

## Dealing with Instances of Suspected Malpractice

Malpractice is deemed to be those actions that undermine the integrity of qualifications and have the potential to damage their public esteem. The term “malpractice” is intended to encompass other similar terms such as “non-compliance”, “maladministration”, “professional misconduct”, all of which may be used interchangeably.

1. Any actual or suspected case of malpractice identified by assessors, internal verifiers, candidates, staff of centers, should be reported immediately in writing to the Centre Manager and should be supported, as far as is possible, by signed and dated statements.
2. The Centre must inform the awarding body whenever it finds evidence of malpractice.

QCF certificates are, in principle, deemed invalid in the following circumstances:

- The evidence assessed is not the candidate's work
- The candidate is still working towards the qualification after the certificate has been claimed
- The certificates have been claimed on the basis of falsified records;
- The awarding body has issued certificates contrary to the QCF code of practice and the accreditation agreement.

These circumstances set out the reasons why a certificate may be judged to be invalid. They do not prescribe that action automatically has to be taken. A variety of factors need to be taken into account.

Assessors and internal verifiers are required, as part of their normal duties, to identify cases of deficiencies relating to the conduct of assessment, and to report these to the Centre Manager. The centre manager will investigate or comment.

3. It is the responsibility of the Centre Manager, acting on behalf of the awarding bodies, to carry out an investigation, to submit a full written report of the case and to provide supporting evidence.
4. Candidates accused of malpractice should be made 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.
5. Candidates accused of malpractice must be given the opportunity to respond (preferably in writing) to allegations made.
6. Candidates accused of malpractice should be made aware of the avenues for appealing should a judgment be made against them.
7. Reports of alleged malpractice should include:
  - A description of the facts of the case,
  - A detailed account of the investigation carried out,
  - Written statements from managers and other staff concerned, such as internal verifiers and assessors; and
  - Written statements from the candidates concerned or a clear indication that they have been given the opportunity to make a statement.
8. The centre will acknowledge the receipt of a report of suspected malpractice. On the basis of the information received, a decision will be made on whether or not to proceed with the matter.
9. Actions to be taken as the result of investigations into malpractice will be decided by the Centre Manager or whom delegated powers are vested, depending on the seriousness of the matters concerned

**10.** Disqualification from completion of the qualification concerned for a set period :

The college reserves the right to refuse to accept registrations or certifications without providing reasons. (Agencies/satellites will normally be advised prior to such action being taken)

**11.** The awarding bodies will acknowledge the receipt of a report of suspected malpractice. On the basis of the information received, a decision will be made on whether to proceed with the matter or not,

**12.** In order to obtain the fullest possible details of the situation, so that a fair judgment in the case may be arrived at awarding bodies officers will investigate the case thoroughly through means such as:

- A review of the complete records held by the awarding body on the Centre.
- A request for a report on an investigation carried out by the Head of the Centre;
- A special investigative visit.
- A formal audit of the Centre's activities and records

**13.** During a period of formal investigation, the awarding body may impose one or more of the following temporary suspensions:

- Registration of candidates
- Certification
- Qualification approval
- Centre approval

**Examples of Malpractice by Candidates-** This list is not exhaustive

- Copying from another candidate
- Plagiarism- the failure to acknowledge sources properly and for the submission of another person's work as if it were the candidate's work.
- Disruptive behavior in the assessment environment (including the use of offensive language);



- Failing to abide by the instructions of an assessor or the awarding body in relation to the assessment;
- Collusion or attempted collusion with other persons to avoid the requirements of the qualification specifications.
- Submission for assessment of work which is not the candidate's own;
- The alteration of any results document, including certificates;
- Misuse of examination material
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be examination related or the attempt to by means of talking or in writing
- Offensive or insulting behavior towards centre staff, external verifiers or other officers

**Examples of Malpractice by Staff or Management** –This list is not exhaustive or in order of seriousness

- Failing to keep candidates/student files secure;
- Assisting or prompting candidates with the production of answers;
- Failing to ensure that candidates are assessed and internally verified by the internal verifiers.

I have read and understood Dealing with Instances of Suspected Malpractice Policy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_