



## **The Youth Development Academy**

# **Assessment Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy**

## **Assessment Malpractice Policy**

### **Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that there are no acts that seek to undermine the integrity and validity of assessment and the certification of the qualifications.

### **Malpractice**

The term malpractice covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise the:

- assessment process;
- integrity of a regulated qualification;
- validity of a result or certificate;
- reputation and credibility of the Awarding Organisation; or,
- qualification or the wider qualifications community.

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.

### **Maladministration**

Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the Awarding Organisation Approved Centre or Learner not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications as set out in the relevant codes of practice, where applicable.

All Learners enrolled on any qualification must be registered with the relevant awarding organisation.

### **Procedure**

The Academy does not tolerate actions or attempted actions of malpractice by:

- Students, or
- Staff

The Academy may enforce penalties and/or sanctions on Students where incidents or (attempted incidents) of malpractice have been identified and proven.

A rigorous assessment process will be open and fair when handling incidents or (attempted incidents) of malpractice.

The policy on malpractice aims to:

- Record the incidents or (attempted incidents) of malpractice
- Inform the Students as soon as practicable by email, phone or by letter
- Inform the Students of their rights and responsibilities
- Provide the Students with an opportunity to discuss how they intend to rectify the situation
- Involve members of the Programme and Management team to investigate proven malpractice incidents or (attempted incidents).
- Handle the investigation in a fair, balanced and timely manner.

The Academy reserves the right in suspected cases of malpractice to withhold the issuing of a certificate, whilst the investigation is being carried out. The outcome of the investigation will determine whether or not the certificate is withheld or not.

### **Intervention and Support for Students**

Students will be taught the process and appropriate formats for recording cited texts and other source materials or other materials including websites through face to face feedback sessions, study skills class and online formative feedback.

It is necessary for all Students to sign a declaration for all assessed work to authenticate that it is their own work. This will ensure that when any incidents of malpractice have been identified or suspected, it would be considered as evidence which may be used in any investigation.

The Students must be made aware of this on each occasion that the document is being signed, confirming that they are agreeing to the statement.

## Student Malpractice

### Plagiarism

**By copying and claiming another person's work as your own**, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work, such as internet sources, inventions whether published or not without appropriately acknowledging the source and giving credit where credit is due. It is therefore essential that:

- quotations from published and unpublished sources are clearly acknowledged;
- web-based materials are not to be directly downloaded into an assignment and are fully referenced like any other source material;
- students do not incorporate materials/assignments purchased or acquired from internet sites or commissioned from sources which write assignments for payment;
- paraphrasing of material from others must be clearly referenced;
- students do not normally incorporate materials previously submitted at this or any other institution towards the completion of an award;
- sources of illustrations, photographs maps and statistics are acknowledged;
- unless students have been instructed to produce a group assignment, students must produce work which is uniquely their own;
- where work is done as part of a group the submission sheet should include a list of all students who contributed to this work.

### Collusion

**By working together with other Students to produce work** that is submitted for assessment as individual work. All parties involved in collusion are considered to be equally guilty of this offence and both will be subject to both the Academy and the awarding organisation guidelines.

### Impersonation

**By pretending to be someone else** in order to produce work for another Student or arranging for another person to take the place of another Student in an assessment or exam.

### Fabricated Data

**By making up or fabricating data.** Fabricated data is defined as any data presented as part of a formal assessment and which has not been obtained by legitimate means of experimentation or enquiry and/or there is insufficient evidence to support its validity. Fabricated data also includes any instance where existing data has been falsified.

### **Cheating**

**By acting in any way that gains an unfair advantage** through inappropriate methods.

### **Inappropriate Material**

**By the 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 (including racism, sexism and homophobia).

### **Inappropriate Behaviour**

**By 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.

### **Frivolous Content**

**By producing content that is unrelated to the question** in scripts or coursework.

### **Student Commitment**

You will admit that if you engage in plagiarism of any sort then you risk your academic career. You are showing no respect for the Academy or the awarding organisation. You also have little or no self-respect.

In order to avoid any such bad practice – cheating – you must be able to say that:

**My answers** to homework, quizzes and examinations **are my own work** (except for assignments that explicitly permit collaboration).

**I did not make solutions** to homework, quizzes or exams **available to anyone else**. This includes both solutions written by me, as well as any official solutions provided by the course staff.

**I did not engage in any other activities that will dishonestly improve my results or dishonestly improve/hurt the results of others.**

**If you cannot agree 100% to all three statements then you are guilty of plagiarism. You are a cheat, without integrity and without self-respect.**

### **Plagiarism Avoidance**

All learners will be given a copy of this plagiarism policy, as a basis for discussion, as part of course induction. To minimise the possibilities for plagiarism essay titles and assignments will be, as far as possible, designed so as to make 'copying' or using the work of others unhelpful or inappropriate.

### **Plagiarism Detection**

The Youth Development Academy has access to plagiarism detection software and will periodically run random pieces of work through the program to check instances of plagiarism.

### **Plagiarism Treatment**

1. If an assessor suspects plagiarism as defined above, s/he will investigate the matter in confidence with the learner(s) concerned to establish whether plagiarism has indeed taken place.
2. If an assessor judges that plagiarism has occurred, the assessor will normally follow validating partner procedures. However, where the Academy is required to use its own procedures, the assessor will report the case to the Internal Verifier, and submit the relevant evidence.
3. The Internal Verifier will make a decision based on the evidence provided and, occasionally, further investigation, seeking advice if necessary from one of the Quality Nominee. Where the learner is requested to attend an investigatory hearing, they may seek support with the hearing from the Academic Advisor. The decision should always be reported to the Programme Manager.
4. Depending on the extent of the offence and the evidence submitted, first time offenders may be allowed to resubmit the work within two weeks of establishing that plagiarism has taken place. The maximum mark or grade for such re-submitted work will be a pass.
5. Second time offenders will incur severe penalties, more specifically, the piece of work in question will be awarded no marks, nor will it be able to be used as evidence for the achievement of any learning outcomes. This will result in non-completion of the learning outcome and failure of the module. The learner's personal assessor and/or course assessor/coordinator will also be fully informed.
6. Any case of repeated or final year plagiarism will be treated very seriously and may result in the learner being asked to leave the course.

