

Plagiarism, Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure

SSG is committed to providing excellent services through their learning environments and by eliminating any suspected malpractice and maladministration in the management of our organisation and in the delivery of qualifications. SSG aims to promote accountability and to encourage the openness to disclose any allegations of malpractice and maladministration in the workplace.

Learners should be made aware of this policy at the start of their course/programme and the policy should be easily accessible (website and handbook).

Aims:

- To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners.
- To respond to any alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
- To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
- To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
- To protect the integrity of SSG, Stake Holders and the Awarding Body's qualifications.

In order to do this SSG will:

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the student handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- Minimising a learner committing plagiarism by copying and passing off the whole or part(s) of another person's work, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source, by asking learners to declare that their work is their own and completing a learner declaration area of the assignment brief.
- SSG will inform the Awarding Organisation as soon as an incidence of malpractice, maladministration or plagiarism is suspected or detected to allow the Awarding Organisation to decide how to investigate the incident. Where the Awarding Organisation carries out the investigation SSG will cooperate fully.
- Conduct an investigation if approval from the Awarding Body has been given. Such an investigation will be supported by the Director; Quality and Compliance and all personnel linked to the allegation. SSG will immediately inform the relevant Awarding Body of the information/evidence collated.

Malpractice/Maladministration Allegations Reporting Procedure

1. Allegations of malpractice/maladministration should be reported to the Centre Manager by completing a Malpractice Reporting Form. Learners and staff will write a statement from their account of the incident.

2. Quality Manager and Centre Manager will discuss the malpractice issue with both parties and will gather evidence in order to come to a decision. The investigation should be documented at all stages.
3. Centre Manager will inform the individual at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
4. The individual will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations made. Centre Manager will inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.
5. If the learner is found to be in breach of malpractice, then they will be reported to the Awarding Body and any Stake Holders, and will be withdrawn from the programme. Certificates may be invalidated and those already issued may be withdrawn.

Where malpractice is proven, this centre will apply the following penalties / sanctions:

1. Minor acts will be handled by the Centre Manager and Quality Manager, for example the tutor refused to accept work, the learner being made aware of the malpractice policy and the learner resubmits work. Penalties should be appropriate to the nature of the malpractice under review.
2. Major acts will be inappropriate for the Centre Manager and will be passed onto the Director; Quality and Compliance, and will refer the learner and/or staff to the disciplinary procedures. *The Awarding Body* will be informed of any malpractice/maladministration or attempted acts of malpractice/maladministration, which have compromised assessment and await advice on further action required.

Definition of Malpractice by Learners

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- a. Plagiarism of any nature
- b. Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work
- c. Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
- d. Deliberate destruction of another's work
- e. Fabrication of results or evidence
- f. False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
- g. 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.

Definition of Malpractice by Centre Staff

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- h. Improper assistance to candidates

- i. Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made
- j. Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure
- k. Fraudulent claims for certificates
- l. Inappropriate retention of certificates
- m. 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 centre staff producing work for the learner
- n. Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated.
- o. 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
- p. Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- q. 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
- r. Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- s. Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

Definition of Maladministration by Centre Staff

Maladministration is any activity which is **not deliberate**, but which neglects, defaults on regulation, conditions placed upon us by awarding organisations or compromises the integrity of our organisational statuses, financial stability, reputation, the reputation of our stakeholders and the qualifications and related assessments we are approved to deliver. This includes accidental non-compliance with any SSG policy, procedure, guidance.