The Damara School

Specialist SEMH Independent School

Examination Malpractice Policy

Approved by: Trust Board	
Initial Ratification: 14 November 2024	**Review: November 2025, October 2026**
Next review due by: October 2027	

Key staff involved in the Malpractice Policy

Role	Name
Head of Centre/SENDCO	Mrs Sandra Govender (CEO)
Exams Officer	Mrs Julie Cox
SENDCO in training	Mrs Toni Mahler-Strzelecki

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 use 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 which:

- 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

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.

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 Suspected malpractice

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

Purpose of the policy

To confirm The Damara School: has in place for inspection a policy 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).

General principles

In accordance with the regulations The Damara School will:

- take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place
- 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
- 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

Preventing Malpractice

The Damara 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.

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 2025-26
- 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 Informing and advising candidates how to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments.

Candidates are informed and advised to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments at the start of their GCSE, Level 2, A Level or Level 3 courses. All pupils receive documents by email sent by the Exams Officer regarding 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: Protecting the 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.

Pupils are reminded of the key forms of malpractice in their exams briefing assembly, which takes place just before they start their written exams. They are reminded to refer to the malpractice document. This is done by the Exams Officer.

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. Any suspected malpractice issues should be reported to the Exams Officer in the first instance. The Exams Officer will escalate issues as appropriate to the Head of Centre.

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

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 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.

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 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. 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 Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M2 will be used. 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.

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.

Appeals against decisions made in cases of malpractice The Damara School will provide the individual with information on the process and timeframe for submitting an appeal, where relevant. They will be sent further information about the process as per the JCQ publication A Guide to the Awarding Bodies' Appeals Processes.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Head of Centre is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy.

This policy will be reviewed every year and shared with the full Trust board.