

Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Process

Introduction and Scope

This policy applies to all Summit Qualifications UK learners, approved delivery centres, Summit Qualifications UK staff and representatives, and third parties including contractors and service suppliers.

All individuals have a responsibility for reporting any suspicion of malpractice or maladministration, as directed in this policy.

Centres must have in place preventative measures or be aware of any potential areas of risk, where malpractice or maladministration could occur.

Learners must be made aware of this policy by Centres.

Summit Qualifications UK will aim to support Centres to help prevent malpractice occurring, and at all times seek to ensure an Adverse Effect does not occur.

Definition

Malpractice is defined as:

- Any deliberate activity, neglect, default, or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment or awarding process, and/or the validity of results or certificates that may damage the authority, reputation or credibility of Summit Qualifications UK, a Centre or any officer, employee or agent of Summit Qualifications UK or Centre.
- Any failure by a Centre to notify, investigate and report on an allegation of malpractice or suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice, also.
- Any failure to take action as required by Summit Qualifications UK as detailed in this document, or to co-operate with a Summit Qualifications UK investigation constitutes malpractice.

Misconduct and forms of discrimination or bias that prejudices certain learners is malpractice.

Learner malpractice may include, for example plagiarism, collusion, tampering or breach of confidentiality of assessment materials.

Maladministration is defined as:

- Any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with regulations and administrative requirements and includes persistent mistakes, or poor administration.

Reporting of Malpractice or Maladministration

Any suspected malpractice or maladministration should be notified to Summit Qualifications UK immediately. All relevant information must be supplied. You may complete the form at Appendix A that outlines the initial information sought or make an initial contact with the AO Manager.

Where suspected malpractice is identified by a Centre, the head of Centre must submit full details of the case at the earliest opportunity to Summit Qualifications UK. The AO Manager will make contact with the Centre to establish who is best placed to investigate the allegations, and whether the Centre should undertake the investigation.

Suspicion of malpractice and maladministration should be reported on as soon as they are discovered. Cases of any historical malpractice and maladministration are equally valid and are also investigated as per this policy.

Please report any allegations to the AO Manager via contact@summitqualifications.co.uk

Confidentiality

Sometimes an individual making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. If you are concerned about possible adverse consequences, you may ask that Summit Qualifications UK do not divulge your identity.

Summit Qualifications UK will investigate issues that are reported anonymously and aim to confirm the identity of those who make anonymous allegations.

Centre staff may consider raising concerns under their employer's whistleblowing policy where they wish to remain anonymous.

All personal information submitted or discovered during an investigation will be protected, as per Summit Qualifications UK data protection policy and procedure.

Responsibility for Investigation

All reported cases of malpractice and maladministration will initially be handled by the AO Manager. The AO Manager will be the coordination point for all communications. Acknowledgement of any investigation reports will be issued within 2 working days.

In accordance with regulatory requirements all suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration will be examined promptly by Summit Qualifications UK to establish if malpractice or maladministration has occurred. All reasonable steps will be taken by Summit Qualifications UK to prevent any adverse effect from occurring.

The AO Manager will identify an appropriate individual to investigate the allegation/s made. The individual must:

- **Have no prior knowledge or interest in the issue, and will not be known to the individual/ Centre i.e. there must be no conflicts of interest in carrying out an investigation**
- **Understand the issues involved, and be aware of any relevant policy or procedures in place**
- **Be available to investigate in a timely manner.**

An investigator will be appointed to look at the case within 5 working days of the item being reported.

All information and evidence relating to the instigation will be kept in a secure and confidential file set up for this purpose.

Cooperation with Investigations

Summit Qualifications UK requires all relevant persons to provide relevant information and evidence where requested in a timely manner, within requested timescales. Summit Qualifications UK may require interviewing individuals, visit premises and examine evidence held locally.

Requests for information may include reports of investigations or evidence arising from Centre based investigations.

Where Centres or Centre staff do not comply with Summit Qualifications UK requests for information they may be subject to relevant Summit Qualifications UK sanctions as laid out in the Centre Sanctions Policy.

Reporting Findings

Summit Qualifications UK will endeavour to share any updates on findings as the investigation progresses, where appropriate.

The AO Manager will be the point of contact on all matters.

The report and any recommendations will be shared and agreed by the Responsible Officer before it is issued.

Summit Qualifications UK will share its final report and recommendations with relevant individuals, or the Centre. Investigation reports will be available within 25 working days of the date of an investigator being assigned.

Those individuals or the Centre may challenge the findings and outcomes through Summit Qualifications UK Appeals Policy.

Lessons Learned

Any investigation must be evaluated to identify if there are measures or changes that might be reasonably put in place to prevent such an occurrence in the future.

Sanctions applied for found malpractice or maladministration cases

In the case where malpractice or maladministration is found individuals, or Centres may be subject to a sanction. Please refer the Sanction Policy. The following provides an indicator of the kinds of sanctions that Summit Qualifications UK will consider, however, individual sanctions are considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to the severity of the case and intent of those involved.

In certain cases Centres may be better placed to identify appropriate sanctions, particularly in relation to any learners or Centre staff. Summit Qualifications UK would aim to discuss sanctions with the Centre prior to their being recommended or applied.

For any Summit Qualifications UK staff found to be involved in any malpractice or maladministration they will be subject to Summit Qualifications UK's disciplinary process.

For any Summit Qualifications UK contractors involved in any malpractice or maladministration, they may be required to undergo re-training, or their contract may be altered or withdrawn, subject to severity of the case.

Found malpractice/maladministration	Possible sanctions – this is for illustration purposes and is not an exhaustive list; each case is considered on its own merits, severity of the case and intent of those involved
Administrative failures, such as incorrect registration information	<p>Training requirement for responsible staff</p> <p>Requirement to improve administrative procedures</p> <p>Action plan put in place</p>
Centre does not comply with controlled arrangements for assessments	<p>Training requirement for responsible staff</p> <p>Requirement to improve administrative procedures</p> <p>Action plan put in place</p> <p>Removal of Centre status (temporary or permanent)</p>
Claims for certificates prior to learners completing	<p>Training requirement for responsible staff</p> <p>Requirement to improve administrative procedures</p> <p>Action plan put in place</p>
Centre makes incorrect certificate claims	<p>Training requirement for responsible staff</p> <p>Requirement to improve administrative procedures</p> <p>Action plan put in place</p> <p>Removal of Centre status (temporary or permanent)</p>
Centre provides false evidence of learner ID or achievement	Removal of Centre status (temporary or permanent)
Centre makes fraudulent certificate claims	Removal of Centre status (temporary or permanent)
Plagiarism, collusion or cheating of some form by a learner	<p>Debarred from entering an assessment for a given period</p> <p>Debarred from being registered as a learner</p>

Reporting Malpractice or Maladministration

Appendix A

Your Name

Email

Phone number

Centre name (if relevant)

What is your status?

Learner, Teacher/Trainer, Assessor, Centre Staff (state role), Other

Explain the malpractice or maladministration you wish to report:

Date of occurrence, where relevant:

What evidence is available to support your report?

Who else is aware of the above – please include names and contact information:

Any other relevant information?

Signed:

Dated:

Please include any relevant evidence wherever possible. Please send this form to the AO Manager or the Quality Manger for the EPAO contact@summitqualifications.co.uk