



WMC MALPRACTICE POLICY

Contents

Introduction 2

Definitions..... 2

 Malpractice by learners 2

 Malpractice by college staff..... 2

 Maladministration 3

Suspected Malpractice 3

 Initial steps and overview 3

 Investigating an allegation of malpractice..... 4

Outcomes and actions 5

Introduction

WM College has an obligation to its learners, employers, awarding organisations (AOs) and partner organisations to ensure that the qualifications its learners receive are a fair and accurate representation of their work, and of the knowledge and skills that they have attained.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the integrity of accredited qualifications is maintained and to outline the steps the college will take where instances of malpractice and/or maladministration, by learners or staff, may be identified.

Definitions

'Malpractice', which includes maladministration and non-compliance with the Regulations, means any act, default or practice which is a breach of the Regulations or which:

- compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate; and/or
- damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or college or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or college.

Some examples of malpractice are given below, though neither list is exhaustive.

Malpractice by learners

- Obtaining examination or assessment material without authorisation.
- Impersonating another student to sit an assessment or to submit an assignment on their behalf.
- Collaborating with another student or individual, by any means, to complete a coursework assignment or assessment, unless it has been clearly stated that such collaboration is permitted.
- Damaging another student's work.
- Inclusion of inappropriate or offensive material in coursework assignments or assessment scripts.
- Failure to comply with published AO examination/assessment regulations.
- Plagiarism
- Fraudulent claims for special consideration while studying.

Malpractice by college staff

- Failure to adhere to the relevant AO regulations and procedures, including those relating to college approval, internal or external verification, or any other programme delivery requirements as set out by AOs.
- Knowingly allowing an individual to impersonate a student.
- Allowing a student to copy another student's assignment work, or allowing a student to let their own work be copied.

- Allowing students to work collaboratively during an assignment assessment, unless specified in the assignment brief.
- Completing an assessed assignment for a student or providing them with assistance beyond that 'normally' expected.
- Failing to keep examination or assessment material secure prior to an examination;
- Discussing or otherwise revealing information about examinations and assessments that should be kept confidential, e.g. internet forums;

Maladministration

Maladministration is defined as any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with an awarding body's administrative regulations and requirements including the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration. This could include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Failure to adhere to learner registration and certification procedures, as outlined by AOs □
Continual failure to adhere to college recognition/qualification requirements, □
Continual late learner registration.
- Inaccurate claims for certification.
- Failure to maintain appropriate auditable records – e.g. certificate claim and/or forgery of evidence.
- Withholding or delaying of information by deliberate acts or omission required by awarding organisation.
- Inappropriate administration arrangements and/or records.

Suspected Malpractice

All allegations of malpractice or maladministration will be investigated. 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. 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. Where this involves staff, senior management and HR will be involved in any disciplinary proceedings. Where this involves learners, senior curriculum staff will be involved in any disciplinary proceedings.

Initial steps and overview

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

1. Any case of suspected malpractice should be reported in the first instance to the **Director of Learning** for the area of learning concerned.¹
2. The Director of Learning (or the Exams Officer, if delegated the duty and as the first point of contact for AOs) **will immediately report to the AO, by telephone and email, suspected malpractice or maladministration**
3. An incident report or written report of any suspected malpractice or maladministration will be submitted by either the Director of Learning or main contact **within two (2) working days, to the AO concerned** (see next section Investigating an allegation of malpractice)²
4. The College will take all necessary steps as directed by the Awarding Organisation and comply fully with the investigative measures outlined by the AO.

Investigating an allegation of malpractice

The Director of Learning (or persons delegated the task of investigating an allegation of malpractice) will organise an investigation into the alleged malpractice and then submit a report to the Awarding Organisation.

The College will ensure that there is not a conflict of interest between the person conducting the investigation and the individual(s) accused of malpractice. The person conducting the investigation must have no personal interest in the outcome of that investigation.

The investigation will determine:

- who was involved in the incident, including candidates, members of staff and/or invigilators;
□ the facts of the case, as established from evidence and/or statements from those involved.

The report submitted to the awarding body will include:

- a clear account, as detailed as necessary, of the circumstances;
- details of the investigations carried out by the college;
- written statements from any teachers, invigilators or other members of staff concerned, which must be signed and dated;
- written statements from the candidates concerned, which must be signed and dated; □ any other evidence relevant to the allegation.

Where appropriate:

- information about how the college makes candidates aware of the awarding bodies' regulations;
- seating plans;
- unauthorised material found in any examination rooms;

¹ Where the case of suspected malpractice may involve the Director of Learning, the Deputy Principal should be informed in their place

² For AAT qualifications this report must be sent to aatquality.assurance@aat.org.uk, as per Section A7 of the AAT *Code of Practice – Approved Organisations*

- photographic evidence of any material written on hands/clothing etc. suspected of being used in an exam;
- any candidate work/associated material which is relevant to the investigation;
- any evidence that substantiates alleged plagiarism □ any evidence of staff collusion or neglect of duty □ any other relevant evidence.

Individuals accused of malpractice will be made fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the allegation in writing, and the possible consequences should malpractice be proven. They will also be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation made against them.

Outcomes and actions

Once an investigation has been completed, the college will await instructions from the Awarding Organisation and communicate any findings to the person(s) under investigation on behalf of the AO.

Where staff are concerned, the college may wish to implement disciplinary proceedings in line with its staff Disciplinary Policy, depending on the nature and the gravity of the proven malpractice. HR, senior management and line managers of those involved will do so at their discretion, once all investigative measures are completed and the facts of the case established proper.

In the case of learner malpractice, the college may wish to implement measures of its own using its own policies for dealing with learner breaches of its Code of Conduct. Senior Curriculum staff and the Deputy Principal will execute these at their discretion.