



# WADHAM SCHOOL

## Coursework and Exam Malpractice Policy



Who is Responsible?	Curriculum and Outcomes Committee
Statutory Policy?	Yes
Review Timescale	Every year
Approval Date	Jan 2022
Next Review	Jan 2023

Signed .....

Date .....



This policy ensures our values as a school can be realised professionally with an assessment and exam process that is robust and controlled with a goal to provide academic achievements that are 100% valid and trusted in line with the National expectation.

Achievements gained from assessments and exams will support young people realise their aspirations and their learning and education will bring hope for the future.

## **1.Aims and Objectives of the policy**

### **Aims**

Wadham School is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of our awarding bodies. The way students' work is assessed must serve the stated learning objectives of the programmes we offer, meet the requirements of the various awarding bodies and facilitate the achievement and wider development of our students.

### **Objectives**

- a) To assess students' work with integrity by being consistent and transparent in our assessment judgements and processes so that the outcomes are fair, reliable and valid.
- b) To ensure that assessment standards and specifications are implemented fully (both in spirit and in letter), so that no risk is posed to the reputation of the awarding bodies or the qualifications we offer.
- c) To establish quality control and recording mechanisms for assignments and their assessment through a system of sampling, moderation, internal verification and cross-departmental co-ordination as appropriate to the requirements of the programmes we offer.
- d) To provide learner-centred approaches to assessment, which provide opportunities for students to achieve at levels commensurate with the demands of their course.

## **2. Range and scope of the policy.**

The range of the policy covers all externally validated courses offered at Wadham School.

## **3. Assessment of Coursework**

Internal Assessment is defined as the process where staff make judgements on evidence produced by students against required criteria for the qualification. In subjects where tasks are not set centrally. *The School devised assessment materials must be internally and/or externally verified before being issued to students depending on the requirements of the examining board.*

- a) Completed student assignments will be assessed internally, be subject to internal verification (sometimes called internal moderation) and external moderation by the awarding body.
- b) Students must be left in no doubt that any grade awarded will be subject to internal and/or external scrutiny, (moderation) and that ultimately the final decision rests with the awarding body.
- c) The teacher is responsible for ensuring that assessment processes are consistent and transparent, that evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic and that judgement of evidence is valid and reliable.
- d) All work must be handed in on the stated date. If an extension is granted the reasons for this must be recorded.

### **3.1 Role of the Teacher**

#### **ALL AWARDS**

- a) Ensure that students are clear about the criteria they are expected to meet in their assignments and that they are fully briefed on the skills which need to be demonstrated in this component of a subject.
- b) Ensure that each student has the allotted time needed to complete the assignment including (if appropriate) planning and write up time.
- c) Ensure that access arrangements are in place for the relevant students

- d) Ensure the relevant level of control needed by the awarding body is followed and that school required paperwork is completed
- e) Adhere to the Awarding Body's specification in the assessment of student assignments
- f) Record outcomes of assessment using appropriate documentation. Outcomes will be held secure for three years, measured from the point of certification. Associated moderation records should also be kept, to support and verify the decisions that were made for the cohort.
- g) Ensure that they and each candidate complete all necessary paperwork associated with submitting the assignment. These must be kept until after the date for appeals.
- h) Provide accurate records of internally assessed marks to the Exams Office in a timely manner for transfer to the awarding body.

### **3.2 Internal Verification (Internal Moderation)**

- a) The Internal Verifier is at the heart of quality assurance on Vocational and Technical Award programmes and is an essential component of all centre assessed work, whatever the award. The role is to ensure that internally assessed work consistently meets national standards. In all types of award, it can also lead to staff development and quality improvement.
- b) Within subject teams where vocational and/or technical awards are delivered all teachers are internal verifiers of each other's work i.e. teacher marks the work for their own group and other teacher acts as the internal verifier.
- c) Internal Verifiers will have the knowledge and qualifications relevant to the qualification(s) and other competence-based award(s) for which they are responsible to enable accurate judgements to be made regarding candidate performance in relation to competence criteria.
- d) Provision will be made for communication between course teams to share 'best practice' and areas of concern.