### **Who will be involved in the Plagiarism/Malpractice Investigations?**

- Course Assessors/Tutors
- Lead Internal Verifier
- Member(s) of the Management Team

### **Who will contact the Student?**

- Team member from the Academic Department
- Lead Internal Verifier

The Management Team will determine the penalty or penalties that Student may receive after all the processes and procedures have been explored during the course of the investigation.

### **What are the timescales?**

Where any form of malpractice is identified the Student will be given time to re-submit his/her work with the next assignment submission deadlines which are normally at the end of each term.

If on the second submission the Student has been identified or suspected of any incidents or (attempted incidents), then they will be asked to re-enrol and re-do the module in the classroom.

Failure to comply with the above opportunities: the matter will be referred back to the Academic Board for a final decision if plagiarism is found on third occasion. The Academic Board will review the case on an individual basis and depending upon seriousness of the plagiarism, the Academic Board may terminate a student's enrolment at The Youth Development Academy. However, if the student is not satisfied with the decision then they can appeal the decision.

### **Staff Malpractice:**

The following are examples of what the Academy considers to be malpractice by staff.

- Failing to keep awarding organisation assessment records safe and secure.
- Altering assessment and grading records without the proper authority.
- Influencing the outcome of assessment by producing work for Students or providing support that influences the grade awarded.
- Producing false witness statements.
- Allowing evidence which is known not to be the Students own work to be included in assessment.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation and collusion.
- Inappropriate use of the reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy, where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
- Making fraudulent certification claims and/or claiming for a certificate prior to the Student completing all the requirements for assessment.
- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment and verification material

### **Centre Malpractice**

Focused on insecure storage of assessment instruments and marking guidance.

- Misuse of assessments, including inappropriate adjustments to assessment decisions.
- Failure to comply with requirements for accurate and safe retention of Learner evidence, assessment and internal verification records.
- Failure to comply with awarding organisation procedures for managing and transferring accurate Learner data.
- Excessive direction from assessors to Learners on how to meet national standards.
- Deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates

**The policy also concerns actions that:**

- compromise, attempt to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment
- undermine the integrity of any qualification or the validity of an exam result or certificate; and/or
- damage the authority, reputation or credibility of the Academy, awarding organisation or any officer or employee

The Management team takes seriously any suspected or reported case of malpractice or maladministration, which may be the result of a deliberate act, neglect, or failure in a practice or system, or due to actions of individual(s).

The Management Team will undertake an investigation in cases of suspected or reported malpractice. The Academy will take appropriate disciplinary actions against the alleged/reported malpractice staff and the awarding organisation will be informed if deemed appropriate depending on the seriousness of the matter

**Reporting**

Should students or others wish to report possible malpractice or maladministration they should contact the Principal in the first instance.

**Appeals Procedure**

**Stage 1 - Review**

Students or staff members may request a review of the decision made following the above process. The review is conducted by a panel consisting of representative(s) of the Academic Board including Director of Academics, Quality Assurance Manager and Principal. The panel will consider the report made initially on the malpractice incident, imposed penalties as well as any new information or evidence subsequently provided by other relevant parties. Following a review, the initial decision may be upheld or overturned, or upheld but with a change to the penalties originally imposed.

**Stage 2 – Appeal**

If the student or staff member does not agree with the outcome of the review, they have the right to take the process to Stage 2, which would involve an independent review of the case. An appeal at Stage 2 will only consider whether the panel set by the Academy at the review stage applied its procedures consistently, properly and fairly during the original investigation and/or the Stage 1 review and will cover any inconsistencies if noted.

Appeals are heard by a panel chaired by the Academic Director in the presence of Principal with at least one independent member, who is not an employee of The Youth Development Academy, an assessor/internal verifier working for Academy, or otherwise connected to The Youth Development Academy. The appeal panel will have not been involved with the assessment or the administration of assessments and have no personal interest in the decisions under consideration.

The appeal panel may uphold the original decision or overturn it on the grounds that procedures were not properly followed. The appeal panel will not review the original investigation.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all parties affected by decisions on malpractice or maladministration are informed of the outcome of the above processes.

### **Reporting to the Awarding Organisation:**

Malpractice or attempted acts of malpractice as well as plagiarism that have influenced the assessment outcomes will be immediately reported to the Awarding Organisation and in cases of malpractice to the qualifications regulator if there's evidence that results or certificates may be invalid.

- oversee all investigations into suspected or alleged malpractice;
- withhold the issuing of results until the conclusion of the investigation, or permanently, where the outcome of the investigation warrants it;
- apply the sanctions and penalties listed in this document in cases of proven malpractice;
- report the matter to the regulators and other awarding bodies in accordance with the regulators' General Conditions of Recognition.
- report the matter to the police if a proven malpractice involved the committing of a criminal act.

The Academy and the Awarding Organisation reserve the right, in suspected cases of malpractice, to withhold the issuing of results or certificates while an investigation is in progress.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or if there is a change in legal or other business related requirement.

| Review date  | Description                                  | Reviewed by | Next Review date |
|--------------|--|-------------|------------------|
| 08 July 2019 | Assessment Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy | SMT Team    | 06 July 2020     |