



DistanceLearningCentre.com Ltd

Malpractice Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1 This document aims to:

- Define malpractice in the context of assessment
- Set out the rights and responsibilities of the DistanceLearningCentre.com Ltd staff and learners in relation to such matters
- Describe the procedures to be followed in cases where there is reason to suspect that the regulations have been broken

1.2 The Executive Director (Academic) at the DistanceLearningCentre.com has overall responsibility for the qualifications and/or units of the qualifications and will supervise all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice.

1.3 The DistanceLearningCentre.com will actively and promptly report suspected malpractice to the relevant Awarding/Exam Body.

2. Malpractice

2.1 Malpractice is deemed to be those actions and practices, which threaten the integrity of assessment and certification. The term '**malpractice**' is intended to encompass other similar terms such as '**non-compliance**', '**misadministration**' and '**professional misconduct**'.

3. Staff Malpractice

3.1 The following are examples of malpractice by staff. Other instances of malpractice may be considered by the DistanceLearningCentre.com at its discretion:

- Failing to keep learners, computers or other files secure
- Assisting or prompting learners with the production of answers
- Failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to ensure the security of assessment

4. Learner Malpractice

4.1 The following are examples of malpractice by learners. Other instances of malpractice may be considered by the DistanceLearningCentre.com at its discretion:

- Introduction of unauthorised material during an observed closed book examination assessment, for example course material notes
- Copying any type or form of work from another learner

- The inclusion of inappropriate, offensive or obscene material in assessment tasks
- The deliberate destruction of another's work
- Plagiarism
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment
- Acting in a disruptive manner

5. Procedures for investigating alleged malpractice

5.1 All allegations of malpractice must be reported to the Executive Director (Academic) of the DistanceLearningCentre.com by tutors, managers, learners and members of the public.

5.2 When dealing with alleged malpractice the DistanceLearningCentre.com will deal primarily with the person or persons against whom the malpractice has been alleged.

5.3 The DistanceLearningCentre.com will seek to establish the full facts and circumstances of any alleged malpractice.

6. Discovery of malpractice

6.1 If malpractice is discovered by the Centre, full details of the case will be submitted at the earliest opportunity to the Chief Executive of the relevant Awarding/Exam Body.

7. Anonymous reports

7.1 The Centre will only act upon anonymous reports if there is supporting evidence, or if the nature of the report warrants any actions to be taken.

8. Investigation into suspected malpractice by learners

8.1 The Executive Director (Academic) will supervise all investigations into the alleged malpractice and will submit a full written report of the case and provide supporting evidence to the relevant Awarding/Exam Body.

8.2 Learners suspected of malpractice will be made fully aware, in writing at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should the malpractice be proven.

8.3 Learners suspected of malpractice will be given an opportunity to respond in writing to the allegations made.

8.4 Learners suspected of malpractice will be made aware of the routes for appealing should a judgement be made against him/her.

8.5 Full details of the appeals procedure can be found on the DistanceLearningCentre.com's website and can also be requested from Student Services at studentservices@distancelearningcentre.com

9. Investigation in to suspected malpractice by members of staff

9.1 The Executive Director (Academic) will in the first instance carry out all investigations into any case of suspected malpractice against a member of the DistanceLearningCentre.com staff, in conjunction with the relevant Awarding/Exam Body if required.

9.2 Any member of Centre's staff suspected of malpractice will be made fully aware, in writing; at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the suspected malpractice and the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.

9.3 Any member of the Centre's staff suspected of malpractice will have the opportunity to respond in writing to the allegations made.

9.4 Any member of the DistanceLearningCentre.com staff suspected of malpractice will be made aware of the routes for appealing.

9.5 A report on cases where members of the DistanceLearningCentre.com staff are found to have committed malpractice, together with details of the action taken by the Executive Director (Academic) may be made available to others, for example, the Police, if the Centre decides that the circumstances of the case are sufficiently serious to warrant such reports being made.

10. Reporting

10.1 The Executive Director (Academic) at the DistanceLearningCentre.com will submit a full written report of any malpractice investigation to the relevant Awarding/Exam Body.

11. The DistanceLearningCentre.com response to cases of malpractice

11.1 Where an investigation indicates evidence of malpractice, the Executive Director (Academic) will appoint a panel, chaired by the Executive Director and comprising of members of the senior management team and other relevant members.

11.2 The panel will establish that correct procedures have been followed in the investigation of cases.

11.3 The panel will determine:

- Whether the assessment regulations have been broken
- Where the culpability lies for the breach of regulations
- Appropriate measures to be taken to protect the integrity of the assessment and to prevent future breaches
- The nature of the actions to be taken

11.4 Each case of suspected malpractice will be considered and judged on an individual basis in the light of all information available.

11.5 The DistanceLearningCentre.com will impose sanctions on individuals found guilty of breaking assessment regulations in order to:

- Maintain the integrity of the assessment and confidence in assessment
- Ensure that there is nothing to gain from breaking the regulations
- Deter others from doing likewise

11.6 Where an investigation establishes a malpractice by a member of the Centre staff, the DistanceLearningCentre.com will subsequently undertake disciplinary action against the member of staff concerned.

12. Sanctions applied against learners

12.1 The DistanceLearningCentre.com may, at its discretion, impose the following sanctions against learners found guilty of breaking the regulations:

- The learner is issued with a warning
- The learner loses all credit gained for a unit
- The learner loses all credit gained from all units in a single qualification (units which have been awarded are retained)
- The learner is disqualified from the whole qualification

Notes:

- Not all of the penalties may be appropriate for all Awarding/Exam Body qualifications
- In the case of serious malpractice the DistanceLearningCentre.com may report the case to the Police
- The Executive Director (Academic) retains sole discretion to take any further action that is deemed appropriate

13. Applying sanctions

13.1 The application of sanctions is at the discretion of the DistanceLearningCentre.com and will reflect the particular circumstances of each case and any mitigating factors

13.2 Sanctions will be based only on the evidence presented

13.3 All sanctions will be justifiable and reasonable in their scale and consistent in their application

13.4 For reasons of consistency of approach in the application of sanctions, the Centre will not take into account any consequential effects of a particular sanction which might arise from the circumstances of the individual

13.5 Sanctions applied will remain on record at the DistanceLearningCentre.com

14. Communicating decisions

14.1 The Executive Director (Academic) will communicate the decision to the individuals concerned and pass on warnings in cases where this is indicated

14.2 In all instances of serious malpractice, the DistanceLearningCentre.com will automatically report the case to the relevant qualification authorities. All other cases will be reported on request

14.3 The DistanceLearningCentre.com has established procedures for considering appeals arising from the outcomes of an investigation into malpractice. This appeals procedure can be found on the DistanceLearningCentre.com website

DistanceLearningCentre.com Ltd: Dates reviewed: 30/05/2013; 27/01/2014; 27/11/2015