



Malpractice, Misadministration and Plagiarism Policy



MALPRACTICE, MISADMINISTRATION AND PLAGIARISM POLICY

INTRODUCTION

APPROVED TRAINING is required by the awarding organisation/s to take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice or maladministration. Approved Training will investigate instances of alleged or suspected malpractice and take the necessary action to maintain the integrity of the qualification or assessment. Awarding organisations take the integrity of their qualifications and assessments very seriously and are committed to providing qualifications and assessments which are fit for purpose and which are managed and assessed consistently, accurately and fairly.

Approved Training intends to prevent and deal with any cases of suspected malpractice and will report all confirmed instances to the respective awarding organisation detailing the staff and learner malpractice.

There may be a number of reasons why malpractice occurs and it can be detected in a number of ways. For example:

- Observation – someone identifies that they have witnessed someone (or a number of people) doing something they feel is inappropriate and reports it either openly or anonymously.
- Word of mouth – someone is told that something has happened, or is happening that is inappropriate and reports it either openly or anonymously.
- Through professional identification – for example a Tutor, Trainer, Assessor, Internal Verifier, External Verifier, Examiner or Moderator identifies that learners answers or assessments are exactly the same or they believe the work has been plagiarised. Alternately an Invigilator in an exam may witness people talking, copying or passing notes or using mobile phones etc.

The examples given here are illustrative and do not provide a full and complete description of the many forms malpractice can take. Malpractice for the purposes of this policy includes malpractice, maladministration and plagiarism.

DEFINITIONS

- **Malpractice** – in breach of regulation, unethical, negligent, or immoral behaviour, which does or could compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of regulated qualifications, or the validity of a result or certificate. It could also damage the reputation, credibility and authority of the awarding organisation and/or training centre and their employees. This could include for example; a learner cheating in an exam, or a professional person falsifying or tampering with results. Staff or other training centre representatives and/or learners can carry out malpractice.

Examples of Training Centre malpractice include:



- Insecure storage of assessment instruments and marking guidance.
- Misuse of assessments, including inappropriate adjustments to assessment decisions.
- Failure to comply with requirements for accurate and safe retention of learner evidence, assessment and internal verification records. Failure to comply with Awarding Organisation procedures for managing and transferring accurate learner data.
- Excessive direction from assessors to learners on how to meet national standards. Deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

Examples of Training Centre staff malpractice include:

- A breach of security (e.g. failure to keep exam material secure, tampering with coursework etc.).
- Deception (e.g. manufacturing evidence of competence, fabricating assessment or internal verification records).
- The provision of improper assistance to learners (e.g. permitting the use of a reasonable adjustment over and above the extent permitted by the Awarding Organisation's policy, prompting learners in assessments by means of signs or verbal or written prompts).
- Failure to adhere to regulations/Awarding Organisation stated requirements.

Examples of learner malpractice include:

- Plagiarism - failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person's work as if it were the learner's own.
 - Collusion with others when an assessment must be completed by individual learners.
 - Copying from another learner (including using ICT to do so).
 - Personation - assuming the identity of another learner or having someone assume your identity during an assessment.
 - Inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material in assessment evidence. This includes vulgarity and swearing that is outside of the context of the assessment, or any material of a discriminatory nature (including racism, sexism and homophobia).
 - Inappropriate behaviour during an internal assessment that causes disruption to others. This includes shouting and/or aggressive behaviour or language and having an unauthorised electronic device that causes a disturbance in the examination room.
 - Frivolous content - producing content that is unrelated to the examination paper/question in scripts or coursework. Unauthorised aids - physical possession of unauthorised materials (including mobile phones, MP3 players, notes, etc) in the examination room.
- **Maladministration** – activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the Centre or learner not complying with the specific requirements for delivery of qualifications. This would include incompetent or dishonest



management or administration of exams or assessments. This could include for example; poor invigilation, incorrectly recording examination or assessment results or issuing an incorrect certificate.

- **Plagiarism** - someone deliberately falsifying records or using work in their assessments that is not their own but is presented as if it were their own - if plagiarism is detected before a declaration of authentication is signed, then this need not be reported to the awarding organisation and should be dealt with under the Approved Training's own procedures. N.B. a declaration of authentication means that the evidence or examination result has been signed by the learner to confirm that it is his or her own work.

