

Ballyclare Secondary School



“Every child deserves a rewarding educational experience.”

BTEC Assessment Malpractice Policy

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Purpose of the policy:

1. To define malpractice in the context of assessment decisions in BTEC
2. To set out the rights and responsibilities of learners and staff, regarding malpractice
3. To set out the procedural steps to be taken for learner and/or staff malpractice

Aims:

1. To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners.
2. To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively
3. To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
4. To report all alleged, suspected and actual incidents of malpractice to Pearson
5. To protect the integrity of this centre and BTEC qualifications

To do this, Ballyclare Secondary School will:

- Foster a culture in which all learners and staff feel able to report any concerns of wrongdoing by anyone. At the beginning of the year the Quality Nominee will inform staff that should they have any concerns. they are to come and speak to them. In September, learners will be introduced to the Lead Internal Verifiers on their course as a point of contact should they have any concerns.
- Seek to prevent malpractice by using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the sanctions for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice. As part of the induction process in September, Assessors will make all of their students aware of what constitutes malpractice, the different types of plagiarism and the consequences associated with it. Learners will be referred to the information regarding malpractice in the student handbook for their course and to the definition of plagiarism contained within it.
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources. In September, as part of their induction to the course, students will receive information which introduces them to referencing and the use of bibliographies. These strategies are also incorporated into teaching and learning and are revisited prior to the issue of assignments.
- Require learners to declare that their work is their own. All learners must accompany every piece of assignment with a signed declaration confirming that their work is their own. Assessors are responsible for checking the validity and authenticity of the learners' work and the Lead Internal Verifier will oversee this.
- Ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used. After each assignment a bibliography will be submitted.
- Advise learners of the centre's rules regarding whether AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) can be used and if so, require learners to acknowledge the use of artificial intelligence (AI) sources and provide copies of any interactions with AI tools made in the production of their work.
- Report to Pearson all alleged, suspected and actual incidents of malpractice in accordance with JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures. This policy can be accessed at the following link

https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Malpractice_Feb23_v1.pdf

- Where required, gather information for an investigation in accordance with Pearson instructions. Such an investigation will be supported by the Head of Centre and all staff linked to the allegation. If you discover an irregularity after a learner has signed the declaration of authentication, or you suspect any malpractice by a learner during an external assessment, you must submit full details of the case at the earliest opportunity by emailing a JCQ Form M1 with supporting documentation to candidatemaalpractice@pearson.com. If you suspect a member of staff has committed malpractice or that maladministration of the qualification may have occurred, you must email a completed JCQ M2 form to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. The Investigations team will review the documentation that you provide and advise on the next steps.
- Seek to avoid the risk of staff malpractice. The Centre will ensure that all staff are recruited with integrity and are suitably qualified to teach on BTEC qualifications. Assessors will be expected to undertake BTEC CPD to become fully conversant with the specifications and the requirements of BTEC. All BTEC staff will be fully informed of the seriousness of staff malpractice through induction by the Quality Nominee. The information concerning staff malpractice will also be contained within the BTEC staff handbook.

Note: Where malpractice is proven, Pearson will determine the sanctions to be imposed.

Learner Malpractice

This list of examples is not exhaustive:

- Plagiarism of any nature, including the misuse of AI tools
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work.
- Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
- Deliberate destruction of another's work
- Fabrication of results or evidence
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
- Impersonation, by pretending to be someone else to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.

Staff Malpractice

This list of examples is not exhaustive:

- Improper assistance to learners
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the learners' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made.
- Failure to keep learner coursework/portfolios of evidence secure.
- 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 centre 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 own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- Failing to provide reasonable adjustments where these have been approved, such as having a scribe or reader.
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or fabrication
- Improper certificate claims, e.g., claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

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 BTEC qualifications.
- As has always been the case, and in accordance with section 5.3(j) of the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/examsoffice/general-regulations/>), all work submitted for qualification assessments must be the students' 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.
- AI tools must only be used when the conditions of the assessment permit the use of the internet and where the student is able to demonstrate that the final submission is the product of their own independent work and independent thinking.
- 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.

- When reviewing a given piece of work to ensure its authenticity, it is useful to compare it against other work created by the student. Where the work is made up of writing, one can make note of the following characteristics:
 - Spelling and punctuation
 - Grammatical usage
 - Writing style and tone
 - Vocabulary
 - Complexity and coherency
 - General understanding and working level.
 - The mode of production (i.e., whether handwritten or word-processed)

Procedures for dealing with suspected Learner Malpractice – Internally Assessed Units

Stage 1:

The Quality Nominee and Lead Internal Verifier must be informed of the malpractice with accompanying evidence. A thorough investigation will be undertaken and both the Quality Nominee and Lead Internal Verifier will speak to the learner(s) and give the opportunity to respond to the allegations made. In cases where plagiarism is proven the Lead Internal Verifier will give the learner a verbal warning. The submitted work will be cancelled and the learner will be given the opportunity to amend the work and re-submit it within a given timescale. A signed learner declaration form must be attached to the re-submitted work. Details of the meeting and the sanctions applied will be formally recorded and a copy stored on the student record. Parents/Guardians will be informed. In cases of serious malpractice, where the breach is of a serious magnitude, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Quality Nominee and Lead Internal Verifier to discuss the seriousness of the offence, and the learner will be given a verbal warning. The submitted work will be cancelled and the learner will be given the opportunity to amend the work and re-submit it within a given timescale. Details of the meeting and the sanctions applied will be formally recorded and a copy stored on the learner record. The process will be documented by the Quality Nominee.

Stage 2:

If the learner fails to remove the plagiarised material or re-submits work which contains further plagiarised content which is proven following investigation by the Quality Nominee and Lead Internal Verifier, then parents will be invited to the school and the learner will be given a final warning. The learner will also be given one final opportunity to re-submit the work. A signed learner declaration must be attached to the re-submitted work. The process will be documented by the Quality Nominee and a copy recorded on the learner record.

Stage 3:

Should the situation remain unresolved; the Quality Nominee will inform the Head of Centre and a further investigation will follow. Consequences will depend on the outcome of the investigation but if the malpractice is proven and the learner has failed to remove the plagiarised content then this may result in the learner being withdrawn from the course and the malpractice being reported to the exam board.

How to minimise the risk of Learner Malpractice

All students are expected to:

- Avoid sharing their work (electronic or physical) with other students.
- Avoid sharing passwords with other students.
- Only submit work for assessment that is their own original work.
- Cite and reference text when taken from an information source

Links

Links to key Pearson Centre Documents that may be helpful for staff when reading or using these policies & procedures.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/exams/examination-guidance/malpractice.html>

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/Quality%20Assurance/OnDemand-Understanding-Plagiarism-Presentation.pdf>