

Assessment Malpractice Policy

Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that there are no acts that seek to undermine the integrity and validity of assessment and the certification of the qualifications.

This Policy aims to ensure that there are 'processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice'. [B6: Indicator 14]. Further that 'Assessment is carried out securely' [B6: Indicator 11] and that 'A commitment to equity guides higher education providers in enabling student development and achievement'. [B4: Indicator 3]

This Policy also notes the commitment of staff and students under B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints, and ensures that 'Clear and accurate advice and guidance is available for students making an appeal or complaint, and for staff involved in handling or supporting appeals and complaints'. [B9: Indicator 4 and other indicators]

Malpractice

The term malpractice covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise the:

- assessment process;
- integrity of a regulated qualification;
- validity of a result or certificate;
- reputation and credibility of the Awarding Body.

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

Maladministration

Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the Edexcel Approved Centre or Learner not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications as set out in the relevant codes of practice, where applicable.

All Learners enrolled on any qualification must be registered with the relevant awarding body.

Unfair Practice in formal examinations

It is an unfair practice to commit any act whereby a person may obtain for themselves or for another an unpermitted advantage. This shall apply whether the candidate acts alone or in conjunction with others. Examples of unfair practice in formal examinations are:

- introduction into an examination room and/or associated facilities any unauthorised form of materials such as a book, manuscript, data or loose papers, information obtained via any electronic device, or any source of unauthorised information;
- copying from or communication with any other person in the examination room and/or associated facilities, except as authorised by an invigilator;
- communicate electronically with any other person, except as authorised by an invigilator;
- impersonation of an examination candidate or allowing oneself to be impersonated;
- presentation of an examination script as one's own work when the script includes material produced by unauthorised means;
- presentation of evidence of special circumstances to Examining Boards, when the evidence is false or falsified or in any way misleads or could mislead Examining Boards;

A candidate suspected of engaging in an unfair examination practice shall be informed by the invigilator that the circumstances will be reported. Such a candidate may continue with that and subsequent examinations without prejudice to any investigation and decision subsequently to be taken by the awarding body. Failure by an Invigilator to warn a candidate at the time of examination shall not prejudice subsequent investigation by the awarding body of any allegation made against a candidate. An Invigilator who considers, or suspects that a candidate is engaging in an unfair examination practice is authorised by the College to confiscate and retain evidence relating to the alleged unfair practice.

Procedure

The College does not tolerate actions or attempted actions of malpractice by students, administrative staff and teaching staff.

The College may enforce penalties and/or sanctions on Students where incidents or (attempted incidents) of malpractice have been identified and proven.

A rigorous assessment process will be open and fair when handling incidents or (attempted incidents) of malpractice.

The policy on malpractice aims to:

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- record the incidents or (attempted incidents) of malpractice;
 - inform the Students as soon as practicable by email, phone or by letter;
 - inform the Students of their rights and responsibilities;
 - provide the Students with an opportunity to discuss how they intend to rectify the situation;
 - involve members of the Programme and Management team to investigate proven malpractice incidents or (attempted incidents);
 - handle the investigation in a fair, balanced and timely manner.

The College reserves the right in suspected cases of malpractice to withhold the issuing of a certificate, whilst the investigation is being carried out. The outcome of the investigation will determine whether or not the certificate is withheld or not.

Intervention and Support for Students

Students will be taught the process and appropriate formats for recording cited texts and other source materials or other materials including websites through face to face feedback sessions, study skills class and formative feedback.

It is necessary for all Students to sign a declaration for all assessed work to authenticate that it is their own work. This will ensure that when any incidents of malpractice have been identified or suspected, it would be considered as evidence which may be used in any investigation.

The Student must be made aware of this on each occasion that the document is being signed, confirming that they are agreeing to the statement.

Student Malpractice: Plagiarism

This is defined as copying and claiming another person's work as one's own, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work, such as internet sources, inventions whether published or not without appropriately acknowledging the source and giving credit where credit is due. It is therefore essential that:

- quotations from published and unpublished sources are clearly acknowledged;
 - web-based materials are not to be directly downloaded into an assignment and are fully referenced like any other source material;
 - students do not incorporate materials/assignments purchased or acquired from internet sites or commissioned from sources which write assignments for payment;
 - paraphrasing of material from others must be clearly referenced;
 - students do not normally incorporate materials previously submitted at this or any other institution towards the completion of an award;
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- sources of illustrations, photographs maps and statistics are acknowledged;
 - unless students have been instructed to produce a group assignment, students must produce work which is uniquely their own;
 - where work is done as part of a group the submission sheet should include a list of all students who contributed to this work.

