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Part of Walbrook Institute London

Updated February 2022

Student Malpractice Policy and Procedure for Financial Education Qualifications

The purpose of the Student Malpractice Policy and Procedure for Financial Education Qualifications is to provide centres with details of the malpractice process for our qualifications. The policy sets out examples of student malpractice, the procedure to follow to report cases of suspected malpractice, the role of the Malpractice Committee, possible sanctions that may be imposed by us in cases of malpractice, the reporting requirements in cases of malpractice, and our monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Summary of policy

For the purpose of this document, 'malpractice' is defined as

> Any act, or failure to act, that threatens or compromises the integrity of the academic process or the validity of our qualifications and their certification. This includes acts of plagiarism or other misconduct, and / or actions that compromise the reputation or authority of us, our centres[1], officers and employees.

We treat all cases of suspected malpractice with the utmost rigour, and will investigate all suspected and reported incidents of possible malpractice.

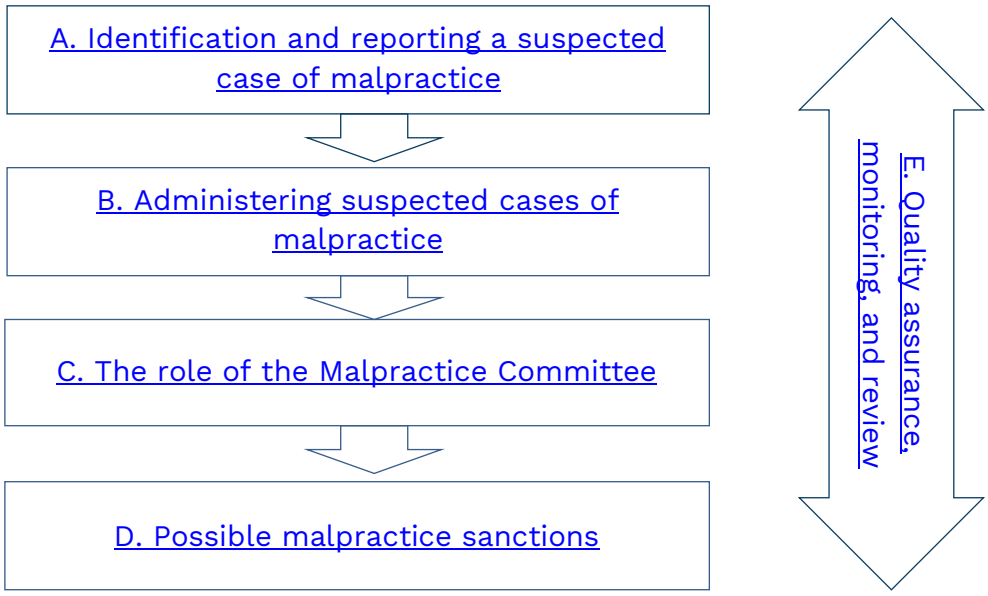
We'll take the appropriate action to maintain the integrity of our qualifications, including applying sanctions, as set out in this policy.

[1] Centres are organisations who are involved with any part of the delivery of qualifications on behalf of us. Centres may be schools, colleges or any other venue where the delivery of learning, including teaching and / or assessments, leading to a qualification is conducted.

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For the purpose of this document, student malpractice can relate to registrations, assessments, coursework assignments, examinations, reasonable adjustments, special considerations, certification, and student conduct.



Section A - identification and reporting a suspected case of malpractice

1.1 An allegation of student malpractice may be made by

i. an assessment centre, and centre contractors / employees and stakeholders – for instance, invigilators, teachers / tutors, and other officers

ii. another student

iii. an independent party[2] who suspects possible malpractice has taken place, and

[2] An independent party is an individual or organisation that doesn't work for, or provide any services on behalf of us

iv. an individual who wishes to remain anonymous.

1.2 We'll also investigate when potential or suspected malpractice via internal administration or quality assurance procedures have been discovered, for example, coursework assignments that are submitted to plagiarism detection software and, as a result, are identified for review.

