

SPM Development Services Ltd

Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

Reviewed and Updated: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027, or sooner if awarding body or JCQ guidance changes.

Approved by: Simon Piper-Masha

Policy Statement

SPM Development Services Ltd is committed to preventing, identifying and reporting malpractice and maladministration and to protecting the integrity of assessment decisions, results and certificates. Any concerns will be handled promptly, fairly and proportionately in accordance with awarding organisation requirements.

Malpractice means deliberate actions or practices that compromise, or attempt to compromise, the integrity of assessment or the validity of results or certificates.

Maladministration means persistent or widespread errors, poor administration or failure to follow required procedures that undermine the integrity of assessment or the validity of a qualification.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners, tutors, mentors, staff and contractors working with SPM Development Services Ltd. It covers OCN London qualifications and units delivered and internally assessed by SPM. It also covers preparation, evidence and assessment completed through SPM where learners are entered as external candidates for GCSEs or other examinations through an approved examination centre.

For OCN London provision, SPM will follow OCN London's malpractice and maladministration requirements. Where a concern relates to an externally entered examination, SPM will report it promptly to the examination centre, which is responsible for following the relevant awarding organisation and JCQ procedures. SPM will cooperate fully with any resulting investigation.

Responsibilities and Reporting

Anyone who suspects or becomes aware of malpractice or maladministration must report it immediately to Simon Piper-Masha. Concerns relating to OCN London provision will be reported to OCN London without delay. SPM will follow any instructions given by OCN London about how the matter should be investigated.

Where a concern relates to a GCSE or other external examination entry, SPM will report it promptly to the relevant examination centre and cooperate with the centre, awarding organisation and JCQ as required.

Failure to report a concern, preserve relevant evidence or cooperate with an investigation may itself be treated as malpractice or maladministration.

Possible Consequences

Any action taken will be fair, proportionate and based on the evidence and circumstances of the case.

For learners, possible outcomes may include further assessment, work being disallowed, removal from a course or referral to the relevant awarding organisation or examination centre. Decisions concerning results, certificates or disqualification will be made by the responsible awarding organisation or examination centre.

For tutors, staff or contractors, possible outcomes may include additional training, increased monitoring, temporary removal from assessment duties, termination of their engagement with SPM or referral to the relevant awarding organisation, examination centre, commissioning authority or legal authority.

Prevention Measures

SPM will take reasonable steps to prevent malpractice and maladministration through:

- Clear information for learners about assessment rules, plagiarism, collusion and acceptable use of AI.
- Appropriate induction, training and guidance for tutors and assessors.
- Internal quality assurance, sampling and annual standardisation.
- Secure and accurate assessment, registration and certification records.
- Clear learner declarations confirming that submitted work is their own and identifying any permitted support or use of AI.
- Assessors checking that evidence is authentic and consistent with the learner's demonstrated knowledge and ability.
- Prompt action where errors, irregularities or concerns are identified.

Procedures for Handling Malpractice and Maladministration

- All concerns must be reported immediately to Simon Piper-Masha.
- Relevant evidence and records will be secured and preserved.
- OCN London or the relevant examination centre will be notified promptly where required. SPM will follow any instructions given before proceeding with an investigation.
- The investigation will be led by a suitably competent person who has no personal interest in the outcome. Simon Piper-Masha will retain overall responsibility as Head of Centre.
- The person concerned will be informed in writing of the allegation and possible consequences and will be given a fair opportunity to respond and provide evidence. Learners may be supported by a parent, carer, advocate or support worker.
- The investigation will establish the facts, identify anyone or any qualification affected and consider whether corrective action is required.
- Findings, evidence, decisions and actions will be recorded securely and shared with OCN London, the examination centre, commissioning authorities or other relevant bodies where required.
- The person concerned will receive a written outcome, including the reasons for the decision and information about their right to appeal under SPM's Fair Assessment Appeals Procedure.

Examples

Learner malpractice may include plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, impersonation, false declarations, use of unauthorised materials, falsification of evidence or misuse of AI.

Tutor, staff or contractor malpractice may include falsifying assessment or attendance records, making unsupported assessment decisions, improperly assisting learners, making fraudulent certification claims, breaching examination security, or knowingly allowing malpractice to occur.

Maladministration may include persistent or widespread failures in learner registration, record keeping, assessment, internal quality assurance, examination arrangements, certification or the application of awarding organisation procedures.

An isolated administrative error will not automatically be treated as maladministration, but it must be corrected promptly and reviewed to prevent recurrence.

AI Use in Assessments

Learners may only use AI tools where this is permitted by the assessment task and relevant awarding organisation requirements. Any permitted use must be clearly acknowledged, and submitted work must remain the learner's own.

Using AI to generate work that is presented as the learner's own, fabricating sources or evidence, or using AI contrary to assessment instructions may be treated as malpractice.

Concerns about AI misuse will be considered alongside the learner's demonstrated knowledge, previous work and other available evidence. AI detection tools will not be used as the sole basis for a malpractice decision. Learners will be given an opportunity to explain how their work was produced.

Safeguarding Link

If malpractice investigations raise safeguarding concerns, these will be referred immediately to the DSL in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (2026).

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if awarding body, JCQ or statutory guidance changes.