



## **Exams Appeals and Malpractice Policy**

Adopted by Governing Body: 22.05.18

Reviewed by Governing Body: 22.05.18

Next Review Date: May 2023

Statutory Policy: No

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## **Statement of intent**

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in Pitcheroak School's exam process to read, understand and implement this policy.

The Exam Appeals Policy will be reviewed every three years by the headteacher and the Governors.

The school will report to ASDAN any occasions of malpractice. The school understands the responsibilities as outlined in ASDAN's Malpractice and Maladministration policy and procedure Section 3.2 and confirm that this will be adhered to.

We are committed to ensuring that:

- Internal assessments are conducted by members of the teaching staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Assessment evidence provided by the candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the awarding body for the subject concerned.
- The consistency of internal assessment will be maintained by internal moderation and standardisation.
- All pupil work being assessed by teaching staff for external qualifications is carried out fairly, consistently and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the specification relating to the qualification.

The purpose of this Exams Appeals Policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient exams system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

## **WHAT IS EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE?**

Malpractice is defined as any deliberate act of wrong doing, contrary to the rules of examinations designed to give a candidate an unfair advantage or to place a candidate at a disadvantage. Malpractice therefore introduces inequities into the examination system. In some examinations, the level of malpractice is so high that it seriously undermines the credibility of the examination system.

## **FORMS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

The following are some identified forms of examination malpractice:-

### Leakage:

This means that the content of examination or part of it is disclosed prior to taking the examination. Usually it involves one or more of the following: staff members of the examination authorities, printers, proof readers, messengers, personal to develop the papers (setters) or to determine its suitability (moderators) and school administrators.

### Impersonation:

An individual who is not registered as a candidate takes the place of one that is registered. Usually this involves collusion between the chief examiner and the examination supervisor. It frequently involves tertiary institutions - students taking the test for monetary reward or a favour for a girlfriend or boyfriend. Sometimes young employees are coerced to take the examination in place of the rightful examinee.

### External Assistance:

Individuals who are not examination candidates giving unauthorized assistance to candidates. Usually this involves invigilators (exam room supervisors) dictating answers, writing answers on the boards, calculating sheets of worked out answers during the course of the examinations or acting as couriers of materials into the examination centre. In some instances using phones or broadcasting answers.

### Smuggling of foreign materials:

This is perhaps the most common form of malpractice. It relates to the introduction of unauthorized materials (e.g. note books, crib notes, charts and answers) into the examination hall. Material is frequently smuggled in pants, shoes, hems etc or information is written on parts of the body.

### Copying:

Reproduction of another candidate's work with or without permissions.

### Collusion:

Unauthorized passing of information between candidates usually by exchanging notes or scripts. Usually involves only the candidate but can be facilitated by inadequate spacing between desks and lax supervision.

### Intimidation:

Examinations official including supervisors and markers of papers are physically threatened. Usually involves people seeking support for individual candidates. Substitution of scripts, replacing answer sheets handed out during the course of examination. Usually involves examination office officials, invigilators and some teachers working outside the examination room.

### Ghost Centres:

Fictitious examination centres. This is established by corrupt examination officials where candidates can complete the examination with the support of helpers and without supervision.

### Markers Malpractice:

Deliberate alteration of marks designed to inflate or deflate a candidate's original mark. This can be initiated by examination officials, by candidates (making contract with the markers) or making contracts with the candidates.

### Awards and Certification:

Deliberate alteration of. In the past usually confined to examinations officials but in more recent years include printers and candidates with high level of skills in technology.

In the case of suspected malpractice the centre will conduct an internal investigation and alert the awarding body of the outcome.

## **1. Relevant legislation**

- 1.1. All staff must ensure that they adhere to and implement the requirements of any equality legislation.
- 1.2. Pitcheroak School will comply with legislation in accordance with examination awarding bodies and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

## **2. Acceptable grounds for appeal**

- 2.1. Appeals will only be deemed valid when based on procedural irregularity in terms of the conduct of the examination or determination of the result.
- 2.2. Appeals will be deemed invalid and not upheld if based purely on the following:
  - Academic judgement of examiners
  - Extenuating circumstances affecting performance
  - The candidate's lack of awareness of exam regulations and procedures

## **3. Written appeals procedure**

- 3.1. The pupil, or the parent or carer of a pupil, wishing to appeal against the procedure used in an internal assessment should write to Pitcheroak School's examinations officer immediately.
- 3.2. The deadline for appeal applications is 10 days prior to the start of the written examination series.
- 3.3. Internal appeals will be resolved by the date of the last externally assessed paper of the series (e.g. by the end of June for the summer series).
- 3.4. On receipt of a written appeal, an enquiry will be conducted by the examinations officer, a member of the SLT and a head of department who is not involved in the internal assessment decision.
- 3.5. This enquiry will consider whether the procedure used in the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the awarding body and the JCQ Codes of Practice.
- 3.6. Consideration will be given to whether the original mark given is fair and just.
- 3.7. If necessary, comparisons will be made to other pupils' work to help determine a correct and appropriate mark.
- 3.8. A written response to the appeal will be sent to the candidate and their parents/carers within 10 working days of the school receiving the appeal.
- 3.9. A written record of the appeal and the outcome will be kept on file at Pitcheroak School, with the awarding body being informed of any amendments.