1.3 A centre that is registered with us must report all cases of suspected student malpractice to us. Failure to report a case of suspected student malpractice to us may be investigated for centre malpractice or maladministration (Centre Malpractice and Maladministration Policy).

1.4 We reserve the right not to investigate further where the information doesn't provide reasonable grounds for possible malpractice, or enough evidence on which to base further investigation.

1.5 Some examples of student malpractice are described below. These examples are not exhaustive and all incidents of suspected malpractice, whether or not described below, will be fully investigated by us, where there are sufficient grounds to do so.

i. Obtaining examination or assessment material without authorisation.
ii. Arranging for an individual other than the student to sit an assessment or to submit an assignment not undertaken by the student.
iii. Impersonating another student to sit an assessment or to submit an assignment on their behalf.
iv. Possession of any materials not permitted in the assessment room, regardless of whether or not they're relevant to the assessment, or whether or not the student refers to them during the assessment process, for example, notes, blank paper, electronic devices (when prohibited).
v. Communicating in any form, for example verbally or electronically, with other students in the assessment room when prohibited.

vi. Copying the work of another student or knowingly allowing another student to copy from their own work (collusion).
vii. Fabrication of evidence / results set down within assessment submissions.
viii. Collaborating with another student or individual, by any means, to complete a coursework assignment or assessment, unless it's been clearly stated that such collaboration is permitted. Students aren't to work together when completing coursework assignments or during assessments.
ix. Damaging another student's work.
x. Inclusion of inappropriate or offensive material in coursework assignments or assessment scripts.
xi. Failure to comply with published our regulations.
xii. Failure to comply with instructions given by the assessment invigilator, e.g., working beyond the allocated time, refusing to hand in assessment script / paper when requested, not adhering to warnings relating to conduct during the assessment.
xiii. Failure to comply with the regulations of a centre.
xiv. Disruptive behaviour or unacceptable conduct at an assessment venue or centre (including aggressive or offensive language or behaviour).
xv. Producing, using or allowing the use of forged or falsified documentation, including but not limited to
    - personal identification
    - supporting evidence provided for reasonable adjustment or special consideration applications, and
    - our results documentation, including a certificate.
xvi. Falsely obtaining, by any means, a certificate for a unit or qualification.
xvii. Falsely acquiring or declaring, by any means, entry criteria necessary for a unit or qualification.
xviii. Misrepresentation or plagiarism, including self-plagiarism.
xix. Fraudulent claims for special considerations.

1.6 This process applies to invigilators, teachers, tutors, students, and other officers, and to any reporting of malpractice by an independent party or individual who wishes to remain anonymous.

1.7 It's the responsibility of all invigilators and centre staff to be aware of our procedures for confiscating items not permitted at assessment / examination venues, for example, electronic devices or reference books, and how to deal with issues relating to malpractice, such as communication, collaboration or disruption within an assessment venue.

1.8 We'll acknowledge all reports of suspected malpractice within five working days. Where the suspected malpractice hasn't been reported to us directly from the centre, the centre involved will then be contacted by us, within ten working days of receipt of the report detailing the suspected malpractice. We may also contact other individuals who may be able to provide evidence relevant to the case.

1.9 Any case of suspected malpractice should be reported in the first instance to

Assessment Operations team for Financial Education Qualifications
Administrative Centre:
4–9 Burgate Lane
Canterbury
Kent CT1 2XJ
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)1227 818609 (option 3)

E: fcexams@libf.ac.uk

1.10 Suspected malpractice must be reported as soon as possible to us, if possible within two working days from its discovery. The incident should also be reported internally, according to that centre's own policies and procedures.

1.11 At the time of the incident, the student suspected of the malpractice must, where possible, be warned by the assessor that their actions are in

breach of our regulations and may constitute malpractice and that a report will be made to us. However, we recognise that this action may not always be possible due to disruption to other students.