#### **3.2.1 The role of the Internal Verifier and/or Curriculum Team Leader (relevant for NCFE/CACHE and OCR Nationals and Technicals):**

- Not verify their own work or assignments.
- Make all IV evidence available for external quality assurance, if appropriate.
- Plan with the course teachers an annual internal verification schedule linked to assignment plans.
- Consider the assessment decisions of all units and all assessors to judge whether the assessor has assessed accurately against the unit grading criteria

- Verify 50% of the sample, though this proportion should be higher, particularly for assessors who are new to the qualification or when numbers are low.
- Consider alternative methods of moderation/verification as required for non-written (ephemeral) assessments (e.g. assessments of performance, oral presentations, and work placements). In most cases, the documentary record of the assessor(s) will provide the basis for verification.
- Maintain secure records of all work sampled as part of their verification process using a standard template.
- If a concern is raised the IV should discuss this with the assessor prior to the final confirmation of the marks for all the students taking the assignment. As a result of the

IV process it may be necessary for the assessor(s) to reconsider the marks awarded for the entire cohort of students and, as a consequence, to make changes either to all marks or to some marks.

- Where re-sampling is necessary the work should be verified again before being sent to the external standards verifier/moderator and records kept.

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### **General Responsibilities of the Curriculum Team Leader**

- Plan with other teachers how and when this component of the award will be delivered
- Provide all delivery staff with a moderation/internal verification schedule which outlines when and how the process will occur
- Ensure that, where more than one piece of work is involved, moderation occurs promptly after the completion of *each* piece of work.
- Ensure they are able to verify that the standard of marking between teachers is of a comparable standard.
- Maintain a database of verified marks for tracking purposes
- Use the process to identify staff development and quality improvement opportunities.

### **3.3 Authentication of Candidate's Work**

- a) On each assignment students must sign that the work submitted is their own and teachers / assessors should confirm that the work assessed is solely that of the candidate concerned and was conducted under required conditions.
- b) If the student hands in an assignment and teachers suspect it is not the student's own work, the matter should be reported to the Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum).

### **3.4 Student Misconduct**

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

- a) Plagiarism: taking someone else's work, images or ideas, whether published or not, and with or without their permission, and passing them off as your own: thereby not properly acknowledging the original source. This particularly relates to material downloaded from the Internet or copied from books
- b) Copying the work of other students with or without their permission and knowingly, allowing another student to copy one's own work.
- c) Colluding with other students to produce work, which is then submitted individually, except where this is specifically required/allowed by the assessment criteria.
- d) Falsely claiming extenuating circumstances to gain an unfair advantage in assessment outcomes
- e) Submitting work done by another student as your own.

### **3.5 Preventing Student Misconduct**

The School will take positive steps to prevent and reduce the occurrence of malpractice by students. These will include:

- a) Informing students of what constitutes malpractice and consequent penalties.
- b) Showing students the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Students 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 student has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.
- c) Introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, eg plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc. These procedures may include:
  - o The requirement for interim work to be handed in before final deadlines to give a picture of the student's progress.

- periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework is produced by the student.
  - altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis.
  - the teacher assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of students.
  - using oral questions with students to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc within their work.
  - teachers getting to know their students' styles and abilities.
- d) Ensuring access controls are installed to prevent students from accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.

### **3.6 Investigating Student Misconduct**

There will be an investigation if student misconduct is suspected which may lead to disciplinary action.

- a) Students who attempt to gain an award by deceitful means will automatically have their result(s) suspended (held) pending a thorough investigation by the Deputy Head (Curriculum). The student 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 School. Malpractice is a breach of School rules and may invoke the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Any case where student malpractice is found to be substantiated will be reported to the awarding body.
- c) If no evidence is found that the student cheated, then the benefit of the doubt should be given to the student and the grade achieved should be awarded.

