappropriate use of AI) will be reported to the Quality Office who will contact the Awarding Organisation according to their requirements.
- Staff Disciplinary Records.
- Student Disciplinary Records.

7. Associated Policies

- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Student Assessment Policy
- JCQ Handbook

8. Appendices:

Appendix 1: Record of Investigation into Alleged Malpractice

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Student / Staff Name:		
Date range of alleged offence:	**From:**	**To:**

Course Details:	**Course:**				**Tutor / Line Manager:**
Detail of alleged offence:					
Action taken: (relate to the relevant disciplinary process)					**Disciplinary Stage:**
Authorised Signatory: (Curriculum Manager / School Assistant Principal)	**Name:**				
	Signature:				
	Date:				
Student Signature:	**Name:**				
	Signature:				
	Date:				
Checklist:	**Action Taken:**				**Date:**
	Copy of relevant disciplinary policy issued.				
	Inform staff / student of the outcome of further proven misconduct.				
	Issue Letter				
	First	Final	Suspension	Exclusion	
	Issue copy of this form and letter to parents / carers if under 18				
	Issue copy of this form and letter to Curriculum Manager / Assistant Principal of School / HR				