



West Exe School

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**BTEC ASSESSMENT
MALPRACTICE POLICY 2025-2026**

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, West Exe School will:

- Foster a culture in which all learners and staff feel able to report any concerns of wrongdoing by anyone
- Seek to prevent malpractice by using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of our policy on malpractice and the sanctions for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
- Require learners to declare that their work is their own
- Ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- Advise learners of our 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 (This is made clear in the Learner handbook)
- Report to Pearson all alleged, suspected and actual incidents of malpractice in accordance with [JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures](#) .
 - o If West Exe School discover or suspect a learner or member of staff of having committed malpractice, the individual will be made fully aware (preferably in writing) at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
 - o Cases of suspected learner malpractice in external assessments will be reported to Pearson immediately. The Head of Centre will complete JCQ Form M1 and submit this along with all supporting documentation to Pearson's Investigations Processing team at candidatemalpractice@pearson.com
 - o Cases of suspected learner malpractice in internal assessments will be reported to Pearson if the learner has signed the declaration of authentication. The Head of Centre will complete [JCQ Form M1](#) and submit this along with all supporting documentation to Pearson's Investigations Processing team at <mailto:candidatemalpractice@pearson.com>
 - o For internal assessment, where learners have not completed a declaration of authentication, West Exe School will follow the internal assessment

malpractice/academic misconduct policy in resolving the matter as this does not need to be reported to Pearson.

- Where required, gather information for an investigation in accordance with Pearson instructions. Such an investigation will be supported by the Headteacher and all personnel linked to the allegation.
- comply with the requirements as set out in the [Centre Guidance: Dealing with Malpractice and maladministration](#).

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.

Why plagiarism can occur:

The reasons why learners plagiarise are varied, but among them are:

- The learner's lack of awareness of the regulations;
- The learner's failure to allow sufficient time to produce work;
- The greater pressures on the learners to succeed;
- The greater availability of information on the internet and ease with which this can be copied.

Preventing Malpractice and Plagiarism:

We seek to avoid potential malpractice by informing learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice. This will take place every September, during the learner's induction.

The Curriculum and standards Lead (Mrs Laura Jacobs), the QN (Mrs Chris Davies), Examinations Officer (Mrs Elizabeth Henderson) and Programme Leads as well as all BTEC teachers and assessors will all be responsible for ensuring students and parents are informed via the learner handbooks, VLE and the course inductions. If a learner joins one of the BTEC courses late, then they will be informed of this when they enrol.

The school will also ensure appropriate study skills training, information and support is available for all students to prevent incidents of assessment malpractice and plagiarism. This includes showing learners the appropriate format to record cited texts and other materials or information sources, including the use of AI.

Academic staff will take reasonable steps to monitor student work carefully for assessment malpractice and plagiarism. Detection methods could include, but are not limited to, standardisation of marked work, comparing student work, checking work for unfamiliar words and grammar, a change in the quality of work produced, identification of unreferenced familiar text.

Assessors, Internal Verifiers, Standards Verifiers and Lead Internal Verifiers will receive annual training and guidance to support the prevention and identification of assessment malpractice and plagiarism and how to deal with any incidents identified.

Staff teaching on BTEC courses will also follow robust quality assurance processes including Internal Verification, audited record keeping, tracking and certification claims to minimise and identify any malpractice.

Procedure for dealing with suspected malpractice and/or plagiarism (before declaration of authenticity signed)

Students are required to provide a signed and dated authenticity statement with every BTEC assignment brief to acknowledge that the work produced is their own and that

they understand the penalties that will be imposed on students who do submit plagiarised work.

In the event of acts of malpractice and plagiarism being suspected:

The programme leader and examinations officer will undertake a thorough investigation; speaking first to the learner(s) involved to seek clarification and in respect of plagiarism regarding how they believe they sourced the material, assessment material, etc.

If it is suspected an assignment has been plagiarised, the next step is to try to locate the source. The easiest method is to type a four-to-six-word phrase from the text (preferably one with an unusual phrase in it) directly into a search engine such as Google and perform an “exact phrase search”. Staff could also look through the websites that students use, as these are common sources for assignments. If an investigation is inconclusive the work in question could be removed and replaced by alternative work whose authenticity is not in doubt. There are other various plagiarism software packages that can be used although the school does not have a particular package we use now.

Proven Plagiarism

In cases where plagiarism has been proved (and depending upon the seriousness of the offence) for a first-time offender, the student will be interviewed by the Assistant Head Teacher, given a verbal warning and reminded of the Assessment Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy.

Details of the meeting will be recorded on the school disciplinary system. The student’s work will be withdrawn scoring no marks and the student will be given an opportunity to amend the work and resubmit the piece of work within an agreed timeframe.

BTEC rules will be applied, and students will not be given the opportunity of a further resubmission or retake. In cases where there is a further breach of the policy, or where a first-time breach is of serious magnitude the learner’s parent(s) or guardian(s) will be informed and invited to attend a hearing with the programme leader and head of centre. Once again, the student’s work will then be withdrawn scoring no marks and the student will be given an opportunity to amend the work and resubmit the piece of work within an agreed timeframe.

BTEC rules will be applied, and students will not be given the opportunity of a further resubmission or retake. The student will progress upwards through the school disciplinary system. In cases whereby either there is a second or further offence, or the first-time breach is of serious magnitude, the school may contact the appropriate examination board.

Awarding bodies have at their disposal a range of sanctions that they may wish to invoke:

- the student being withdrawn from one or all their current examination series.
- the piece of work being awarded zero marks.
- student being barred from being entered for the qualification for a specified period. In cases where staff malpractice is identified they will be subject to the staff disciplinary policy.

Procedure for dealing with suspected malpractice and/or plagiarism (after declaration of authenticity signed)

Students are required to provide a signed and dated authenticity statement with every BTEC assignment brief to acknowledge that the work produced is their own and that they understand the penalties that will be imposed on students who do submit plagiarised work.

Assessors must not accept work which is not the learners own. If plagiarism is discovered prior to the signing of a declaration of authentication the incident need not be reported to Pearson, but should be dealt with in accordance with the centre's own procedures. (see above)

If plagiarism is detected by the centre and the declaration of authentication has been signed, the case must be reported to Pearson. The procedure is detailed in

[Centre Guide for dealing with malpractice and maladministration](#)

Pearson will then consider the case and, if necessary, impose a sanction in line with the penalties given in the document Guidance for Dealing with Instances of Suspected Malpractice in Examinations. The sanctions applied to a candidate committing plagiarism range from a warning regarding future conduct to the candidate being barred from entering for one or more examinations for a set period.

Appeals

The learner has the right to appeal the decision. Circumstances will be investigated by the head of centre and/or trust. Appeals must be made within 10 working day of the decision being given in writing to the learner. See Appeals policy for more details.

Signed:



Mrs Laura Jacobs (Deputy Headteacher)

Date: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026