

AC&N EDUCATION CENTRE

Malpractice Policy

ACN_MP04

Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and the authority of those responsible for conducting assessment and certification.

AC&N EDUCATION CENTRE does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by candidates or by staff, in connection with any NCC Education qualification. AC&N EDUCATION CENTRE and NCC Education will impose penalties and/or sanctions on candidates or centre staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven.

Candidate malpractice (Academic Misconduct)

All work submitted by candidates for assessment must be the candidates' own work. It is an offence for any candidate to be guilty of, or party to, collusion, plagiarism, or any other act which may mislead the examiners about the development and authorship of work presented in assessments, including misleading examiners about the sources of information included in an assessment. This may include:

- **Collusion** - the preparation or production of work for assessment jointly with another person or persons, except where group work is explicitly permitted by the specification and/or assessments guidance.
- **Plagiarism** - the use, without acknowledgement, of the intellectual work of other people, and the act of representing the ideas or discoveries of another as one's own in written work submitted for assessment
- **Impersonation** - where someone other than the candidate prepares the work submitted for assessment. This includes purchasing or commissioning essays from third parties (including essay writing websites and other students) or asking someone else to sit an examination
- **Misconduct in examinations** - having access, or attempting to gain access, to any books, memoranda, notes, unauthorised calculators, or any other material, except such as may have been supplied by the invigilator or authorised in the rubric on the front of the examination paper
- **Fabrication of results or observations** in practical or project work is the synthesis of data gained from practical activities carried out by the candidate, or the use of artificial observations to support a hypothesis/conclusion.

For more information, please refer to NCC Education's Academic Misconduct Policy.

Staff malpractice and maladministration

Malpractice is any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates. Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the Centre or candidate not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications. These definitions may include:

- contravention of examination regulations and/or failure to correctly follow assessment-related processes
- alteration of (or disregard for) NCC Education's marking schemes and grading criteria
- allowing work which is known by the staff member not to be the candidate's own, to be included in an assignment or other assessed component
- misusing the conditions for Special Considerations such that the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- failing to keep candidate computer files secure
- falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution or fraud
- failing to keep the required records and documents
- failing to adhere to NCC Education's administrative procedures and activity schedules.

Candidate malpractice discovered by the Centre

Malpractice discovered by the Centre will be investigated by the centre and reported in full to NCC Education.

Investigations will normally be carried out by the Head of Centre. The investigation should seek to establish the full facts and circumstances of this alleged malpractice, and upon completion a written report should be submitted to NCC Education's Head of Quality and Compliance by email indicating the findings and any actions which have been taken.

Any material evidence gathered during this investigation (including transcripts or recordings of interviews) will be securely retained by the Head of Centre, and copies should be forwarded to NCC Education with the completed report.

For allegations of malpractice which involve fraud or a serious breach of examination security, it will normally be expected that an investigation into the allegation will be carried out by NCC Education staff.

The Head of Centre or other person conducting the investigation must:

- supervise personally all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice
- ensure that, if it is necessary to delegate part of an investigation to a member of staff, the member of staff chosen is independent, and not connected to anyone involved in the suspected malpractice

- respond promptly and openly to all requests for an investigation into an allegation of malpractice
- co-operate and ensure their staff co-operate fully with an enquiry into an allegation of malpractice.

After investigating an allegation of malpractice, the Head of Centre will submit a full written report of the case to the Head of Quality and Compliance at NCC Education. Reports will be produced in the following format:

- a) Statement of process: what steps have been taken to investigate this alleged malpractice
- b) Statement of facts: an account of the circumstances of the alleged malpractice which have been established as fact
- c) written statement(s) from the invigilator(s), tutor(s), examiner(s) or any other staff who are involved
- d) written statement(s) from the candidate(s)
- e) in the case of malpractice in examinations, seating plans showing the exact position of candidates in the examination room, and details of any unauthorised material found in the examination room
- f) any mitigating factors or additional information.

Staff malpractice discovered by the Centre

Malpractice discovered by the Centre will be investigated by the centre and reported in full to NCC Education.

Investigations will normally be carried out by the Head of Centre acting at the request of NCC Education. The investigation should seek to establish the full facts and circumstances of this alleged malpractice, and upon completion a written report should be submitted to NCC Education's Head of Quality and Compliance by email indicating the findings and any actions which have been taken. Any material evidence gathered during this investigation (including transcripts or recordings of interviews) will be securely retained by the Head of Centre, and copies should be forwarded to NCC Education with the completed report. Investigations into allegations of malpractice and maladministration against the Head of Centre will have the same requirements and expectations, but will be conducted by another appropriate person, such as the Chair of the Centre's governing body, or the Centre owner, or a member of NCC Education staff.

For allegations of malpractice which involve fraud or a serious breach of examination security, it will normally be expected that an investigation into the allegation will be carried out by NCC Education staff.

The Head of Centre or other person conducting the investigation must:

- supervise personally all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice
- ensure that, if it is necessary to delegate part of an investigation to a member of staff, the member of staff chosen is independent, and not connected to anyone involved in the suspected malpractice
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- f) any mitigating factors or additional information.

Malpractice discovered by NCC Education

The Head of the Centre and all relevant staff and candidates will provide the required support for any investigation carried out by NCC Education.