

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, PLAGIARISM AND ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE POLICY

(Higher National/Directly Funded Programmes)

GOVERNANCE AND CONTROL

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AUDIENCE

Applicable to students?	Yes
Accessible to students?	Yes
Accessible to public?	Yes

PURPOSE

It is essential that Students understand that all work submitted must be their own, including correct referencing of any (short passages of) quoted material. Similarly, tutors are required to follow the correct procedures as laid down by the awarding body and the college.

DEFINITIONS/TERMINOLOGY

- Student malpractice is considered as any action by the student, which has the potential to undermine the integrity and validity of the assessment of the student's work including plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc.
- Assessor malpractice is any deliberate action by an assessor which has the potential to undermine the integrity of the qualifications on offer
- Plagiarism is taking and using another's thoughts, writings, inventions, etc. as one's own

- Minor acts of student malpractice: handled by the Assessor by, for example, refusal to accept work for marking and learner being made aware of malpractice policy. Student corrects and resubmits work in question
- Major acts of learner malpractice: extensive copying/plagiarism, 2nd or subsequent offence, inappropriate for the Assessor to deal with

RESPONSIBILITIES

- North Hertfordshire College will seek proactive ways to promote a positive culture that encourages students to take individual responsibility for their learning and respect the work of others
- College assessors are responsible for designing assessment opportunities which limit the opportunity for malpractice and for checking the validity of the learner's work
- The Internal Verifier/Lead Internal Verifier is responsible for malpractice checks when internally verifying work
- The Quality Nominee at the College is the person required to inform Pearson of any acts of malpractice
- Heads of Centre or their nominees are responsible for any investigation into allegations of malpractice

PROCEDURES

- Addressing learner malpractice:
 - The college will promote positive and honest study practices
 - Students should declare that work is their own: check the validity of their work
 - Student induction and handbook will inform about malpractice and outcomes
 - The college will deliver the necessary training to ensure students use appropriate citations and referencing for research sources
 - The college will ensure that assessment procedures are there to help reduce and identify malpractice
- Addressing staff malpractice:
 - Staff BTEC induction and updating should include BTEC requirements
 - Use robust Internal Verification and audited record keeping
 - Audit student records, assessment tracking records and certification claims
- Dealing with malpractice:
 - Inform the individual of the issues and of the possible consequences
 - Inform the individual of the process and appeals rights

- Give the individual the opportunity to respond
- Investigate in a fair and equitable manner
- Inform Pearson of any malpractice or attempted acts of malpractice, which have compromised assessment. Pearson will advise on further action required
- Penalties should be appropriate to the nature of the malpractice under review
- Gross misconduct should refer to learner and staff disciplinary procedures

ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE POLICY AIMS

- To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners
- To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively
- To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness
- To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven
- To protect the integrity of the college and BTEC qualifications. In order to do this, the centre will:
 - seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
 - show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
 - ask learners to declare that their work is their own
 - ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
 - conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the Head of HE / Director and all personnel linked to the allegation.

It will proceed through the following stages:

- inform the individual of the issues and of the possible consequences
- inform the individual of the process and appeals rights
- give the individual the opportunity to respond
- investigate in a fair and equitable manner
- inform Pearson of any malpractice or attempted acts of malpractice, which have compromised assessment. Pearson will advise on further action required

- 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 avenues for appealing against any judgment made
- document all stages of any investigation.

Where malpractice is proven, this centre will apply the following penalties / sanctions:

- Minor acts of student malpractice: handled by the Assessor by, for example, refusal to accept work for marking and learner being made aware of malpractice policy. Student corrects and resubmits work in question and undertakes not to repeat error.
- Major acts of learner malpractice: extensive copying/plagiarism, 2nd or subsequent offence, full investigation supported by the Head of HE / Assistant Principal and all personnel linked to the allegation. Document all stages

DEFINITION OF MALPRACTICE BY STUDENTS

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- plagiarism of any nature
- collusion by working collaboratively with other students to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work
- copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
- deliberate destruction of another's work
- 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 in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.

DEFINITION OF MALPRACTICE BY CENTRE STAFF

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- improper assistance to candidates
- inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made
- failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure

- fraudulent claims for certificates
- inappropriate retention of certificates
- 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 centre 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, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- 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.

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months by the HE Committee.