

Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy 2024-25

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Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

Scope

This policy refers to all internal and external summative assessments, assignments, examinations, and their reporting mechanisms within the College. The primary objective is to maintain the integrity and credibility of the assessment process by preventing and addressing any instances of malpractice or maladministration.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- The risk of malpractice by staff or learners is identified and minimised.
- Any incident of alleged malpractice is promptly and objectively responded to by the relevant staff.
- Appropriate disciplinary actions are imposed on learners and staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
- Conflict of interest in relation to assessment practice is avoided.

Malpractice:

- Any action that threatens the integrity of the assessment process.
- Includes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of results, and unauthorised assistance.

Maladministration:

- Any administrative error or practice that compromises the assessment process.
- Includes incorrect handling of examination papers, faulty record-keeping, and failure to follow assessment procedures.

Staff responsibility

All members of staff (whether employed under a contract of employment or a contract for services) are required to work within the terms of this Policy to ensure the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and prevent damage to the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.

Staff or contractors must ensure that they:

- Are aware of and comply with the Awarding Organisation requirements for internal and external assessment including Examination and invigilation arrangements.
- Comply with Awarding Organisation administration processes and report any instances of maladministration.
- Take part in induction and updating activities.
- Inform learners of the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

- Design assessments that limit the opportunity for malpractice.
- Check and verify learners' work ensuring authentication.
- Declare any conflict between personal, professional or business interest that will impact on assessment practice.
- Co-operate fully with any enquiry into an allegation of malpractice.

Teachers' responsibilities

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and published information to ensure learners are aware of, and understand, the policy on malpractice and the consequences for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources such as Artificial Intelligence tools (AI).
- Ensure that learners sign to declare that their work is their own and indicate whether they have utilised additional sources to aid research such as (AI) tools.
- Wherever possible submit work through software that checks for plagiarism.

Investigating alleged malpractice

Any alleged incident of malpractice will be investigated in line with the relevant College policies relating to student or staff behaviour.

The College will:

- Investigate in an open, fair manner conducted by a manager ideally from the department if they do not form part of the complaint. If this is the case, the Quality manager will allocate the case to an independent Curriculum Head or Director to oversee this process, make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Inform the individual of the process for appealing against any allegations made.
- Document all stages of any investigation.
- Report suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice to the Awarding Organisation within the specified timeframe as per their policy.

Where malpractice is proven, the College will apply actions in accordance with the Awarding Organisation and / or the College's disciplinary procedures.

Malpractice by Learners

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered:

- Plagiarism of any nature, including direct quotation without acknowledging the source.
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work.
- Copying from other sources, digital and/or paper based, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) content
- Fabrication of results or evidence.
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.

- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/ examination/ test.
- Failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an assessor, a supervisor, an invigilator or Awarding Organisation conditions in relation to the assessment /examination/ test rules, regulation and security misuse of assessment/examination materials.
- Introduction and use of unauthorised material contra to the requirements of supervised assessment examination/test conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal stereos, mobile phones or other similar electronic devices.
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment examination/test related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written papers/notes during supervised assessment examination/test.
- The alteration of any results document, including certificates.
- Cheating to gain an unfair advantage.
- Trying to declare an illness to get exam assistance.

Malpractice by Staff

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered:

- Improper assistance to candidates.
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidate's achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made.
- Failure to keep candidate coursework/ portfolios of evidence secure.
- Fraudulent claims for certificates.
- Failure to follow Awarding Organisation policies and procedures for administering the internal or external assessment processes.
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves staff producing work for the learner.
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment task/ portfolio/ coursework.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements.
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.
- Failing to keep assessment examination/ test papers secure prior to the assessment examination/ test.
- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment examination/ test material prior to an assessment examination/ test.

To prevent risk of Malpractice the College will:

- Inform learners during the Induction period of plagiarism and the importance of original work.
- Include the guidance and repercussions of using AI to plagiarise in Course Handbooks.

- Inform learners of the policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice with reference to the JCQ guidelines.
- Learners will be shown the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources.
- Learners will be expected to declare and provide evidence that their work is their own through authentication on the assessment sheet.
- Staff will have training on how to identify and deal with cases of Malpractice.
- Staff will use plagiarism detection software (e.g. Turnitin) to check assignment originality, including for AI.

SBC are responsible for the safety of learners and staff in the use of Artificial Intelligence tools

- This includes ensuring all AI tools which are used as part of learning or promoted to students for their learning are contextualised with warnings that AI can deliver unreliable, biased and dangerous content. We also need to encourage students and staff to report any such content they experience via the Digital Skills page on Moodle and the Teaching & Learning CPD Team on MS Teams. In accordance with the JCQ Guidance on the use of AI in Assessments, some AI chatbots have been identified as providing dangerous and harmful answers to questions and some can also produce unauthorised references to books/ articles.

Assessment use of AI

- SBC will work with awarding bodies to ensure a consistent approach for the use of AI in assessments, with the aim of making assessments authentic and relevant for all learners.

Refer to the link below to review the JCQ AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications.

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/JCQ-AI-Use-in-Assessments-Protecting-the-Integrity-of-Qualifications.pdf>

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