1.12 In cases of suspected student examination malpractice, the following information and evidence should be supplied to us following the initial report

i. a full written report of the incident. The individual writing the report, usually the invigilator or head of an assessment centre, needs to clearly identify the factual information, including the actions that've been taken in relation to the incident

ii. the report can comprise of the completed and signed Conduct of Examination form and all relevant supporting evidence and documentation. This should include but is not limited to

   a. confiscated materials

   b. any student scripts that may have been copied or show evidence of collaboration or plagiarism

   c. statements from other individuals involved and / or affected.

iii. the student has the right to respond by providing a signed statement explaining their conduct before they leave the assessment centre. This must be included on the Conduct of Examination form or in the assessment invigilator's report. If a student declines to provide a statement, this should be recorded in the report.

1.13 In cases of suspected malpractice, a report should be made to us and should include as much information as possible, including

i. the assessment venue name and location
ii. the date and title of the assessment, if known
iii. the time the assessment took place, if known
iv. the student's name and LIBF number, if applicable

v. the name of the assessment centre invigilators, teachers / tutors, and any other officers concerned
vi. a description of the suspected malpractice, and
vii. any available supporting evidence.

1.14 In cases of suspected malpractice reported by an independent party, or an individual who wishes to remain anonymous, otherwise known as whistleblowing, we'll take all reasonable steps to authenticate the reported information and to investigate the alleged malpractice to ascertain whether their concern has any foundation. If we don't receive adequate information from a whistleblower to justify an investigation or it doesn't relate to the delivery of our qualifications, we reserve the right not to take any further action. Whilst we may need to provide the centre with certain details in order to gather enough information, all effort will be made to keep the identity of the whistleblower concealed to avoid any prejudice against them.

Section B - administering suspected cases of malpractice

2.1 For suspected cases of student malpractice, the centre will normally undertake the investigation and provide us with the information to form a judgement. In the case of malpractice during an assessment, this will usually be provided through the completed Conduct of Examination form. However additional supporting information can be supplied.

2.2 Where further investigation is required or if the incident is significant, the Head of Centre would usually be expected to undertake the investigation or another delegated individual with appropriate authority and competence. We'll inform the centre if we're not satisfied with the delegated individual undertaking the investigation.

2.3 At any stage, we may determine that it's not possible for the centre to undertake an investigation without there being a conflict of interest and therefore we'll take over the investigation ourselves. Likewise, at any stage,

we may decide the seriousness of the case deems it necessary for us to do the investigation. The centre will be informed if we decide to take over the investigation, including who will be conducting the investigation, when and how it will take place, and who we want to meet with.

2.4 Where a case of student malpractice also involves the centre potentially committing malpractice/maladministration, the investigation process will follow the information outlined in our Centre Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

2.5 Where an investigation is required, the purpose of it will be to ascertain whether malpractice has occurred and will aim to establish the full facts and circumstances and, where relevant, students' previous conduct.

2.6 In order to avoid any perceived or actual conflicts of interest, any individual with a personal interest in the outcome will not be permitted to undertake an investigation of a suspected case.

2.7 We'll promptly take all reasonable steps to prevent any adverse effect that may arise as a result of the malpractice, or to mitigate any adverse effect, as far as possible, and to correct it to make sure that any action necessary to maintain the integrity of the examination will be taken.

2.8 Where necessary, the centre will be informed of the following

i. where it hasn't already occurred, that an investigation will take place, and the grounds for that investigation

ii. details of all the relevant timescales, and dates, where known

iii. that the student has a right to respond by providing a personal written response relating to the suspected malpractice (within ten working days of the date of that letter)

iv. that the student may continue their studies, including assessment resits, but that any results achieved since the cases of suspected

malpractice may be removed if an individual is found to be guilty (see Section D)

v. that, if malpractice is considered proven by us, sanctions may be imposed reflecting the seriousness of the case that, if they are found guilty, they have the right to appeal under the Appeals Policy and procedures, and

vi. that we have a duty to inform the relevant authorities / regulators but only after time for the appeal has passed or the appeal process has been completed.

2.9 The student or centre has a right to appeal against a malpractice outcome reached by us if they believe the policy or procedure hasn't been followed properly or has been implemented to their detriment. For more detail, see the Appeals Policy and procedures.

