Academic Integrity Policy for Students

The core principle that guides everything we do is **Putting Students First.**

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles of academic integrity which students are expected to uphold and to provide definitions of key terminology, ideas and principles.

This policy will also identify what constitutes misconduct, how suspected misconduct will be addressed and what the consequences of misconduct could be.

This policy is to be upheld by students in all year groups but is especially relevant to students engaged in the production and submission of all 'coursework' to be assessed by external exam boards. This includes GCSE and GCE Non-Examined Assessments (NEA), Level 2 and Level 3 BTEC coursework, and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).

Gordon's School is committed to upholding academic integrity and ensuring that all students produce original work.

Where this policy conflicts with or falls short of JCQ regulations or awarding body specifications for a particular qualification, the JCQ and awarding body requirements will always take precedence.

General Principles

Students must adhere to the principles of academic integrity and originality in all academic submissions (GCE and GCSE Coursework, GCE and GCSE Non-Examination Assessments, BTEC Coursework and Project Qualifications).

All work submitted for assessment must be the student's own with all academic material used, including AI-generated content, clearly identified and appropriately referenced.

AI tools can be used responsibly and ethically to support learning but must not replace a student's own independent work.

Part 1: Plagiarism and Malpractice

Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of using another person's work, ideas, or intellectual property without proper acknowledgment, presenting it as one's own. The behaviours described below may constitute malpractice under JCQ regulations and must be reported to the relevant awarding body where they affect assessment for a qualification:

1. **Direct Plagiarism**: Copying text word-for-word without quotation marks or citation.
   Example: Copying a paragraph from a book, article or the internet without quotation marks or citation.

2. **Self-Plagiarism:** Reusing one's own previous work without permission or acknowledgment in a new assignment.
   Example: Submitting an essay written for a previous course as if it were new work for a current assignment.

3. **Mosaic Plagiarism:** Piecing together ideas or phrases from various sources without proper citation.
   Example: Taking phrases from various sources and weaving them into a new text without proper attribution, even if those phrases are changed slightly.

4. **Accidental Plagiarism:** Failing to cite sources correctly or misrepresenting the originality of one's work.
   Example: Failing to provide proper citations for paraphrased information or misunderstanding how to cite sources correctly.

5. **Source Misrepresentation:** Citing a source inaccurately or fabricating a source to support an argument may constitute malpractice under JCQ regulations.
   Example: Providing incorrect author names, publication dates, or even creating fictitious sources.

6. **Collusion:** Working with another student to produce a single piece of work and submitting it as individual work without acknowledgment.
   Example: Two students work together to write an essay, but one of them submits the paper as their own without acknowledging the collaboration, leading to a misrepresentation of individual effort.

7. **AI Plagiarism:** Using AI software to generate ideas or content and submitting it as your own without appropriate citation may constitute malpractice under JCQ regulations.
   Example: Asking ChatGPT to write sections of your coursework for you or to improve what you have written without appropriate referencing.

Part 2: AI Use

Definition of AI use

AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications.

1. General Principles

- Students must adhere to the principles of academic integrity and originality in all coursework submissions.

- AI tools can be used responsibly and ethically to support learning but must not replace a student's independent work.

- All work submitted for assessment must be the student's own, with AI-generated content clearly identified and appropriately referenced where applicable.

- AI tools can be used for research purposes, such as information retrieval, grammar and spell-checking, or generating ideas for further exploration.

2. NEA

- **Permitted use:** Students may use AI tools for initial research and idea generation. AI tools may assist with gathering background information, but they should not be used to write or generate any significant content or original analysis. Students may use basic spelling and grammar tools that are already integrated into standard word processing software.

- **Prohibited use:** Students must not use AI tools to generate, re-write or substantially re phrase content, or to produce analysis, interpretations, conclusions or evaluation. Students must not use AI to write or contribute to reports or essays, create digital artifacts (such as images, music, videos, or code), conduct analysis, or generate conclusions for assessed.

- **Transparency:** Any use of AI must be agreed with and monitored by the teacher, must not complete any assessed part of the task, and must be fully and honestly declared in the log/appendix in line with JCQ and awarding body guidance.

3. BTEC

- **Permitted Use:** Students may use AI tools for initial research and idea generation. AI tools may assist with gathering background information, but they should not be used to write or generate any significant content or original analysis. Students may use basic spelling and grammar tools that are already integrated into standard word processing software.

- **Prohibited Use:** Use of AI to generate written reports, business plans, or create project outcomes without independent thought or contribution will be considered academic misconduct. Using AI to write or heavily influence the final project, produce the bulk of research or conclusions is also unacceptable. Any use of AI which results in content, analysis, conclusions or evaluative comments being generated by AI rather than by the learner will be treated as malpractice in line with Pearson's BTEC Centre Guide to Plagiarism

- **Transparency:** Any use of AI must be agreed with and monitored by the teacher, must not complete any assessed part of the task, and must be fully and honestly declared in the log/appendix in line with JCQ and awarding body guidance.

BTEC guide to plagiarism: See guide here. Pearson's document is the definitive reference for BTEC malpractice, and this policy does not override it.

- **Permitted use:** Students may use AI tools for initial research and idea generation. AI tools may assist with gathering background information, but they should not be used to write or generate any significant content or original analysis. Students may use basic spelling and grammar tools that are already integrated into standard word processing software.

- **Prohibited use:** Students must not use AI tools to generate, re-write or substantially re phrase content, or to produce analysis, interpretations, conclusions or evaluation. Students must not use AI to write or contribute to reports or essays, create digital artifacts (such as images, music, videos, or code), conduct analysis, or generate conclusions for assessed.

