

# Assessment Malpractice Policy and Procedure



## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy aims to define malpractice in the context of assessment and certification for all qualifications including our Higher Education programme and to set out the rights and responsibilities, with regard to malpractice of the student.
- 1.2 Guidance on malpractice relating to external examinations will be referred to the Awarding Organisation.
- 1.3 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.

## 2. Policy

- 2.1 All staff must be vigilant regarding assessment malpractice. Where malpractice occurs, it must be dealt with in an open and fair manner irrespective of a student's race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disciplinary, religion or beliefs and offers the appropriate support and guidance for all students to access opportunities in this way.
- 2.2 City of Wolverhampton College does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by students in connection with their qualifications. The College may impose penalties and/or sanctions on learners where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven.
- 2.3 City of Wolverhampton College does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice if staff in connection with any qualifications.

2.4 Malpractice offences can be deemed as:

- 2.4.1 Cheating in an examination: Copying from the work of other students, obtaining help from other students in a way that contravenes the regulations for the examination, bringing into the examination any unauthorised materials, or referring during the examination to any unauthorised material, or any form of impersonation.
- 2.4.2 Plagiarism: Copying work from any other source published in a manner not authorised by the regulations for assessment and presenting the copied work as if it were the student's own work. Work presented by a student in assessment must be the student's own, and where exceptions are permitted, any such exceptions must be clearly identified and the source fully acknowledged (including downloads from any internet site).

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- 2.4.3 Fabrication of information: Presentation of any false or fabricated information, results or conclusions in any form of assessment, including practical or field work studies, oral presentations, unpublished work, and including the work of fellow students, interviews and reports from work placements, etc.
- 2.4.4 Collusion: This is the deliberate and intentional collaboration, without official approval, between two or more students in the development and production of work that is eventually submitted by each student, in a substantially similar and/or identical form; and is presented by each student to be the outcome of his or her individual efforts. Collusion also occurs where there is unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person, in or outside of College, in the preparation and production of work, which is ultimately presented, as the student's own.
- 2.4.5 Impersonation: 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.
- 2.4.6 Failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an assessor, a supervisor, an invigilator, or awarding body conditions in relation to the assessment/examination/test rules, regulations and security.
- 2.4.7 The alteration of any results document, including certificates.

## 3. Procedure

- 3.1 Attempting to or actually carrying out any malpractice activity is not permitted by the College. The following are examples of malpractice by students; this list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the College at its discretion. Action taken is appropriate to the malpractice:
  - 3.1.1 Cheating in Examinations - If an invigilator in an examination has cause to suspect any student of cheating, for example by the discovery of unauthorised books or papers brought into the examination, these will be confiscated when discovered and any work done by the student up to that time will be suitably annotated. The student will, however, be allowed to complete the examination. At the end of the examination the student may be asked for an explanation. Unless a totally satisfactory response is received, the invigilator will submit a written report to the Examinations Officer. This report will include a description of the evidence that cheating has occurred, together with details of the student's name, the date and time of the examination and any other relevant information. Where material is

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confiscated this material should be presented along with the written report. The Examinations Officer will forward this information to the relevant examining body in line with Examination Regulations.

- 3.1.2 Plagiarism / Fabrication - If a member of teaching staff marking an assessment, or otherwise associated with the presentation of an assessment and suspect's plagiarism, the matter will be reported to the relevant Curriculum Manager via a written report. The written report must include the appropriate details, including the nature of the alleged offence and the evidence for suspecting it. The College's student disciplinary process will then be followed.
- 3.1.3 Collusion - Where a member of teaching staff marking an assignment, or any piece of work associated with the assessment of modules, suspects' unauthorised collusion in the production of that piece of work, between two or more students, the matter will be reported to the relevant Curriculum Manager via a written report. The written report should include: the nature of the alleged offence; the names of the students suspected of colluding; and the evidence upon which the allegation is based. The College's student disciplinary process will then be followed.
- 3.2 Attempting to or actually carrying out any malpractice activity is not permitted by the College. The following are examples of malpractice by staff; this list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the College at its discretion.
  - 3.2.1 Failing to keep any Awarding Organisation mark schemes secure.
  - 3.2.2 Alteration of any Awarding Organisation mark schemes.
  - 3.2.3 Alteration of any Awarding Organisation assessment and grading criteria.
  - 3.2.4 Assisting students in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment.
- 3.3 Malpractice by staff, the College's Staff Disciplinary and Capability Policy shall be adhered to.
- 3.4 In all cases of malpractice, the Quality Improvement Director will decide if the relevant Awarding Organisation is to be informed, unless there is clear stipulation made by the Awarding Organisation.
- 3.5 If the College discovers or suspects anyone of malpractice, it will make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.

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3.6 If the College is alleging an individual may have been involved in act of malpractice, the centre must give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.

3.7 The College will also inform such individuals of the avenues for appealing should a judgment be made against them. It may be necessary during this process to notify the funding authorities. The College may have to notify the Police in some cases of malpractice. It is accepted that awarding bodies may apply sanctions to the College.

3.8 Guidance to prevent malpractice:

3.8.1 The College requires assessors to ask students to declare that their work is their own, for instance:

3.8.2 For internally assessed units, assessors are responsible for checking the validity of the student's work.

3.8.3 And/or students must provide a written declaration that the evidence is authentic and that the assessment was conducted under the requirements of the assessment specification.

3.8.4 The College will take positive steps to prevent or reduce the occurrence of student malpractice. These steps will include:

3.8.5 Using the induction period to inform students of the College's policy on malpractice and the penalties and provide access to the policy.

3.8.6 Showing students, the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites.

3.8.7 Introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, e.g. plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc.

3.9 Conflicts of Interest Procedure

3.9.1 City of Wolverhampton College considers it to be essential that it adopts a proactive approach to ensure that conflicts of interest are avoided where possible and when not, are managed effectively. The College defines a conflict of interest as any situation in which an organisation or individual's personal interests, or interests that they owe to another body, may (or maybe perceived to) influence or affect their decision making on matters related to the College.

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- 3.9.2 The College shall operate this procedure with a 'Risk Based' approach. Therefore, disclosure is expected by Governors and where appropriate Employees, External Quality Assurers/Examiner, Partners etc. shall complete and sign a *Disclosure Form - Declaration of Interest*. All decisions shall be recorded in the risk register.
- 3.9.3 The College shall take all reasonable steps to robustly manage the conflict to mitigate any adverse effect to the College. Any actions will be approved by the Chief Executive/Principal and recorded in the confidential file. The individual(s) concerned will be notified of the decision. The decision may be appealed up to four weeks after notification. The final decision will be made by the Chief Executive/Principal.
- 3.9.4 The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. The information provided will be treated as 'confidential' and not be used for any other purpose.

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