2.10 In cases where malpractice has been proven and has other external significance, we have a duty of care and may inform the relevant regulator(s), the assessment centre, other awarding organisations, and other relevant authorities as appropriate to comply with legislation. This may include informing the police if the law has been broken.

2.11 We won't normally report any outcome from a malpractice case until the time for appeal has passed.

2.12 Individuals aren't permitted to attend the Malpractice Committee meeting when their case is heard. Individuals do have the right to request to attend the hearing of their appeal should the candidate wish to appeal the Malpractice Committee outcome.

2.13 If a student decides to continue their programme of study while a malpractice case is being considered, they do so at their own risk, pending the outcome of their malpractice case.

Section C - the role of the Malpractice Committee

3.1 The Malpractice Committee will consider all cases of suspected malpractice on an individual basis. Membership of the Malpractice Committee will include at least one member who isn't a member of our qualifications team. The Malpractice Committee reserves the right to request further information relating to the case.

3.2 The Malpractice Committee has a maximum of 40 working days from the initial reporting of a suspected malpractice to determine the outcome of the case. However, if a delay is expected, the parties concerned will be informed as early as possible. The Committee will determine the outcome based upon all the evidence available to them at the time, including any personal written response that's been received.

3.3 Once the Malpractice Committee has determined the outcome, it will usually inform the centre within ten working days of the decision.

3.4 If the case relates to a coursework assignment and potential plagiarism, the centre concerned will be informed of the outcome either on, or before, the date the assessment results are published. However, depending on the level of plagiarism, this may be delayed.

3.8 All documents related to the decision-making process of the Malpractice Committee will be kept securely in line with GDPR.

Section D - possible malpractice sanctions

4.1 If a case of malpractice is proven, the Malpractice Committee is empowered to impose one or more sanctions upon the individual(s) concerned. The Malpractice Committee will make sure that any sanctions imposed reflect the seriousness of the malpractice that's occurred and that all similar cases are treated in an equitable, fair, and unbiased manner. When considering the seriousness of a case of malpractice, any previous cases may be taken into consideration.

4.2 The sanction(s) implemented by the Malpractice Committee may be informed by any previous advice that it's given to the student on malpractice.

4.3 Listed below are examples of sanctions, one or more of which may be applied. This list is not exhaustive and other sanctions may be applied on a case-by-case basis, as recommended by the Malpractice Committee.

4.4 Possible sanctions that may be applied to students include, but aren't limited to

i. awarding the mark given by the examiner and a warning given to the student

ii. awarding a minimum pass mark for the assessment component in which malpractice has been deemed to have occurred

iii. awarding a mark of zero in the assessment component in which malpractice has been deemed to have occurred

iv. notification to other departments for additional sanctions. These additional sanctions may involve

a. loss of marks for the entire relevant unit and all other units sat previously. This may result in the student having to resit an entire qualification, if the regulations allow, or a certificate being revoked for either a unit or qualification

b. the student not being allowed to resit or resubmit the relevant assessment(s) for that unit or qualification for a stated period of time

c. the student not being allowed to sit, resit or resubmit any other assessment relating to that unit or qualification for a stated period of time

d. the student may be disqualified from registering for future units or qualifications, either for a stated period of time or indefinitely

e. notification to a regulator or the police.

v. any other sanction deemed applicable and applied by a third party or centre where a student breaches the conduct of the venue or centre

vi. for possible sanctions that may be applied to centres and third parties, please refer to the Centre Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Section E - quality assurance, monitoring, and review

5.1 Records of all malpractice cases and their outcomes (with the exception of examination scripts or submitted assessments) are maintained by us for at least five years.

5.2 The policy is subject to regular monitoring and review by us in order to maintain the highest possible standards of consistency and quality.

5.3 The policy is formally approved by our Malpractice Committee.

5.4 The policy has been developed to comply with all relevant legislation, the General Conditions of Recognition, and other relevant guidance.

5.5 We're subject to regulation by the qualifications regulatory authorities, Ofqual, Qualification Wales, and CCEA.