- **Transparency:** Any use of AI must be agreed with and monitored by the teacher, must not complete any assessed part of the task, and must be fully and honestly declared in the log/appendix in line with JCQ and awarding body guidance.

Part 3: Detecting Plagiarism

Prevention and Resources

All work submitted by students for the awarding of an external qualification (GCSE, BTEC, EPQ, A Level) will be checked using plagiarism detecting software alongside teacher review. This may initially be undertaken at random points during any drafting process but will be applied universally when work is submitted for final marking.

For work that contributes to a formal qualification, any suspected malpractice will be reported to the awarding body in accordance with JCQ regulations. The awarding body makes the final decision on malpractice outcomes and sanctions.

Students are therefore encouraged to:

- Familiarise themselves with referencing/citation styles (Harvard, APA, etc.) and apply them appropriately.
- Utilise resources available through subject teachers, the School Library or wider academic department for help with research and referencing/citation.
- Consult with teachers or the relevant Head of Department if unsure about how to properly credit any material used.

Reporting Plagiarism

Any suspected instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Head of Department in the first instance and will then be further referred to an Academic Integrity Panel, chaired by the Deputy Head Curriculum, for review. All reports will be investigated, and appropriate action will be taken.

Part 4: Academic Misconduct

Support and Guidance

- **Teacher Support:** Students must seek guidance from teachers if they are unsure about the ethical use of AI in their Coursework/NEA/EPQ.

- **Training:** The school will provide training on how to responsibly use AI in an academic context to ensure students understand the boundaries and proper use of these technologies.

Academic Misconduct potentially identified by Plagiarism and AI detecting software

The following actions will be undertaken if academic misconduct is suspected:

- The Head of Department will inform the student's parents that they intend to meet the student and the reasons why – as close to the time of the intended meeting as possible to avoid unnecessary anxiety.
- The Head of Department will meet with the student to review the evidence (using a standard, school-agreed set of questions) and provide an opportunity for the student to explain the work and how it was produced. Students are encouraged to bring any preparatory materials, notes or drafts with them to support this process.
- Students will be supported during this meeting by a second, trusted member of staff.
- If a decision is reached that malpractice has likely occurred, and the student accepts this decision, the student moves to the 'Consequences' section of this policy.
- If a decision is reached that malpractice has likely occurred, and the student disagrees with this decision, the student may appeal the decision to the Examinations Officer and an Academic Integrity Panel, chaired by the Deputy Head Curriculum, will be convened.
    - An appeal via the Examinations Officer to an Academic Integrity Panel is an internal school process. Where a case has been reported to an awarding body, any further appeal must follow the awarding body's published procedures.
- An Academic Integrity Panel made up of three members of the Leadership Team will then be convened to review the findings, including Head of Department notes and any evidence the student submits to support their case.
- The Panel's decision will be the school's final internal decision and no further means of appeal will be available. For regulated assessments, the awarding body may conduct its own investigation and determine the final outcome.

The school will retain records of investigations, evidence and decisions relating to suspected malpractice in line with JCQ requirements and the school's data protection policy.

Consequences

Any misconduct that results in work being submitted as a student's own, without proper acknowledgment of AI contributions or other source material, will be considered a serious breach of academic integrity.

- Mark reductions on internally assessed tasks before submission to the Exam Board where permitted – only available to students who have confirmed academic misconduct and are willing to work with the school.
- Referral for academic misconduct review – for students who do not accept an outcome of suspected misconduct following their meeting with the Head of Department.
- A decision that the work will not be submitted to the exam board, where this course of action is permitted by exam regulations e.g. EPQ.
- Separate to any formal action taken by the exam board, Internal disciplinary sanctions may be applied where misconduct is confirmed by the Academic Integrity Panel.

Awarding-body actions:

- Once reported, the awarding body may impose penalties up to and including disqualification from one or more units, qualifications or future exam series, in line with JCQ's published sanctions.

The school will follow all regulations set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the awarding bodies when applying the appropriate outcome.

Part 5: Legal Framework

Age restrictions and privacy laws

Different AI providers specify minimum ages and consent requirements in their terms of use. Where AI tools are provided through a school account, use must comply with the provider's terms and the School's data protection policy, Safe Use of technology and Safeguarding policies. Students must not create personal accounts with AI providers in breach of age restrictions.

The following age restrictions are sample examples only and are correct at the time of writing but subject to change; students and parents should check current terms of use.

- **Open AI,** the owners of Chat GPT state that Students under the age of 13 are not allowed to use their service and users aged between 13 and 18 must have their parents' permission.

- **Gemini,** previously Google Bard, states that users of their system must be over the age of 18.

- **Microsoft CoPilot** is only available to students who are 13 or older.

Part 6: JCQ Guidance

Final Notes

The use of technology in education has great potential, but students must exercise judgment, maintain academic integrity and produce authentic work that reflects their independent learning. This policy ensures that the use of traditional and internet-based research methods, as well as the use of AI software, enhances rather than undermines the integrity of student work.

This policy should be read alongside the following:

- JCQ's 'AI Use in Assessments' which can be accessed [here](#).
- 'General Regulations for Approved Centres' which can be accessed [here](#).
- 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' which can be accessed [here](#).
- 'Instructions for the Conduct of Non-Examination Assessments' which can be accessed [here](#).

Students should also read the relevant awarding body specifications and guidance for each course.

Maintaining academic integrity is crucial for the credibility of the educational process. This policy aims to promote original work and ethical scholarship among the students at Gordon's School.

Ms J Pierce
Deputy Head Curriculum
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