POSSIBLE SANCTIONS

Following an investigation, if a case of malpractice is upheld, Approved Training may impose sanctions or other penalties on the individual(s) concerned. Where relevant we will report the matter to the awarding organisation who may impose further sanctions upon the individual(s) concerned. Any sanctions imposed will reflect the seriousness of the malpractice that has occurred.

Listed below are examples of sanctions that may be applied to a student, or to a trainer, teacher, tutor, assessor, invigilator or other officer who has had a case of malpractice upheld against them. Please note that:

- This list is not exhaustive and other sanctions may be applied on a case-by-case basis.
- Where the malpractice affects examination performance, the awarding organisation may impose sanctions of its own.

Possible sanctions that may be applied to learners/students:

- a) A written warning about future conduct.
- b) Notification to an employer, regulator or the police.
- c) Removal from the course.

Possible sanctions that may be applied to trainers, teachers, tutors invigilators, and other officers:

- a) A written warning about future conduct.
- b) Imposition of special conditions for the future involvement of the individual(s) in the conduct, teaching, supervision or administration of students and/or examinations.
- c) Informing any other organisation known to employ the individual in relation to training courses or examinations of the outcome of the case.
- d) Approved Training may carry out unannounced monitoring of the working practices of the individual(s) concerned.



- e) Dismissal.

PROCEDURES

Reporting a suspected case of malpractice

This process applies to trainers, teachers, tutors, invigilators students, other training centre staff and to any reporting of malpractice by a third party or individual who wishes to remain anonymous.

Any case of suspected malpractice should be reported in the first instance to the Approved Training Managing Director.

A written report must be provided clearly identifying the factual information, including statements from other individuals involved and / or affected, any evidence obtained, and the actions that have been taken in relation to the incident.

Suspected malpractice must be reported as soon as possible and at the latest within two working days from its discovery. Where the suspected malpractice has taken place in an examination, the incident must be reported urgently and the appropriate steps taken as specified by the awarding organisation.

Wherever possible, and provided other students are not disrupted by doing so, a student suspected of malpractice should be warned immediately that their actions may constitute malpractice, and that a report will be made to the training centre.

In cases of suspected malpractice by trainers, teachers, tutors invigilators and other officers, and any reporting of malpractice by a third party or individual who wishes to remain anonymous, the report should include as much information as possible, including the following:

- a) the date time and place the alleged malpractice took place, if known.
- b) the name of the centre teacher/tutor, invigilator or other person(s) involved
- c) a description of the suspected malpractice; and
- d) any available supporting evidence.

In cases of suspected malpractice reported by a third party, or an individual who wishes to remain anonymous, Approved Training will take all reasonable steps to authenticate the reported information and to investigate the alleged malpractice.

Administering suspected cases of malpractice

Approved Training will investigate each case of suspected or reported malpractice



relating to awarding organisation qualifications to ascertain whether malpractice has occurred. The investigation will aim to establish the full facts and circumstances. We will promptly take all reasonable steps to prevent any adverse effect that may arise as a result of the malpractice, or to mitigate any adverse effect, as far as possible, and to correct it to make sure that any action necessary to maintain the integrity of the awarding organisation qualifications and reputation is taken.

Approved Training will acknowledge all reports of suspected malpractice within five working days. All of the parties involved in the case will then be contacted within 10 working days of receipt of the report detailing the suspected malpractice. Other individuals may be contacted to establish if they can provide evidence relevant to the case.

The individual(s) concerned will be informed of the following:

- a) that an investigation is going to take place, and the grounds for that investigation;
- b) details of all the relevant timescales, and dates, where known;
- c) that they have a right to respond by providing a personal written response relating to the suspected malpractice (within 15 working days of the date of that letter);
- d) that, if malpractice is considered proven, sanctions may be imposed either by Approved Training or by the awarding organisation reflecting the seriousness of the case;
- e) that, if they are found guilty, they have the right to appeal.
- f) that Approved Training has a duty to inform the awarding organisation and other relevant authorities / regulators, but only after time for the appeal has passed or the appeal process has been completed. This may also include informing the police if the law has been broken and to comply with any other appropriate legislation.

Where more than one individual is contacted regarding a case of suspected malpractice, for example in a case involving suspected collusion, we will contact each individual separately, and will not reveal personal data to any third party unless necessary for the purpose of the investigation.

The individual has a right to appeal against a malpractice outcome if they believe that the policy or procedure has not been followed properly or has been implemented to their detriment.

Records of all malpractice cases and their outcomes are maintained by Approved Training for a period of at least five years and are subject to regular monitoring and review.