

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT POLICY ON PLAGIARISM

Recent developments in digital media have increased the possibility of plagiarism in students' work, not only in coursework but also in externally assessed public examinations. This is a serious issue which has far-reaching consequences for the students. We are obliged to report any instances of plagiarism to the respective board.

In order to maintain the integrity of students' work for both coursework and also externally assessed units of study for GCSE and GCE the English Department is issuing guidance on malpractice and plagiarism. These are accompanied by a document addressed to students regarding their work ethic. For your ease of reference we would like to draw your attention to the definition of plagiarism outlined by the JCQ and the consequent sanctions which can be applied if malpractice is observed.

We are grateful for parental and candidate support in ensuring fairness and good practice throughout both GCSE and GCE courses.

Definition of plagiarism.

This is an extract from the JCQ document on Plagiarism in examinations which can be found at

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

There are many definitions of plagiarism, but they all have in common the idea of taking someone else's intellectual effort and presenting it as one's own. The Joint Council's *Guidelines for Dealing with Instances of Suspected Malpractice* defines plagiarism as: "*The failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person's work as if it were the candidate's own.*"

7. Mostly, plagiarism refers to copying from published texts whether these are in print or on the internet, but it can also refer to copying from manufactured artefacts, or essays or pieces of work previously submitted for examinations.
8. A strict interpretation of the term "work" in the above definition would include the original ideas, as well as the actual words or artefacts produced by another. Unless the candidate has submitted an extensive and unacknowledged paraphrase (amounting to more than 50% of the total) of another person's writings, however, the Awarding Bodies will not include paraphrasing under the definition of plagiarism. Instead markers should reflect the incidence of any paraphrasing in the way they apply the markscheme. On the other hand, plagiarism will cover the direct and unacknowledged translation of foreign language texts into English.
9. It should be noted that in the context of the Joint Council Awarding Bodies, plagiarism does not include collusion, that is, working

collaboratively with other candidates; neither does it include copying from another candidate in the same examination session. Both of these are defined as different forms of malpractice.

10. By virtue of its definition, plagiarism is restricted to those examination components where students undertake examination work in unsupervised conditions, such as coursework, pre-release work, or the compilation of research notes which can be used in the examination. It can also occur when candidates are permitted to annotate texts and bring these into the examination room.

This is an edited extract from the JCQ guidelines on malpractice regarding sanctions against candidates who are suspected of plagiarism:

11. 12.3 Awarding bodies may, at their discretion, impose the following sanctions against candidates.

1 Warning

The candidate is issued with a warning that if the offence is repeated within a set period of time, further specified sanctions will be applied.

2 Loss of marks for a section

The candidate loses all the marks gained for a discrete section of the work. A section may be part of a component, or a single piece of coursework if this consists of several items.

3 Loss of marks for a component

The candidate loses all the marks gained for a component. A component is more often a feature of a linear qualification than a unitised qualification, and so this penalty can be regarded as an alternative to penalty 4. Some units also have components, in which case a level of penalty between numbers 2 and 4 is possible.

4 Loss of all marks for a unit

The candidate loses all the marks gained for a unit. This penalty can only be applied to qualifications which are unitised. For linear qualifications, the option is penalty 3. This penalty usually allows the candidate to aggregate or request certification in that series, albeit with a reduced mark or grade.

5 Disqualification from a unit

The candidate is disqualified from the unit. This penalty is only available if the qualification is unitised. For linear qualifications the option is penalty 7. The effect of this penalty is to prevent the candidate aggregating or requesting certification in that series, if the candidate has applied for it.

6 Disqualification from all units in one or more qualifications

If circumstances suggest, penalty 5 may be applied to other units taken during the same examination or assessment series. (Units which have been banked in previous examination series are retained.) This penalty is only available if the qualification is unitised.

For linear qualifications the option is penalty 8.

7 Disqualification from a whole qualification

The candidate is disqualified from the whole qualification taken in that series or academic year. This penalty can be applied to unitised qualifications only if the candidate has requested aggregation. Any units banked in a previous series are retained, but the units taken in the present series and the aggregation opportunity are lost.

If a candidate has not requested aggregation the option is penalty 6. It may also be used with linear qualifications.

8 Disqualification from all qualifications taken in that series

If circumstances suggest, penalty 7 may be applied to other qualifications. This penalty can be applied to unitised qualifications only if the candidate has requested aggregation. Any units banked in a previous series are retained, but the units taken in the present series and the aggregation opportunity are lost. If a candidate has not requested aggregation the option is penalty 6. It may also be used with linear qualifications.

9 Candidate debarment

The candidate is barred from entering for one or more examinations for a set period of time. This penalty is applied in conjunction with any of the other penalties above, if the circumstances warrant it.

- . 12.4 Unless a penalty is accompanied by a bar on future entry, all candidates penalised by loss of marks or disqualification, may re-take the component(s), unit(s) or qualification(s) affected in the next examination series or assessment opportunity if the specification permits this.
- . 12.5 Candidates in England are not able to re-take individual GCSE units at a later series. They will have to re-take the whole subject, carrying forward the controlled assessment mark. This means that candidates will generally have to wait twelve months before re-taking the examination(s).
- . 12.6 Heads of centre may wish to take further action themselves in cases of candidate malpractice.