AQA
Realising potential

Student exam malpractice: don't get caught out

Malpractice can take lots of different forms, and has some very serious consequences. Here are some common examples and how to avoid them.

What happened?	What was the outcome?	What should they have done?
Matt* had his mobile phone in his pocket in his GCSE Maths exam. He didn't check his pockets when told to by the invigilator before the exam started. Matt realised when his phone rang half way through the exam. The invigilator heard it and took Matt's phone from him.	Matt received zero marks for the exam. Having unauthorised materials, like phones, notes and any kind of watch at all, is breaking the rules, even if you don't intend to use them.	Matt should've left his phone at home or in a safe place outside the exam room. Matt should've checked his pockets when told to by the invigilator. If Matt had handed his phone in before the exam started he wouldn't have received zero marks.
Sophie* and Georgia* both received a link in a social media group to see questions from the GCSE English Literature exam that they were due to sit the following day. Sophie thought it would just be a fake paper and that there was no harm in clicking the link and then sharing it. Georgia wasn't sure so she didn't. Sophie realised after the exam that it wasn't a fake and reported it to a teacher.	Even though Sophie reported this straight away after the exam, she still had an unfair advantage by seeing the questions. She also shouldn't have shared this. Because of this Sophie was disqualified. Georgia's marks weren't affected because she did nothing wrong.	Georgia did the right thing by not clicking the link. Sophie shouldn't have clicked it or shared it. The right thing to do was ignore it and to tell a teacher as soon as they saw it.

*For the purposes of this case study people's names are made up.

Exam rules and guidelines

Take a look at our website for information on exam rules and guidelines to help you understand what's considered to be malpractice and how to avoid it, as well as what to do if you suspect malpractice in exams and assessments.

aqa.org.uk/student-and-parent-support/malpractice

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