

Malpractice and Maladministration policy

Overview

It is the responsibility of all News Associates staff to be vigilant with regards any events which may lead to malpractice or maladministration. These should be reported immediately to the exams administrator so that appropriate action can be taken to address this with immediate effect.

It will be the responsibility of the exams administrator (Graham Moody) to **immediately notify the NCTJ** of any suspected or actual instances relating to malpractice and maladministration, and to refer to the policies specified by the NCTJ.

In the first instance it is the responsibility of the exams administrator to investigate incidents of malpractice or maladministration.

The exams administrator must ensure any staff involved in the investigation are competent and have no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. Where required, such as if the exams administrator declares a personal interest, the investigation will be the responsibility of the course director Rachel Bull or, where required, should be passed to the course ombudsman Neil White.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure any material collected as part of an investigation is kept secure and is readily available for the NCTJ.

If any staff are found to have breached this policy, then they will automatically be suspended from further exam involvement until the matter is investigated.

At News Associates we aim to:

- *Identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff and students
- *Identify and minimise the risk of maladministration by staff
- *Respond to any incident promptly
- *Make a record of any investigation to ensure openness and fairness
- *Impose appropriate penalties on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) are proven
- *Protect the integrity of News Associates and awarding bodies, in this instance the NCTJ

In order to do this News Associates will:

- *Use the learner handbook to inform learners of our malpractice policies
- *Explain clearly to students rules surrounding exam invigilation
- *Ask learners to declare their work is their own, eg explain clearly to students rules surrounding plagiarism in portfolios
- *Conduct any investigations in a form commensurate with the nature of any allegation
- *Ensure the handling of individual cases takes into account the needs of the student

Malpractice

The term 'malpractice' covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice associated

with the examples below; it 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.

Examples of malpractice by learners

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by News Associates at our discretion:

- *Plagiarism or cheating of any nature
- *Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work
- *Deliberate destruction of another's work
- *False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
- *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
- *Inappropriate behaviour during an internal assessment that causes disruption to others. This includes shouting and/or aggressive behaviour or language and having an unauthorised electronic device that causes a disturbance in the examination room.
- *Inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material in assessment evidence.
- *This includes vulgarity and swearing that is outside of the context of the assessment, or any material of a discriminatory nature
- *Unauthorised aids or physical possession of unauthorised materials (including mobile phones, MP3 players, notes, etc) in the examination room.

Examples of Malpractice by News Associates staff

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by News Associates at our discretion:

- *Failure to keep candidates' exams secure
- *Failure to comply with awarding body procedures for exam security and invigilation
- *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
- *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
- *Failure to comply with awarding body procedures for managing and transferring accurate learner data.

Maladministration

Maladministration is any non-deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in News Associates or a learner not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications as set out in the relevant codes of practice, where applicable.

Actions and Responsibilities

News Associates is expected to:

- *Establish the culture and overall values, placing academic issues at the centre of the discussions and any changes
- *Appoint a named exams administrator responsible for ensuring the institution adheres to policies outlined by the NCTJ. The Examinations Officer is expected to ensure timely, accurate and valid registration, transfer, withdrawal and certificate claims for learners and inform awarding bodies (The NCTJ) of any acts of malpractice.
- *Ensure policies and procedures are appropriate to the current situation
- *Maintain systems for keeping records of all incidents and what action has been taken

Rights of individuals for internal issues of malpractice:

Where an individual is suspected of malpractice they should be informed of the allegation made against them (preferably in writing) and the evidence that supports the allegation. They should be provided with the opportunity to consider their response to the allegation and submit a written statement or seek advice, if they wish to. They should also be informed of what the possible consequences could be if the malpractice is proven and of the possibility that other parties may be informed e.g. professional bodies. The appeals process should also be communicated to them. All relevant documents and evidence should be retained in line with awarding body and centre stated policy and procedures.

September 2019