



## [DistanceLearningCentre.com Ltd](#) [Malpractice Policy and Procedure](#)

### [Malpractice Policy](#)

#### **Scope**

This policy has been formulated to recognise the importance the DistanceLearningCentre.com places on promoting and protecting academic integrity in order to:

- Protect the ownership of learner work and assessments.
- Improve the quality of academic work.
- Demonstrate the quality of its own provision; and
- Secure the academic standards of the awards it offers in order to protect its reputation.

The Centre also recognises the importance of detecting and addressing malpractice to support this objective.

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This document aims to:

- Define malpractice in the context of assessment.
- Set out the rights and responsibilities of the DistanceLearningCentre.com Ltd staff and learners in relation to such matters.
- Describe the procedures to be followed in cases where there is reason to suspect that the regulations have been broken.

1.2 The Executive Manager (HR & Quality) at the DistanceLearningCentre.com will supervise all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice.

1.3 The DistanceLearningCentre.com will actively and promptly report suspected malpractice to the relevant Awarding/Exam Body as required.

#### **2. Malpractice**

2.1 Malpractice is deemed to be those deliberate actions and practices, which threaten the integrity of internal and external assessments, and certification. The term '**malpractice**' is intended to encompass other similar terms such as '**non-compliance**', '**misadministration**' and '**professional misconduct**'.



### **3. Staff Malpractice**

3.1 The following are examples of malpractice by staff. Other instances of malpractice may be considered by the DistanceLearningCentre.com at its discretion:

- Failing to keep learners, computers or other files secure.
- Attempting to access and or disclose secure materials.
- Assisting or prompting learners with the production of answers.
- Completing work on behalf of the learner.
- Aiding in plagiarism.
- Manipulating results on purpose or by mistake.
- Failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to ensure the security of the assessment.
- Failure to notify the Executive Manager (HR & Quality) of learner malpractice.

### **4. Learner Malpractice**

4.1 The following are examples of malpractice by learners. Other instances of malpractice may be considered by the DistanceLearningCentre.com at its discretion:

- Introduction of unauthorised material during an observed closed book examination/assessment, for example course material notes, textbooks, websites.
- Copying any type or form of assessment/work from another learner.
- Collusion or sharing assessment/work with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work.
- 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.
- The inclusion of inappropriate, offensive or obscene material in assessment tasks.
- The deliberate destruction of another's work.
- Fabrication of results and/or evidence.
- Multiple plagiarism offences.
- AI mis-use to gain an unfair advantage and to produce work that is not their own.
- Cheating to gain an unfair advantage.
- Acting in a disruptive manner.
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment e.g. if a learner utilises an organisation or individual to complete an assessment for the learner and the learner submits the assessment as though it was completed by the learner.



## **5. Procedures for investigating alleged malpractice**

5.1 All allegations of malpractice must be reported to the Executive Manager (HR & Quality) of the DistanceLearningCentre.com by tutors, managers, learners and members of the public.

5.2 When dealing with alleged malpractice the DistanceLearningCentre.com will deal primarily with the person or persons against whom the malpractice has been alleged.

5.3 The DistanceLearningCentre.com will seek to establish the full facts and circumstances of any alleged malpractice.

## **6. Discovery of malpractice**

6.1 If malpractice is discovered by the Centre, full details of the case will be submitted, as required, at the earliest opportunity to the Chief Executive/Head of Quality Assurance of the relevant Awarding/Exam Body.

## **7. Anonymous reports**

7.1 The Centre will only act upon anonymous reports if there is supporting evidence, or if the nature of the report warrants any actions to be taken.

## **8. Investigation into suspected malpractice by learners**

8.1 The Executive Manager (HR & Quality) will supervise all investigations into the alleged malpractice and will submit a full written report of the case and provide supporting evidence to the relevant Awarding/Exam Body.

8.2 Learners suspected of malpractice will be made fully aware, in writing at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice.

8.3 Learners suspected of malpractice will be given an opportunity to respond in writing to the allegations made.

8.4 Learners suspected of malpractice will be made aware of the routes for appealing should a judgement be made against him/her.

