

## NCTJ PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH MALPRACTICE

**NCTJ acknowledges its responsibility to deal with any issues of malpractice on the part of candidates, centre staff or any others involved in providing their qualifications. The NCTJ also recommends the use of independent invigilators especially in situations of small-entry papers to avoid potential conflicts of interest**

### 1. IRREGULARITIES BY CANDIDATES

This area covers all forms of irregularity in the full range of examinations offered by NCTJ Centres, although it is understood that opportunities for any irregularity are most unusual.

Principles and regulations governing irregularities decisions are set out in the Joint Council for General Qualifications (JCGQ) document *Guidance for Dealing with Instances of Suspected Malpractice in Examinations*. Copies of this booklet are distributed to centres each year.

Allegations must be made in writing to the Head of Examinations. It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to undertake a full investigation and report any suspected malpractice on the part of candidates.

The NCTJ will conduct a full investigation into cases of suspected malpractice and failure to co-operate may lead to certificates not being issued and future registrations not being accepted.

NCTJ staff are authorised to take decisions where the possible penalties range from a letter of warning to disqualification and may lead to a certificate not being issued and future enrolments not being accepted.

### 2. IRREGULARITIES BY CENTRE STAFF

These cases can be complex and may have far-reaching implications. Allegations must be made in writing to the Head of Examinations. It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to undertake a full investigation and report any suspected malpractice on the part of centre staff.

Reference should be made to the *JCGQ Guidelines for dealing with Instances of Suspected Malpractice in Examinations*

The NCTJ will conduct a full investigation into cases of suspected malpractice and failure to co-operate may lead to certificates not being issued and future registrations not being accepted.

All decisions in such cases are made by a sub-committee of the Journalism Qualifications Board. Its work is entirely confidential. Members of the sub-committee are required to identify any case of which they have personal knowledge or might be said to have some interest which could lead to an imputation that the sub-committee had been biased. Any member with such knowledge or interest takes no part in the discussions of the case.

The decision of the sub-committee will be reported to the Head of Centre within seven working days of the meeting of the sub-committee. If a Head of Centre disagrees with the decision, s/he should: submit a written request for the convening of an Appeal to the Head of Examinations. This submission should be made within fourteen working days of receiving the decision of the sub-committee.

Should it be determined there is clear evidence of malpractice, sanctions will be applied as described in the JCGQ publication *Guidelines for Dealing with Instances of Suspected Malpractice in Examinations*. The NCTJ recognises that it is for a centre staff's employer to apply any penalties affecting their role.

It should be noted that centre staff **do** have an independent right of appeal if they so wish.

**3. Cases of Malpractice which may result in certificates being invalid** will be reported to the regulatory authorities by the Head of Examinations.