



Assessment Malpractice Policy

COVID-19

Exceptional arrangements put in place by the Department for Education (DfE), Ofqual and Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the awarding organisations as a result of the coronavirus pandemic will be strictly adhered to as and when required. Due to the fluid nature of the situation the usual policies will remain in place and new guidelines implemented to ensure compliance as and when required using Ofqual, DfE and JCQ guidance.

The staff and senior management of Brockenhurst College have a statutory and moral responsibility for ensuring that there is no malpractice in any of the assessments, examinations or verifications that occur as a result of a student participating in a course at the College. This policy defines malpractice and lays out the steps that will be taken if malpractice is suspected. It should be read in conjunction with the Conflict of Interest Policy, Staff Disciplinary Policy, the Learner Disciplinary Policy and the Overarching Academic Offence Policy, Plagiarism Policy. This policy applies to both staff and learners and will be applied in all cases warranted serious enough to undermine the credibility and reputation of the College and/or the qualification.

Definition

Malpractice is defined as 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.

Examples of malpractice include:

- claiming certification for non-active candidates;
- claiming a certificate for candidates who have not undergone appropriate assessment or verification;
- claiming for incorrect units or qualifications;
- claiming for fictitious candidates;
- Claiming incorrect grades.
- Non-compliance with JCQ guidelines

In addition

- No member of staff trains and/or assesses learners they have a vested interest in
- No member of staff will internally quality assure work that has been assessed by a spouse/partner/family member
- No member of staff will invigilate any formal assessment where they have a vested interest in any of the learners taking the test/exam

More specifically:

Learner Malpractice is any falsification/fabrication/deceit in the production of any information within work being assessed.

The following are examples of malpractice by learners; this list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the College at its discretion.

- Plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learner's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including Internet sources), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work. Learners should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential key skill for many sectors and subject areas, but the use of minutes, allocating tasks, agreeing outcomes, etc. are an essential part of team work and this must be made clear to the learners
- 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
- Fraudulent use of electronic materials
- Fabrication of results and/or evidence
- Failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an assessor, a supervisor, an invigilator, or College conditions in relation to the assessment/examination/test rules, regulations and security
- Misuse of assessment/examination material
- Introduction and/or use of unauthorised material contrary to the requirements of supervised assessment/examination/test conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), personal stereos, mobile phones or other similar electronic devices or communication equipment.
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment/examination/test related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written papers/notes or electronically stored information during supervised assessment/examination/test conditions
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment/examination/test
- The alteration of any results documents, including certificates
- Cheating to gain unfair advantage

College Employees

The following are examples of **potential malpractice by College staff**. The list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the College at its discretion.

- Failing to keep to awarding organisation and qualification approval requirements
- Failing to keep any marking schemes secure
- Alteration of any marking schemes
- Alteration of assessment and grading criteria
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves College staff producing work for the learner

- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/ coursework
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- Failing to keep learner computer files secure
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment
- Failing to keep assessment/examination/test papers secure prior to the assessment/examination/test
- Request certification for folders that have not been fully assessed and/or all paperwork completed
- Request certification for learners whose work has not been signed off by the relevant IQA
- Inappropriate conduct during an examination
- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment/examination/test material prior to an assessment/examination/test

Distance Learning

All of the statements in this policy apply to this method of learning and assessment with the following additions:

- When using e-assessor the learners' work can only be accepted when the relevant box has been ticked to confirm authenticity of work
- When completing by paper the work cannot be assessed until the signed authentication statement from the learner is received
- Failure to complete the above would be considered as malpractice

Blended Learning

All of the statements apply to this method of learning and assessment with the following additions:

- All Awarding Organisation procedures and guidelines must be followed with regard to submission of work, including timescales. Failure to do this will be considered as malpractice.
- Assessors must check for authenticity of work submitted by learners. This can be done through a variety of assessment methods
 - Questioning submitted work with individual learners where any concerns have been identified
 - Compare language used to previous submissions to ensure consistency
 - To review previous achieved grades to ensure consistency
- Assessors with vested interest in the learner's outcome must not be involved with assessment or quality assurance. Any involvement will be considered as malpractice.

Dealing with Malpractice

Staff who discover or suspect malpractice must immediately report to the Assistant Principal (Learning and Quality). It is the responsibility of the Assistant Principal (Learning and Quality) to carry out an investigation into allegations of malpractice. Investigations into alleged malpractice against the Head of Centre/Principal will be conducted by the Chair of Governors. The alleged incident must be reported to the appropriate awarding organisation at the earliest opportunity.

Each awarding organisation will have their own policy on dealing with cases of suspected malpractice.

As staff and learners can be responsible for malpractice, investigations into malpractice will not be delegated to the manager of the section, team or department involved. Where the Assistant Principal (Learning and Quality) has direct line management responsibility the investigation will be carried out by the Quality Assurance Lead to avoid any conflicts of interest which may arise and compromise the investigation.

Consequences

- The College takes the area of assessment malpractice extremely seriously. Where staff are considered to have been involved in assessment malpractice the College disciplinary procedure will be applied. For students the College support and disciplinary procedures will apply.
- Any decision on the outcome will reflect the weight of evidence and the minor or major nature of the case, as will the sanction.

Complaints and Appeals

If the learner feels he/she has been treated unfairly they should follow the College Complaints and Appeals procedure. Awarding Organisations will have established procedures for centres that are considering appeals against penalties and sanctions arising from malpractice. Appeals against a decision made by an awarding organisation will normally be accepted only from the Principal (on behalf of the learners and/or members of staff) and from individual members of centre staff in respect of a decision taken against them personally.

Associated Documentation

Appeals Procedure
Apprenticeship Provision, Monitoring and Tracking
Assessment Boards Policy and Procedure
Controlled Assessment Policy
Data Protection Policy
Development of Learning Strategy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Monitoring and Tracking Policies and Procedures
Plagiarism Policy
Learner Disciplinary Policy
Quality Strategy
Safeguarding
Set Work Submission Policy
Supporting Learners and Staff with Medical Conditions
Teaching and Learning Policy
Conflict of Interest
Academic Offence Policy (overarching)