

# **PLAGIARISM, MALPRACTICE & MALADMINISTRATION PROCEDURE**

**Agreed at SMT: 5 September 2018**

**To be reviewed: August 2019**

*It is intended that this procedure is 'fair to all'. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.*

## **1. Scope and Purpose**

Wiltshire College considers any element of plagiarism and other forms of assessment malpractice and maladministration to be a serious issue, and this procedure defines malpractice/maladministration from both student and staff perspective, and how instances of this would be dealt with. It should be read in conjunction with the relevant Staff and Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

This procedure is applicable to all students and staff at all centres of Wiltshire College and applies to all internal assessments, and internal and external examinations. Where awarding bodies or validating HEI's have their own published procedures these will take precedent over the college policy.

The main objectives of the policy are:

- 1.1** To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice/maladministration by staff or students
- 1.2** To respond effectively to any incident of alleged malpractice/maladministration promptly and objectively
- 1.3** To standardise the recording and reporting of any investigation of malpractice /maladministration to the relevant awarding bodies
- 1.4** To impose appropriate penalties/sanctions on staff or students where incident (or attempted incidents) of malpractice/maladministration are proven.
- 1.5** To protect the integrity of Wiltshire College and the qualifications delivered

## **2. Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all staff to give full and active support for the policy by ensuring the policy is known understood and implemented.

### **2.1 Students**

In all assessed work candidates should take care to ensure the work presented is their own and fully acknowledges the work and opinions of others. Candidates should declare that work is their own. It is also the responsibility of the candidates to ensure that they do not undertake any form of cheating or other form of unfair advantage.

## 2.2 Wiltshire College (Centre)

Should seek proactive ways to promote a positive culture that encourages learners to take individual responsibility for their learning and respect the work of others.

## 2.3 Tutor/ Assessor

Responsible for designing assessment opportunities which limit the opportunity for malpractice and for checking the validity of student's work. Use learner induction and learner handbook to inform about malpractice/Maladministration and outcomes.

## 2.4 Internal Verifier/Internal Quality Assurer (IV/IQA)

Responsible for malpractice checks when internally verifying work.

## 2.5 Quality Manager

Required to inform Awarding Organisations of any acts of malpractice/maladministration.

## 2.6 Head of Centre (Principal) or their designated nominee

Responsible for any investigation into allegations of malpractice/maladministration

## 3 Definitions

**3.1 Malpractice** is any irregular conduct through deliberate activity, neglect or default on the part of a student or member of college staff, which gives unfair advantage to a candidate or group of candidates, or disadvantages other candidates. Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates. Failure by a centre to deal with identified issues may in itself constitute Malpractice.

- **Plagiarism** is where a student has included published material in submitted work, but has not cited the source, therefore, falsely claiming that the work is their own.
- **Plagiarism** is also including another students work in submitted work falsely claiming it is their own
- **Plagiarism** can also mean using the same assessed work in a different assessment. Students can **normally** only use work once for assessment.

For **Higher Education students**, academic theft is a serious academic offence, which has significant consequences. Plagiarism is academic theft. **See Appendix 1 for actions relating to Academic Theft (HE only) .**

**3.2 Maladministration** is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre or learner not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications and as set out in the awarding organisation requirements for approved centres and regulator documents.

**3.3 Examples** of actions that may constitute Malpractice/Maladministration are listed below. (These lists are not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice/maladministration may be considered)

Students	Staff	Centres
Plagiarism, including the copying of work of another learner (including the use of ICT to aid copying).	Unfair discrimination in assessment (for example, on the grounds of age, sex, ethnicity, etc)	Failure to provide appropriate facilities for the security of assessment and of assessment records
Collusion between two or more learners	Deliberate or wilful failure to assess in accordance with -the assessment criteria or other assessment requirements	Failure to keep externally set assessment papers secure prior to or after assessment
Deliberate destruction of another learner's work for assessment	Assisting or prompting learners with the production of answers	Failure to keep learner, computer or other files secure
Fabrication of results or evidence	Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment material prior to or after assessment	Failure to provide assessment records of learners to awarding bodies or representatives of awarding bodies
False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.	Failure to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to ensure the security of assessment	Failure to register learners with awarding bodies such that learners are prevented from obtaining the units or qualifications that they are taking.
Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or r to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test	Fraudulent certificate claims	Consistent failure to follow actions resulting in external quality assurance visits
	Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence)	Insufficient management of

	<p>Failure to keep learner coursework/portfolios of evidence secure.</p> <p>Adding dates and signatures to coursework/portfolio evidence post assessment</p>	<p>conflicts of interest. (Assessment of own staff, family members etc.).</p>
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#### 4 Identifying malpractice/maladministration

Cases of malpractice/maladministration can be identified in a number of different ways. They may be:

- reported by a lecturer or examiner via a report where the behaviour of an individual has had a disruptive effect on other candidates
- reported by an examiner or assessor, who may identify shared answers in an examination script or identical wording in a coursework assignment
- identified by an internal verifier who may identify identical work in coursework assignments
- identified by an external verifier, during a verification event

In cases where malpractice is identified or suspected, the Student and/or Staff Discipline Policies would apply. The Student Discipline Policy, which is distributed and discussed with all students during induction and guidance, outlines the consequences of such conduct.

