



# Thomas Telford University Technical College

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## Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration

Thomas Telford UTC are committed to the values of fairness, integrity and respect in all aspects of UTC, including in the conduct of examinations.

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Monitoring, Evaluation and Review	The Vice Principal will review this document at least every 2 years and in any case as required to changes in regulation. Change of name made on 18/10/18.		

### Contents

1. Purpose
2. Definition
3. Principles
4. Guidance on Assessment Malpractice
5. Learner Malpractice
6. Centre Staff Malpractice/conflicts of interest
7. Investigating Alleged Malpractice
8. Dealing with Malpractice
9. Appeals
10. DfE Guidance and supporting documentation

#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to clarify and define assessment malpractice, with particular reference to Vocational qualifications and outline the process that the school will use when responding to an allegation or suspicion of assessment malpractice. For further guidance on malpractice relating to GCSE, AS, GCE, AVCE, GNVQ and Key Skills qualifications see the JCQ publication Guidance for dealing with instances of suspected malpractice in examinations.

#### 2. Definition

Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification. TTUTC does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by learners and / or staff. Examination boards may impose penalties and/or sanctions on learners or centres where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven.

### **3. Principles**

Centre staff must be vigilant regarding assessment malpractice and where malpractice occurs it must be dealt with in an open and fair manner. In the interest of learners and staff, we will respond effectively and openly to all requests for an investigation into an incident or a suspected incident of malpractice. Normally, the Principal will supervise, through a nominated member of the senior leadership team, investigations resulting from allegations of malpractice. The Principal or nominated senior leader will inform learners and centre staff suspected of malpractice of their responsibilities and rights. In the case of Vocational qualifications, the centre will inform the appropriate examination board of our investigations. Examination boards reserve the right, in suspected cases of malpractice, to withhold the issuing of results/certificates while an investigation is in progress. Depending on the outcome of the investigation results/certificates may be released or withheld.

### **4. Guidance on assessment malpractice**

Examination boards require assessors in centres to ask learners to declare that their work is their own, for instance:

- for internally assessed units, assessors are responsible for checking the validity of the learner's work.
- a centre and its learners must provide a written declaration that the evidence is authentic and that the assessment was conducted under the requirements of the assessment specification.

The centre will take positive steps to prevent or reduce the occurrence of learner malpractice. These steps include:

- using the induction period and the student handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- showing learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Learners should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the learner has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.

The centre will use procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, e.g. plagiarism, collusion, cheating. These procedures may include:

- periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments /tasks /coursework is produced by the learner
- altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis
- the assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of learners
- using oral questions with learners to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc. within their work
- assessors getting to know their learners' styles and abilities.

### **5. Learner malpractice**

Attempting to or actually carrying out any malpractice activity is not permitted by examination boards. The following are examples of malpractice by learners; this list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the examination board at its discretion:

- plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learner's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including Internet sources), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source

- collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work. Learners should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential key skill for many sectors and subject areas, but the use of minutes, allocating tasks, agreeing outcomes, etc. are an essential part of team work and this must be made clear to the learners
- 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.
- fabrication of results and/or evidence
- failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an assessor, a supervisor, an invigilator, or examination board conditions in relation to the assessment /examination /test rules, regulations and security.
- misuse of assessment/examination material
- introduction and/or use of unauthorised material contra to the requirements of supervised assessment/examination/test conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), 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 conditions
- behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment/examination/test
- the alteration of any results document, including certificates

## **6. Centre staff malpractice/conflicts of interest**

The following are examples of malpractice by centre staff. The list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by examination boards at their discretion:

- failing to keep any examination board mark schemes secure
- failing to advise the Exams Office and then in turn the exam board(s) of potential conflicts of interest when asked to do so by the Exams Office at the beginning of each new academic year. In the event of a non-examination year duties and personnel may need to be separated to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals
- alteration of any examination board mark schemes
- alteration of examination board assessment and grading criteria
- 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 (improper assistance to students)
- 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
- failing to keep learner computer files secure
- 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

- tampering with evidence will be classed as a breach of internal security. Where it is not possible to hold an examination series, evidence is to be kept in the exam safe room with limited access.
- over direction of students in preparation for common assessments for example, assisting candidates in the production of work
- failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made for the purposes of EQA in a non-examination year
- submission of grades that are not supported by evidence that staff know to be inaccurate in a non-examinations year
- entering of students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in a summer series of a non-examination year
- failure to ensure that details of a student's final grade remains confidential in the event of a non-examination year. Students can be informed of grades achieved from a range of evidence on which their final grade will be based.

## **7. Investigating alleged malpractice**

When dealing with alleged malpractice in a centre, the examination board will deal primarily with the Principal or a nominated senior leadership team representative. The examination board may require full access to a centre for investigation purposes. As part of the investigation the examination board retains the right to:

- involve the learner and others in the investigation process
- deal with the learner (if aged 18 or above) and/or the learner's representative.

This may occur, for example, when a learner's account of events is at variance with that of the centre. Where learners aged 18 or over are involved, they may wish to be assisted by centre personnel, parents or guardians.

During the investigation period, the examination board may:

- refuse learner registrations/entries
- withhold the release of results/certificate
- withhold test/examination papers if the security of a test/examination is considered at risk

## **8. Dealing with malpractice and maladministration**

It is the responsibility of the Principal or their nominees to carry out an investigation into allegations of malpractice. Investigations into alleged malpractice against the Principal will normally be conducted by the Chair of the Governing Body of the UTC. The alleged incident must be reported to examination board at the earliest opportunity. The examination board reserves the right to carry out an independent investigation in full under any circumstances of alleged malpractice relating to a centre and full cooperation from the centre will be expected. If a member of centre staff discovers or suspects anyone of malpractice, the centre must make the individual fully aware (preferably in writing) at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.

## **9. Appeals**

The examination board has established procedures for centres that are considering appeals against penalties and sanctions arising from malpractice. Appeals against a decision made by the examination board will normally be accepted only from Heads of Centres (on behalf of learners and/or members of staff) and from individual members of centre staff (in respect of a decision taken against them personally).

**10. DfE Guidance and other documentation** has been used to create this document. The specific guidance documents include:

- [JCQ General Regulation 2021](#)
- [JCQ Guidance on Suspected Malpractice](#)
- [JCQ. General-regulations](#)