



Malpractice Policy

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Malpractice Policy

1 Scope of the policy

This policy is aimed at the faculty staff, learners and the faculty associates and staff who are using any the faculty products and services and who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

The policy sets out how centres, learners or other personnel should work with us to deal with such cases and the steps which must be followed when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice and maladministration. It also identifies the faculty's responsibilities in dealing with such cases and the steps that will be followed when reviewing such cases.

2 Definitions of Malpractice

For the purposes of this policy 'Malpractice' is defined as

"Any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates"

For the purposes of this policy it also includes some forms of misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain groups or groups of learners.

Malpractice may include a range of issues from failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates

3. Examples of actions that may constitute Malpractice

Examples of centre and learner malpractice are provided below. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive.

Examples of centre malpractice

- Failure to meet the college centre recognition and qualification approval requirements as stated in the centre contract and the faculty policies. Examples of this would include:
 - failure to continually meet the faculty centre recognition and qualification approval requirements e.g. failure to advise the faculty of centre changes related to the delivery of the faculty qualifications; external verifier action plans repeatedly not implemented within agreed timescales;
 - repeated short-notice cancellation of External Verifier visits by a centre
 - continued failure to meet the faculty requirements for assessment, internal verification
 - failure to keep learners' portfolios of evidence secure
 - providing deliberate erroneous advice to learners
- Failure by the centre to implement the agreed internal Malpractice policy relating to staff and learners
- Examples of this would include
 - improper assistance to learners over and beyond normal levels of supervision such as to put in doubt learner ownership of work
 - inventing or changing judgements for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) without following agreed internal policies and processes
 - repeated incidences of insufficient evidence of the learners' achievements to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made (fraudulent claims for certificates)
 - inappropriate retention of certificates
 - fraudulent use of the faculty logo and/or claiming to offer the faculty qualifications without formal recognition as a college centre.
 - Failure to deal appropriately with learner malpractice such as:
 - plagiarism of any nature
 - collusion with others
 - copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)

- deliberate destruction of another's work
 - false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
 - impersonation
- Failure to meet the requirements of the regulations for the conduct of timed assessments or other forms of assessment under controlled conditions including:
 - non-adherence to any arrangements agreed with the faculty for such assessments
 - amendments to assessment materials without permission
 - failure to provide access arrangements for assessment in accordance with the faculty requirements.

4. Definition of Maladministration

For the purposes of this policy this is defined as:

'any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre or candidate not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications as set out in the relevant regulatory and awarding organisation requirements'.

For the purposes of this policy it also includes persistent mistakes or poor administration within a faculty.

5. Examples of Maladministration

Examples of actions that may constitute maladministration are listed below. These are exemplars and the faculty reserve the right to consider as maladministration other actions not listed but falling under the general definition of maladministration.

- Delay in issuing certificates
- Unreasonable delay in responding to requests for information or other communications from the faculty
- Inaccurate claims for certificates
- Incorrect action or failure to take any action when requested to by the faculty
- Failure to provide information when reasonably requested to do so
- Inadequate record-keeping for example in relation to assessment of learners
- Failure to investigate
- Misleading or inaccurate statements

6. Dealing with Malpractice or Maladministration

All allegations of malpractice or maladministration must be investigated. The nature of the investigation, and of the actions taken if malpractice or maladministration is proven, will be commensurate with the nature and the gravity of the malpractice or maladministration. The college regards all allegations and suspicions of malpractice or maladministration as potentially serious issues, and as such all must be investigated and recorded formally, no matter how trivial they may at first appear.

7. Academic Malpractice

This section identifies the steps that the college will take in detecting and dealing with academic malpractice. As such it is applicable to its own operations and those of its departments.

Definition:

Academic malpractice is any activity that is likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research. It includes;

- plagiarism,
- collusion,
- fabrication or falsification of results,
- anything else that could result in unearned or undeserved credit for those committing it.

Academic malpractice can result from a deliberate act of cheating or may be committed unintentionally. Whether intended or not, all incidents of academic malpractice will be treated seriously by the college

Safeguards:

- Wherever practicable assessment tasks and topics will vary from year to year.
- Assessment will focus on demonstration of the understanding of knowledge rather than the relatively straightforward repetition of such knowledge.
- Students will be asked to submit a draft or outline of major pieces of work; this allows useful formative feedback, affords you the opportunity to spot possible plagiarism, and helps to combat plagiarism from the Web.
- All assignments issued to Distance Learning students will require that they sign a declaration that it is the student's own work. This will be countersigned by a designated Mentor.
- Wherever practicable assignments will be submitted for electronic scrutiny using the plagiarism detection systems to check for passages found elsewhere on the web, in books and journals or in work submitted previously. The college will inform students of this procedure as required.
- The faculty will give students guidance on the appropriate styles of referencing, the need for bibliographies and their layout, etc.
- Students working in groups or teams will be given specific guidance on how assignments arising from their legitimate collaboration are to be assessed and to what extent 'shared' material may be appropriate in individual assignments submitted for assessment.
- Before reporting suspected instances of collusion, the faculty will check with the students concerned, at the earliest opportunity, that they have properly understood what is required of them in terms of the submission or presentation of assignments. In cases where misunderstandings have apparently occurred, a request for resubmission or re-presentation would probably be the most appropriate form of action.