

Addendum to Academic Honesty Policy for 2021 Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG)

Malpractice

Centres are required to submit grades that have been determined in line with published guidance and their own Centre Policy.

The decision to not go ahead with exams in Summer 2021 means that the causes and drivers for malpractice will be different to those in a normal examination series.

However, malpractice can still occur through genuine error or intent, particularly around the determination of grades.

A minority of centre staff may fail to appropriately adhere to the guidance in determining grades and some students might attempt to gain an unfair advantage.

The JCQ awarding organisations will investigate potential malpractice concerns in the following circumstances: (Please note that the list is not intended to be exhaustive and there may be other instances of potential malpractice which will require investigation).

Centres/centre staff

The awarding organisations will investigate credible allegations of malpractice or issues reported from our monitoring processes that raise concerns about a failure to follow the published requirements for determining grades.

Examples include:

- Exam entries are created for students who had not studied the course of entry or had not intended to enter for June 2021.
- Grades created for students who have not been taught sufficient content to provide the basis for that grade.
- A teacher deliberately and inappropriately disregarding the centre's published policy when determining grades.
- A teacher fabricating evidence of candidate performance to support an inflated grade.
- A teacher deliberately providing inappropriate levels of support before or during an assessment, including deliberate disclosure of mark schemes and assessment materials, to support an inflated grade.
- A teacher intentionally submitting inflated grades.
- A failure to retain evidence used in the determination of grades in accordance with the JCQ Grading guidance.
- A systemic failure to follow the centre's policy in relation to the application of Access Arrangements or Special Consideration arrangements for students in relation to assessments used to determine grades.
- A failure to take reasonable steps to authenticate student work.
- A failure to appropriately manage Conflicts of Interest (COIs) within a centre.

- A Head of Centre's failure to submit the required declaration when submitting their grades.
- Grades being released to students (or their parents/carers) before the issue of results (variations to this requirement exist in Wales3).
- Failure to cooperate with an awarding body's quality assurance, appeal or investigation processes.
- Failure to conduct a centre review or submit an appeal when requested to do so by a student.

If VT identifies such incidents will be reported to the appropriate awarding organisation as normal, using the JCQ M2 form.

Students and parents/carers

It is possible that some students may attempt to influence their teachers' judgements about their grades. Students might attempt to gain an unfair advantage during the centre's process by, for example, submitting fabricated evidence or plagiarised work. Such incidents would constitute malpractice and centres are asked to report these to the appropriate awarding organisation in the normal way using the JCQ M1 form.

Students, or individuals acting on behalf of a student, such as parents/carers, might also try to influence grade decisions by applying pressure to centres or their staff. The awarding organisations anticipate that the majority of such instances will be dealt with by the centre internally – in such cases, the centre will retain clear and reliable records of the circumstances and the steps taken, and that students are made aware of the outcome. However, if a student continues to inappropriately attempt to pressure centre staff then please inform the relevant awarding organisation using the JCQ M1 form. The awarding organisations will contact our centre if they receive credible allegations that such pressure has been applied in order that appropriate steps can be taken.

In all the scenarios listed above, as well as any others that have not been explicitly identified here, the JCQ Suspected malpractice policies and procedures 2020-2026 continues to apply as does the VT Academic Honesty Policy.

Invested Interest

The Centre Policy describes the process that will be adopted where a potential conflict of interest has been identified, such as where a teacher's relative is a student.