### **3.7 Appeals Procedures**

- a) It is the responsibility of the School as an assessment centre, to make all students aware of the appeals procedure and give them access to a copy of the procedure.
- b) In the first instance when an assessment is given back or the mark / grade reported to the student, the student must raise any concerns they have with the teacher at this point. In most cases the concern will be resolved at this stage by explaining to the student how the mark/grade was achieved and marks given. If the student is still not happy with the outcome then the student needs to go through the formal appeals process.

- c) The Deputy Head (Curriculum) with the teacher, on receipt of the formal appeal from the candidate, will try to seek a solution negotiated between the relevant teacher and the candidate. If it is not possible to reach an agreement, the Deputy Head (Curriculum) will set a date for the Appeals Panel to meet.
- d) The Deputy Head (Curriculum) is responsible for managing the formal appeals process. If deemed necessary, a formal appeals panel should be set up comprising at least three people, where at least one member is independent of the assessment process.
- e) The Appeals Panel will normally meet within 1 week of the receipt of the appeal, with re-assessment, if deemed necessary by the panel, taking place within 10 working days of the appeals panel meeting.
- f) The outcome of the appeal may be:
  - ✦ Confirmation of original decision;
  - ✦ A re-assessment by an independent assessor;
  - ✦ An opportunity to resubmit for assessment within a revised agreed timescale.
- g) Written records of all appeals should be maintained by the School. These should include a description of the appeal, the outcome of the appeal and the reason for that outcome. A tracking document will be used (see appendix) to follow the course of an appeal, allowing it to be time tracked and verified at each stage.

### **3.8 Grounds for Appeal**

A student/candidate would have grounds for appeal against an assessment decision in the following situations. This list is selective and not exhaustive.

- a) The work is not assessed according to the set criteria or the criteria are ambiguous.
- b) The final grade of the work does not match the criteria set for grade boundaries or the grade boundaries are not sufficiently defined.
- c) The internal verification procedure contradicts the assessment grades awarded.
- d) There is evidence of preferential treatment towards other students/candidates.
- e) The conduct of the assessment did not conform to the published requirements of the Awarding Body
- f) Valid, agreed, extenuating circumstances were not considered at the time of assessment, which the School was aware of prior to the submission deadline.
- g) Agreed deadlines were not observed by staff.
- h) The decision to reject coursework on the grounds of malpractice.



### **3.9 Staff Malpractice**

The following are examples of malpractice by School staff. This list is not exhaustive.

- a) Failure to keep any awarding body mark schemes secure
- b) Alteration of awarding body assessment and grading criteria
- c) 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 School staff producing work for the student
- d) Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the student has not generated
- e) Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assignment/task/portfolio/ coursework
- f) Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- g) Misusing the conditions for special student requirements,
- h) Failing to keep student computer files secure
- i) Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- j) Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment

**Where staff malpractice is suspected, an investigation will take place under staff disciplinary procedures.**

## **4 Conflicts of Interest**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Wadham School is required to have in place a Conflict of Interest policy that enables us to identify, manage and mitigate any potential conflicts of interest. All staff and other individuals have a responsibility to be aware of the potential for a conflict of interest.

### **4.2 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to protect our integrity as a business and the integrity of our qualifications. The policy is also designed to protect our staff by providing guidance on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of the school's role in delivering courses.

This policy:

- defines what is meant by conflict of interest.
- describes the role of conflict of interest in the context of working with, or for, an awarding organisation.
- sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest at each level in the organisation.

### **4.3 Scope of policy**

This policy applies to all staff and other individuals who interact or potentially interact with the work of the awarding organisation. This includes individuals involved with any aspects of the creation, marketing, sales, distribution, marking or any other activity connected with qualifications, tests and assessments, and supporting resources and services. The individuals falling within the scope of this policy include all staff employed by the school on a full time, part time or casual basis.

