



# Assessment Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism Policy

Policy Number	New or Reviewed	Date of next Review	Responsibility
HCP061	June 2020	June 2022	Principal

*Empowering Learners to shape their future*

# HORIZONS COLLEGE

## ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE, MALADMINISTRATION AND PLAGIARISM POLICY

### 1. Aim

1.1 Horizons College aims to:

- a. Identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or Learners.
- b. Respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
- c. Standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
- d. Impose appropriate penalties and / or sanctions on Learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
- e. Protect the integrity of this Centre and appropriate qualifications.

1.2 To do this Horizons College will:

- a. Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the Learner induction period and the Learner handbook to inform Learners of Horizons College's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- b. Show Learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources.
- c. Ask Learners to declare that their work is their own.
- d. Ask Learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used.
- e. Investigate in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the Principal and all personnel linked to the allegation. It will proceed through the following stages:
  - Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven;
  - Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made;
  - Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made;
  - Document all stages of any investigation.
- f. Where malpractice is proven, Horizons College will apply sanctions that are:
  - Appropriate to the nature of the malpractice;

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- Within and following disciplinary procedures.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Malpractice** is any irregular conduct through deliberate activity, neglect or default on the part of a Learner or member of college staff, which gives unfair advantage to a candidate or group of candidates, or disadvantages other candidates. Malpractice 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. Failure by a Centre to deal with identified issues may in itself constitute Malpractice.
- 2.2 **Maladministration** is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the Centre or Learner not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications and as set out in the awarding organisation requirements for approved Centres and regulator documents.

## 3. Malpractice by Learners

- 3.1 This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by Horizons College 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 Information and Communication Technologies {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 to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment / examination / test.

## 4. Malpractice by Horizons College Staff

- 4.1 This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be included at its discretion by Horizons College:
- a. Improper assistance to candidates.
  - b. 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.

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- c. Failure to keep candidate coursework / portfolios of evidence secure.
- d. Fraudulent claims for certificates.
- e. Inappropriate retention of certificates 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.
- f. Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the Learner has not generated.
- g. 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.
- h. Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- i. 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.
- j. Falsifying records / certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
- k. Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the Learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

## 5. Procedure for Centre

- 5.1 When an instance of suspected or actual Malpractice, Maladministration or Plagiarism (MMP) has occurred the Centre will determine whether the allegation is about a Learner or staff member.
  - a. Senior members of the Quality Assurance Team will consider who and how the matter will be investigated. This will be done in consultation with the Head of the Centre (Principal) or Quality Nominee (Vice Principal) or Responsible Officer.
  - b. Awarding body must be informed immediately. (see emails below)
  - c. In many cases of alleged MMP the Head of Organisation / Centre contact will conduct the initial investigation into the allegations.
  - d. Where the incident concerns a Learner, the Centre must ascertain whether the Learner has signed a declaration of authentication. If a Learner declaration has not been signed, the Centre's internal policies and procedures should be followed.
  - e. Where Centre and the staff or Learners have signed a declaration of authentication, an MMP form must be completed.

## 6. Avoiding Plagiarism

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- 6.1 Plagiarism is when Learners claim the work to be their own when it isn't. All work submitted **MUST** be the Learners own words and not copied from anywhere, unless the source of the information has been clearly referenced. College should provide Learners with guidance on how to reference work in this manner.
- 6.2 If Centre staff discover that the work presented has been copied from elsewhere by a Learner then this work should not be accepted, and the Learner/s should be subject to the College disciplinary process. The appropriate awarding body must be notified of any cases of plagiarism and if the Learner is to continue with the qualification they will need to submit further evidence.
- 6.3 If an irregularity is discovered after a candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, or malpractice is suspected by a candidate during an examination, then full details of the case is submitted at the earliest opportunity by emailing the appropriate awarding body using the email addresses in Para 6.5.
- 6.4 If it is suspected that a member of staff has committed malpractice or that maladministration of the qualification may have occurred, then the appropriate awarding body must be informed using the email addresses in Para 6.5.
- 6.5 Awarding Bodies – Email Addresses:
- a. Ascentis - [qualityassurance@ascentis.co.uk](mailto:qualityassurance@ascentis.co.uk)
  - b. Pearson - [pgsmalpractice@pearson.com](mailto:pgsmalpractice@pearson.com)

## 7. Dealing with malpractice/maladministration

- 7.1 Where the College discovers or suspects an individual, or individuals, of malpractice it will conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation.
- 7.2 Such an investigation will be initially undertaken by Vice Principal (VP), who will interview all personnel linked to the allegation.
- 7.3 The College will make the individual(s) aware (preferably in writing) at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice / maladministration and of possible consequences should malpractice / maladministration be proven.
- 7.4 The investigation will proceed through the following stages:
- a. Preliminary investigation, conducted by the VP, into the allegation to determine whether a full investigation is necessary. If the allegation is against a member of staff and appears to have substance, then all assessments by this member of staff should be halted until the investigation is complete.
  - b. Should it be determined that a full investigation is necessary it shall be conducted by an independent Investigation Officer appointed by the Vice Principal. A wider scrutiny of both current and historical evidence relating to the situation will be

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undertaken. For allegations against staff this is to not only establish the root cause but also the possible effects on Learners past and present.

- c. During the investigation the College will give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- d. All stages of the investigation shall be documented by the person leading the investigation and reported to the relevant Awarding Organisation by the Quality Nominee.
- e. The individual will be informed of the avenues for appealing against any judgments made.
- f. The Investigation Officer shall produce a report of their findings for the attention of the Principal.
- g. For cases of staff malpractice / maladministration, the VP, HR and the Principal will decide whether to invoke the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.
- h. For cases of Learner assessment malpractice, reference should be made by the Investigation Officer to all other relevant policies.

## 8. Possible Actions Taken by the College

- 8.1 The College may take internal disciplinary action in line with College Policy and Procedures. This action will be commensurate with the seriousness of the Malpractice / Maladministration and comply with appropriate employment legislation and awarding body requirements who may impose penalties or sanctions.

## 9. Equality and Diversity

- 9.1 Whenever assessing and making decisions in staff or Learner's best interest the College must consider any equality and diversity issues. Staff or Learner' cultural needs will be detailed in their records, which will inform best interest decisions.

Signed ..... Principal

Signed ..... Chair of Governors

Date .....