Student Malpractice: Collusion

By working together with other Students to produce work that is submitted for assessment as individual work. All parties involved in collusion are considered to be equally guilty of this offence and both will be subject to the College's and the awarding organisation's malpractice procedures.

Student Malpractice: Impersonation

By pretending to be someone else in order to produce work for another Student or arranging for another person to take your place in an assessment or exam.

Student Malpractice: Fabricated Data

By making up or fabricating data. Fabricated data is defined as any data presented as part of a formal assessment and which has not been obtained by legitimate means of experimentation or enquiry and/or there is insufficient evidence to support its validity. Fabricated data also includes any instance where existing data has been falsified.

Student Malpractice: Inappropriate Material

By the inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material in assessment evidence. This includes vulgarity and swearing that is outside the context of the assessment, or any material of a discriminatory nature (including racism, sexism and homophobia).

Student Malpractice: Inappropriate Behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour - during an internal or external assessment, behaviour 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.

Who will be involved in the malpractice Investigations?

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- Course Assessors/Tutors

- Lead Internal Verifier
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- Member(s) of the Management Team
 - Student Representative(s)

Who will contact the Student?

- Team member from the Academic Department
- Lead Internal Verifier

The Management Team will determine the penalty or penalties that the Student may receive after all the processes and procedures have been explored during the course of the investigation.

Staff Malpractice:

The following are examples of what the College considers to be malpractice by staff:

- failure to keep awarding body assessment records safe and secure;
- altering assessment and grading records without proper authority;
- influencing the outcome of assessment by producing work for Students or providing support that influences the grade awarded;
- producing false witness statements;
- allowing evidence which is known not to be the Student's own work and including it in assessment;
- facilitating and allowing impersonation and collusion;
- inappropriate use of the reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy, where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment;
- making fraudulent certification claims and/or claiming for a certificate prior to the Student completing all the requirements for assessment;
- obtaining unauthorised access to assessment and verification material.

Centre Malpractice

Focused on insecure storage of assessment instruments and marking guidance:

- misuse of assessments, including inappropriate adjustments to assessment decisions;

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- failure to comply with requirements for accurate and safe retention of Learner evidence, assessment and internal verification records;
 - failure to comply with awarding body 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.

The policy also concerns actions that:

- compromise, attempt to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment;
- undermine the integrity of any qualification or the validity of an exam result or certificate; and/or
- damage the authority, reputation or credibility of the College, awarding body or any officer or employee.

The College takes seriously any suspected or reported case of malpractice or maladministration, which may be the result of a deliberate act, neglect, or failure in a practice or system, or due to actions of individual(s).

The Management Team will undertake an investigation in cases of suspected or reported malpractice. The College has adopted the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Suspected Malpractice in Examination and Assessments, Policies and Procedures to guide its approach to allegations, investigation, dealing with cases, making decisions and applying sanctions or penalties.

The College will take appropriate disciplinary actions against the alleged/reported malpractice staff and the awarding body will be informed if deemed appropriate depending on the seriousness of the matter.

Appeals Procedure

Stage 1 - Review

Students or staff members may request a review of the decision made following the above process. The review is conducted by an ad hoc committee set up by the Academic Board who decides the membership and terms of reference. The Committee will consider the report made on the malpractice incident together with any imposed penalties, as well as any new information or evidence subsequently provided by other relevant parties. Following a review, the initial decision may be upheld or overturned, or upheld but with a change to the penalties originally imposed.

Stage 2 – Appeal

If the student or staff member does not agree with the outcome of the review, they have the right to take the process to Stage 2, which would involve an independent review of the case. An appeal at Stage 2 will only consider whether the Committee set by the College at the review stage applied its procedures consistently, properly and fairly during the original investigation and/or the Stage 1 review and will cover any inconsistencies if noted.

Appeals are heard by a panel chaired by the Academic Dean in the presence of the College's Operations Director with at least one independent member, who is not an employee of City of London College, an assessor/internal verifier working for City of London College, or otherwise connected to City of London College. The appeal panel will have had no involvement with the assessment or the administration of assessments, and have no personal interest in the decisions under consideration.