3.10. If a candidate is not happy with the written response, a letter requesting a personal hearing should be made to the headteacher.

- A date for a hearing must be given to the candidate and any teachers involved in the assessment.
- The panel must consist of a least two individuals who have not previously dealt with the particular case.
- The school will make a written record of the hearing, which should include the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for that outcome.
- A copy will be sent to the candidate, their parents/carers and teacher(s) within 10 working days of the hearing.

#### **4. External assessments and qualifications**

4.1. Enquiries about results (EARs) can be submitted throughout the academic year.

4.2. Pupils should be aware that EARs can result in the marks/grades being raised, confirmed or lowered.

4.3. Any pupil who wants to query a mark/grade awarded by an awarding body should adhere to the following procedure:

- Contact the examinations officer and the subject teacher as soon as possible in person to discuss the mark/grade. Before this can be done, allow at least five working days before the published deadline for EARs.
- The examinations officer will advise on the options available to query the mark/grade and any costs involved in doing so.
- Pupils must sign a consent form to confirm that they understand the consequences of an EAR; these forms will be issued by the school. Consent forms must be returned before an EAR can be valid.
- The subject teacher will review the pupil's grades and discuss them with their line manager to agree on the appropriate action, taking into account the breakdown of marks, the grade boundaries and the pupil's predicted grades.

4.4. If the EAR is supported, then the staff member will make a request, together with the pupil's consent form, to the examinations officer before the deadline for EARs.

- The cost of the enquiry will be met by the school budget.
- If the EAR is successful, the fee will be refunded.

4.5. If the staff member does not agree to support the EAR, a pupil may appeal against the decision not to support an EAR.

- Appeals should be made in writing to the Headteacher, at least five working days before the published deadline for EARs.

- The appeal should state the reason(s) for the appeal.
- This appeal must be signed, dated and include the contact number and email address of the pupil, parent or carer.
- The appeal information will be reviewed by the examinations officer and a member of the SLT.
- The outcome of the appeal will be communicated either by telephone, email or first class post, as appropriate, within 24 hours of receipt.
- The decision that is reached is final.

4.6. If Pitcheroak School does not support the EAR, the pupil may still proceed with the EAR.

4.7. The fee will be paid by the pupil at the time the EAR is made. No enquiry will be processed until the correct fee is paid.

4.8. Requests must be made in person to the examinations officer before the published deadline for EARs.

4.9. If the enquiry is successful, the fee will be refunded to the pupil.

4.10. Outcomes following EARs will be forwarded by the examinations officer to the pupil as soon as they have been received from the awarding bodies.

## **5. Appeal outcomes**

5.1. All decisions of an EAR, regarding an awarding body, are final.

5.2. Following consideration of an appeal, the potential outcomes are likely to be as follows:

- The appeal is deemed invalid and is not upheld.
- The appeal is valid and a minor procedural irregularity has occurred; however, its impact is not sufficient to justify a change of the examination outcome.
- The appeal is deemed valid; however, there is uncertainty about the impact that the minor procedural irregularity had. The candidate will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a subsequent attempt at the examination.
- The appeal is upheld, in that a major procedural irregularity did occur which affected the candidate's result. The previously awarded score shall be corrected appropriately.

5.3. Candidates will be notified of the outcome of their appeal, with reasons stated, within 10 working days of the decision being agreed.

## **6. Quality assurance procedure**

- 6.1. Pitcheroak is committed to quality assurance and believes it is an integral part of Pitcheroak School's processes.
- 6.2. The provision of education is regularly monitored and reviewed by the members of SLT.
- 6.3. At Pitcheroak an internal moderation process is in place to ensure that consistent testing and assessment standards are maintained.
- 6.4. Several methods of internal moderation are carried out on an on-going basis, including the following:
- Book scrutiny
  - Peer observations
  - Learning walks
  - Internal moderation
  - Standardisation
- 6.5. All cases of borderline achievement are internally verified. All internal moderation is recorded on central recording systems.
- 6.6. All necessary staff members attend relevant training and courses, keeping up-to-date with various methods of assessment and marking.
- 6.7. Where a new teacher is assessing, all work is checked by a named support teacher until the headteacher is satisfied with the standard.
- 6.8. Information from the awarding body is circulated to all members of staff involved in the assessing of pupils' work.
- 6.9. Pitcheroak School's Equal Opportunities Policy is followed at all times and regularly monitored.