### **4.4 Definition of conflict of interest**

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has specific requirements regarding potential conflicts of interest relating to examinations: The awarding bodies are required by the qualification regulators to ensure that any Conflict of Interest in relation to the design, delivery and awarding of examinations/assessments is identified, recorded and managed effectively. In turn, centres are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the awarding bodies are able to comply with this regulatory condition.

#### **4.4.1 What is a Conflict of Interest?**

In this context, a Conflict of Interest occurs where any member of staff who has access to privileged information, or is responsible for making decisions about assessment outcomes, could, potentially, use that information, or their position, to give an unfair advantage to a close friend or relative entered for an examination/assessment at your or any other centre. The term 'Related People' is used to cover close friends or relatives. A Conflict of Interest also occurs if any member of your centre's staff is entered for an examination/assessment.

#### **4.4.2 Who are 'Related People'?**

'Related People' are those with whom the member of staff has a close relationship. It would certainly include spouses, children and siblings, but would also include close friends, relatives and members of the household where there is regular contact, such that privileged information might be shared inappropriately. A step-relative, cousin, niece, etc., would count if the contact with that person was close and frequent.

### **4.5 Principles**

The school will review its processes annually to ensure that all conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest are managed and resolved. Ensure that the contractual arrangements clearly set out any obligations on them to declare and manage conflicts of interest arising from other activities that they undertake. Ensure that anyone who has access to confidential assessment material for a qualification understands the confidential nature of the content.

Ensure that all members of staff declare any interest for friends or family sitting examinations.

## **4.6 Responsibilities**

The Governing Body have the ultimate responsibility for the Conflict of Interest policy, dissemination of the policy and management of potential and actual conflicts of interest rests with the Governing body. Leaders in each department are responsible for communicating the Conflict of Interest Policy to all relevant individuals within their areas of responsibility annually. The Exams Officer will ensure that all JCQ requirements are adhered to and will maintain appropriate records accordingly. All staff Individuals have responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the Conflict of Interest Policy, any guidelines and complete and required conflict of interest training. All individuals will be required annually to read and understand the Conflict of Interest Policy. The most important feature of the policy is the requirement that an individual disclose any activity that might give rise to a potential conflict of interest. If there is any doubt whether or not it represents a conflict of interest it should be reported. Prior to each examination series all staff and other individuals, must inform the Head Teacher and the exams officer of any candidates being entered for its examinations at the school and also at any other examination centre who are family members, other relatives or friends. The Head Teacher is responsible for escalating reports of actual or potential conflicts of interest to an appropriate level within the school and, when necessary, to the Governors. The Head Teacher will begin an investigation of any issues identified within 48 hours. A preliminary report will be made available to the Governors within 5 working days.

## **5 Private Candidates**

Private candidates are candidates who have not studied with the exam centre which makes their entry. Included in this group are, for example:

- School age students who have been home educated;
- Adults who have studied independently;
- Students who have studied with a distance learning provider which does not offer exam entry;

At Wadham School we consider applications to sit exams from private candidates on an individual basis considering the exam(s) they want to take. Initial contact is made to the exams officer who will discuss each case with the Head of Centre. Private candidates are required to pay the exam fee for each qualification they want to take and an administration fee to cover invigilation and other costs.

## **6 Access to Policy**

- a) Copies of the policy will be in the staff handbook

- b) Student induction programmes, course handbooks and curriculum booklets for parents will highlight key aspects of this policy.

## Appendix 1: ASSESSMENT APPEALS TRACKING FORM

Name of appellant	
Course Name	
Unit	
(Assignment)	
Assessment Result	
Date of assessment result	
Name of assessor	
Date of appeal	
Summary of grounds for appeal (Attach copy of letter)	
Action/dates & outcome of informal attempts to resolve	
Comment/signature/date of appellant	
Date of Appeals Panel	
Membership of Appeals Panel	
Outcome of Panel	
Reassessment: Name of assessor and date of reassessment	
Outcome of reassessment	
Date of final decision of panel	
Date of letter to student (copy s/be attached)	
Comment/signature/date of appellant	