#### 5 Dealing with malpractice/maladministration (For HE see appendix 1)

**5.1** Where the College discovers or suspects an individual, or individuals, of malpractice it will conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation.

**5.2** Such an investigation will be initially undertaken by an Assistant Principal (AP), who will interview all personnel linked to the allegation.

**5.3** The College will make the individual(s) aware (preferably in writing) at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice/maladministration and of possible consequences should malpractice/maladministration be proven.

**5.4** The investigation will proceed through the following stages:

**5.4.1 Preliminary investigation**, conducted by the appropriate AP, into the allegation to determine whether a full investigation is necessary. If the allegation is

against a member of staff and appears to have substance, then all assessments by this member of staff should be halted until the investigation is complete.

**5.4.2** Should it be determined that **a full investigation** is necessary it shall be conducted by an independent Investigation Officer appointed by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality. A wider scrutiny of both current and historical evidence relating to the situation will be undertaken. For allegations against staff this is to not only establish the route cause but also the possible effects on learners past and present.

**5.5** During the investigation the College will give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.

**5.6** All stages of the investigation shall be documented by the person leading the investigation and reported to the relevant Awarding Organisation by the Quality Manager.

**5.7** The individual will be informed of the avenues for appealing against any judgments made.

**5.8** The Investigation Officer shall produce a report of their findings for the attention of the Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality for FE assessments, and Vice Principal Higher Education for HE assessments).

**5.9** For cases of staff malpractice/maladministration, the Assistant Principal of HR and the Principal will decide whether to invoke the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

**5.10** For cases of student assessment malpractice, reference should be made by the Investigation Officer to all other relevant policies

## **5 Possible Actions Taken by the College**

The College may take internal disciplinary action in line with College Policy and Procedures. This action will be commensurate with the seriousness of the Malpractice/Maladministration and comply with appropriate employment legislation and awarding body requirements who may impose penalties or sanctions.

## **6 Associated Documents (Linked policies etc.)**

- Assessment & Academic Appeals Procedure
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Awarding Body Investigation Guidelines
- Ofqua/Welsh Government General Conditions of Recognition (Nov 2012)
- NVQ code of practice 2006 (qualifications in the NQF)
- Ofqual Dealing with significant cases of suspected malpractice by those involved with the delivery of qualifications 2006
- Regulatory principles of the Qualifications and Credit Framework 2008

## 7 Monitoring Review and Evaluation

Internal monitoring/verification of assessment activity will include malpractice/maladministration checks.

Evidence of both assessment and internal verification/moderation must be available for auditing by the Quality Team, under the responsibility of the Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning.

The Quality Manager will review these procedures annually.

### Appendix 1 Higher Education Students – Actions for Academic Theft (HEIs follow their own policies)

Severity of Plagiarism offence	Descriptions	Actions
First offence in the first semester of the first year.	Cause for concern by marker that published work has been used and not referenced. Work has been copied from published work, less than 50% copied. Poor referencing.	No penalties or disciplinary action taken. Student to book referencing session with tutor, LRC or academic mentor. To be noted on promonitor as an action to improve referencing. This is considered poor academic work rather than academic theft. Work to fail, and to be resubmitted after referencing session. Normal resubmission rules apply.
Large amount of submitted work is copied but under 50%. Higher counts of similarity or other evidence of copying from published work or another student's work.  First Offence	Cause of concern by marker that large chunks of submitted work is highlighted by Turnitin, or can be identified by marker that work has been copied (known written source for example)  Highlighted work is not referenced and may not be included in bibliography.	Interview with course leader and manager* and written warning issued. (*Quality manager, HE manager, Head of Department, Deputy Head of Department or Assistant Principle). To be noted on promonitor. Student to book referencing session with tutor, LRC or academic mentor. Work to be resubmitted but capped at a pass.

<p>Large amount of submitted work is copied but more than 50%. High counts of similarity or other evidence of copying from published work or another student's work.</p> <p>Second offence of lower amount (less than 50%)</p>	<p>Cause of concern by marker that large chunks of submitted work is highlighted by Turnitin, or can be identified by marker that work has been copied (known written source for example)</p> <p>Highlighted work is not referenced and may not be included in bibliography.</p>	<p>Interview with course leader and manager* and written warning issued. (*Quality manager, HE manager of Head of Department, Deputy Head of Department or Assistant Principle).</p> <p>To be noted on promonitor.</p> <p>Student to book referencing session with tutor, LRC or academic mentor, followed by 500 word reflective report of how to improve academic referencing, highlighting issues noted in own work (within 3 working weeks of written warning)</p> <p>A fail is recorded. Student to write new assignment in summer retrieval capped at a pass.</p>
<p>100% of an assignment has been copied and falsely submitted as student's own work.</p> <p>Repeat offender (more than twice, see above) of more than 50% copied.</p>	<p>Marker has identified that work is 100% copied through Turnitin, which has been substantiated through an investigation by course leader and Manager* (*Quality manager, HE manager of Head of Department, Deputy Head of Department or Assistant Principle)</p> <p>Third time offender of academic theft.</p>	<p>Disciplinary hearing following the college's disciplinary process. Outcome could be expulsion from course.</p>