The appeal panel may uphold the original decision, or overturn it on the grounds that procedures were not properly followed. The appeal panel will not review the original investigation.

The Operations Director responsible for ensuring that all parties affected by decisions on malpractice or maladministration are informed of the outcome of the above processes.

Reporting to the Awarding Body:

Malpractice or attempted acts of malpractice that have influenced the assessment outcomes will be immediately reported to the Awarding Body. In cases of malpractice to the qualifications the regulator, if there is evidence that results or certificates may be invalid, will:

- oversee all investigations into suspected or alleged malpractice;
- withhold the issuing of results until the conclusion of the investigation, or permanently, where the outcome of the investigation warrants it;
- apply the sanctions and penalties listed in this document in cases of proven malpractice;
- report the matter to other awarding bodies in accordance with the regulators' General Conditions of Recognition.
- report the matter to the police if a proven malpractice involved committing a criminal act.

The College and the Awarding Body reserve the right, in suspected cases of malpractice, to withhold the issuing of results or certificates while an investigation is in progress.

The Expectation

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about enabling students' development and achievement, which higher education providers are required to meet. Higher education providers have in place arrangements and resources for monitoring and evaluation, which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

The Indicators of sound practice

Indicator 1

Through strategic and operational planning, and quality assurance and enhancement, higher education providers determine and evaluate how they enable students' development and achievement.

Indicator 2

Higher education providers define, coordinate, monitor and evaluate roles and responsibilities for enabling student development and achievement both internally and in cooperation with other organisations.

Indicator 3

A commitment to equity guides higher education providers in enabling student development and achievement.

Indicator 4

Higher education providers inform students before and during their period of study of opportunities designed to enable their development and achievement.

Indicator 5

To enable student development and achievement, higher education providers put in place policies, practices and systems that facilitate successful transitions and academic progression.

Indicator 6

Higher education providers ensure all students have opportunities to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression.

Indicator 7

Higher education providers ensure staff who enable students to develop and achieve are appropriately qualified, competent, up to date and supported.

Indicator 8

Higher education providers make available appropriate learning resources and enable students to develop the skills to use them

Chapter B6: Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning

The Expectation

Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

The Indicators of sound practice

Indicator 1

Providers operate effective policies, regulations and processes which ensure that the academic standard for each award of credit or a qualification is rigorously set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that student performance is equitably judged against this standard.

Indicator 2

Assessment policies, regulations and processes, including those for the recognition of prior learning, are explicit, transparent and accessible to all intended audiences.

Indicator 3

Those who might be eligible for the recognition of prior learning are made aware of the opportunities available, and are supported throughout the process of application and assessment for recognition.

Indicator 4

Providers assure themselves that everyone involved in the assessment of student work, including prior learning, and associated assessment processes is competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

Indicator 5

Assessment and feedback practices are informed by reflection, consideration of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.

Indicator 6

Staff and students engage in dialogue to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made.

Indicator 7

Students are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice

Indicator 8

The volume, timing and nature of assessment enable students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes.

Indicator 9

Feedback on assessment is timely, constructive and developmental.

Indicator 10

Through inclusive design wherever possible, and through individual reasonable adjustments wherever required, assessment tasks provide every student with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement.

Indicator 11

Assessment is carried out securely.

Indicator 12

Degree-awarding bodies assure themselves that the standards of their awards are not compromised as a result of conducting assessment in a language other than English.

Indicator 13

Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process.

Indicator 14

Providers operate processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice.

Indicator 15

Degree-awarding bodies specify clearly the membership, procedures, powers and accountability of examination boards and assessment panels, including those dealing with the recognition of prior learning; this information is available to all members of such boards.

Indicator 16

Boards of examiners/assessment panels apply fairly and consistently regulations for progression within, and transfer between, programmes and for the award of credits and qualifications.

Indicator 17

The decisions of examination boards and assessment panels are recorded accurately, and communicated to students promptly and in accordance with stated timescales.

Indicator 18

Degree-awarding bodies systematically evaluate and enhance their assessment policies, regulations and processes.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or if there is a change in legal or other business related requirement.

Review Date	Description	Reviewer
October 2024	Assessment Malpractice Policy	SMT

Document History

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