

ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING

Malpractice Policy 2023 - 2024

The policy

The policy for assessment and examination practice follows the Awarding Body's and JCQ requirements.

Adult and Community Learning takes active steps to ensure that the policy is adhered to:

- All tutors/assessors will be qualified and occupationally competent according to Awarding Organisation scheme guidelines. Fair and reliable assessment processes are used to ensure that all candidates have the opportunity to demonstrate their competence, thus ensuring equal access. Evidence is judged for validity, currency, authenticity and sufficiency.
- Occupationally competent and qualified IQAs continually review assessment practice. Support and advice is given to tutors/assessors by IQAs and Programme Leads.
- Assessment decisions and practices are regularly sampled and findings are acted upon to ensure consistency.
- Course inductions and learner handbooks set out the assessment and/or examination procedures clearly.
- Guidance for learners on appropriate formats to record cited texts and other information sources, such as websites, is provided, as appropriate.
- Assessment procedures include checking for malpractice such as collusion and plagiarism.
- Controls are installed to prevent learners accessing other learners' work when using networked computers.
- Learners are required to sign a statement that the work produced for assessment is their own.
- Examination Officers adhere to the JCQ regulations relating to the conduct of examinations.

Definitions of malpractice

Malpractice includes maladministration and means any act, default or practice which compromises, or attempts to compromise, or may damage the process of assessment, the integrity of the qualification or the validity of the result/certificate and/or damages the authority, reputation or credibility of the Adult Community Learning Service and/or the Awarding Organisation

The Adult and Community Learning Service regards any form of malpractice as a serious matter. Individuals who may be involved in malpractice are varied and may include:

- Learners/candidates

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- Centre Staff: managers/ tutors/trainers/assessors/ learning support assistants/invigilators/exams officers/ internal verifiers/external verifiers or others responsible for the conduct, administration or quality assurance of examinations or assessments.
- Other third parties e.g. parents/guardians/relations/friends of the candidate

Learner malpractice

The following list is not exhaustive; other instances of malpractice may be determined:

Plagiarism

This is defined as unacknowledged use of another person’s work and attempting to pass this off as the candidate’s own. This may include images, artwork, words, computer generated work.

Collusion between learners

This may include a learner permitting another learner to copy all or part of his/her work or submits work that has been produced in collaboration with another person without approval.

Impersonation

This may involve pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another person or arranging for another person to take an examination/assessment in his/her own place.

Cheating during an examination

This may involve use of unauthorised material during the examination (including mobile phones and other electronic devices) and /or behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the examination/assessment.

Fabrication of results and/or evidence

This may include falsely claiming to have carried out research/observations/ tests as part of the assessment and fabricating the results.

Falsification

This may involve the alteration of any results document, including Certificates.

All other examples identified by JCQ “Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessment” document

Centre Staff malpractice

The Adult and Community Learning Service identifies the following instances as malpractice by Centre Staff. The list is not exhaustive:

- Alteration of Awarding Organisation mark schemes/assessment and grading criteria.
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, for example where Centre staff produce the work for the learner or provide assistance beyond what is acceptable in the normal course of advising, coaching or supporting learners.

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- Producing falsified witness statements.
- Allowing evidence that is known not to be the learner’s own to be included in the learner’s portfolio.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements.
- Assisting or prompting candidates with the production of answers in a controlled assessment/test/examination.
- Falsifying records/certificates.
- Fraudulent certificate claims.
- Failing to keep assessment/examination/test papers secure prior to the examination/assessment.
- Failing to validate the identity of a learner taking an examination/test.
- Tampering with candidate scripts or controlled assessments after collection and before dispatch to the Awarding Organisation.
- Obtaining unauthorised access to examination/assessment materials.
- Failing to follow regulations and procedures for the conduct of examinations/assessments.
- All other examples identified by JCQ “Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessment” document.

Other third parties e.g. parents/guardians/relations/friends of the candidate in collusion with learner

The following list is not exhaustive. Examples may include:

- Third party production of the work produced for assessment.
- Submission of another person’s work that has been assessed in a previous year.

Procedure for dealing with malpractice in the exams room

If malpractice is suspected, in the first instance the Invigilator must approach the candidate discreetly to avoid further disruption and ask them to stop doing whatever appears to be causing the malpractice e.g. stop talking, remove unauthorised items, the candidate will be allowed to continue with their exam. If the candidate continues with the unauthorised behaviour, the Exams Officer must be contacted, and the candidate may be removed from the exam room if this is causing a disturbance.

All malpractice activities must be reported to the Exams Officer who will request a report from the invigilator and learner (if required) and use this to submit a malpractice form to the Awarding Organisation.

Investigation into alleged cases of malpractice in non-examination assessment situations or outside the exam room

Learner malpractice/third party malpractice

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Where learner malpractice/third party malpractice is suspected, the Programme Lead must be informed and an investigation carried out, following the Awarding Organisation procedure and time line. S/he must inform the Head of Centre. The Head of Centre must notify the Awarding Organisation within the deadlines set by each Organisation, of all suspicions or actual incidences of malpractice. The Head of Centre may, on consideration of the case, delegate the investigation to an “independent” member of the Senior Leadership Team. Penalties for proved learner malpractice will be determined according to ACL policies and procedures and Awarding Organisation regulations.

Centre Staff Malpractice

Where Centre Staff malpractice is suspected, the case should be referred initially to the appropriate line manager. The Head of Centre and Teams Leads – Quality and Curriculum will investigate the case, following Warwickshire County Council procedures into suspected cases of misconduct. The Awarding Organisation will be informed of the issue being investigated. Where appropriate an independent investigator will be appointed according to Warwickshire County Council policies and procedures. Outcomes and penalties resulting from proven cases of misconduct will comply with Warwickshire County Council procedures.

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