8.5 Full details of the academic appeals procedure can be found on the DistanceLearningCentre.com's website and can also be requested from Student Services at [studentservices@distancelearningcentre.com](mailto:studentservices@distancelearningcentre.com)



## **9. Investigation in to suspected malpractice by members of staff**

9.1 The Executive Manager (HR & Quality) will in the first instance carry out all investigations into any case of suspected malpractice against a member of the DistanceLearningCentre.com staff, in conjunction with the relevant Awarding/Exam Body if required.

9.2 Any member of Centre's staff suspected of malpractice will be made fully aware, in writing; at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the suspected malpractice and the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.

9.3 Any member of the Centre's staff suspected of malpractice will have the opportunity to respond in writing to the allegations made.

9.4 Any member of the DistanceLearningCentre.com staff suspected of malpractice will be made aware of the routes for appealing.

9.5 A report on cases where members of the DistanceLearningCentre.com staff are found to have committed malpractice, together with details of the action taken by the Executive Manager (HR & Quality) may be made available to others, for example, the Police, if the Centre decides that the circumstances of the case are sufficiently serious to warrant such reports being made.

## **10. Reporting**

10.1 The Executive Manager (HR & Quality) at the DistanceLearningCentre.com will submit a full written report of any malpractice investigation to the relevant Awarding/Exam Body.

## **11. The DistanceLearningCentre.com response to cases of malpractice**

11.1 Where an investigation indicates evidence of malpractice, the Executive Manager (HR & Quality) will appoint a panel, chaired by the Executive Manager (HR & Quality) and comprising of members of the Executive Management Team and other relevant members.

11.2 The panel will establish that correct procedures have been followed in the investigation of cases.



11.3 The panel will determine:

- Whether assessment regulations have been broken.
- Where the culpability lies for the breach of regulations.
- Appropriate measures to be taken to protect the integrity of assessments and to prevent future breaches.
- The nature of the actions to be taken.

11.4 Each case of suspected malpractice will be considered and judged on an individual basis in the light of all information/evidence available.

11.5 The DistanceLearningCentre.com will impose sanctions on individuals found guilty of breaking assessment regulations in order to:

- Maintain the integrity and confidence of assessments.
- Ensure that there is nothing to gain from breaking the regulations.
- Deter others from doing likewise.

11.6 Where an investigation establishes a malpractice by a member of the Centre staff, the DistanceLearningCentre.com will subsequently undertake disciplinary action against the member of staff concerned.

## **12. Sanctions applied against learners**

12.1 The DistanceLearningCentre.com may, at its discretion, impose the following sanctions against learners found guilty of breaking the regulations:

- The learner is issued with a warning.
- The learner loses all credit gained for a unit.
- The learner loses all credit gained from all units in a single qualification (units which have been awarded are retained).
- The learner is disqualified from the whole qualification and removed from their course of study.

### **Note:**

- Not all of the penalties may be appropriate for all Awarding/Exam Body qualifications.
- In the case of serious malpractice, the DistanceLearningCentre.com may report the case to the Police.
- The Executive Manager (HR & Quality) retains sole discretion to take any further action that is deemed appropriate.



### **13. Applying sanctions**

13.1 The application of sanctions is at the discretion of the DistanceLearningCentre.com and will reflect the particular circumstances of each case and any mitigating factors.

13.2 Sanctions will be based only on the evidence presented.

13.3 All sanctions will be justifiable and reasonable in their scale and consistent in their application.

13.4 For reasons of consistency of approach in the application of sanctions, the Centre will not take into account any consequential effects of a particular sanction which might arise from the circumstances of the individual.

13.5 Sanctions applied will remain on record at the DistanceLearningCentre.com.

### **14. Communicating decisions**

14.1 The Executive Manager (HR & Quality) will communicate the decision to the individuals concerned and pass on warnings in cases where this is indicated.

14.2 In all instances of serious malpractice, the DistanceLearningCentre.com will automatically report the case to the relevant qualification authorities. All other cases will be reported on request.

14.3 The DistanceLearningCentre.com has established procedures for considering appeals arising from the outcomes of an investigation into malpractice. This academic appeals procedure can be found on the DistanceLearningCentre.com website.

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## Appendix 1: Procedure for dealing with malpractice

