



# Malpractice & Plagiarism Policy

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Approved by Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

**Strategy/Policy Responsibility:** Curriculum

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## Definition

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For the purpose of this document 'malpractice' is defined as: Any act, or failure to act, that threatens or compromises the integrity of the assessment process or the validity of qualifications and their certification. This includes: maladministration and the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems; the deliberate falsification of records or documents for any reason connected to the award of qualifications; acts of plagiarism or other academic misconduct; and/or actions that compromise the reputation or authority of Sutton College or of its centres, officers and employees.

Sutton College will report all relevant cases of suspected malpractice / maladministration to the relevant awarding body, accepting that in certain circumstances awarding bodies may take action of their own, including imposing sanctions.

## Purpose

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Sutton College treats all cases of suspected malpractice/maladministration \* very seriously and will investigate all suspected and reported incidents of possible malpractice. The purpose of this Policy is to set out how allegations of malpractice in relation to all qualifications are dealt with. The scope of the policy is to provide:

- a) a definition of malpractice
- b) examples of learner and centre malpractice and maladministration;
- c) possible sanctions that may be imposed in cases of malpractice.

\*The term 'malpractice' in this policy is used for both malpractice and maladministration.

## Scope

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This policy covers all learners and all centre employees and stakeholders.

## Related Policies

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- Learner Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Examining Body Regulations
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy
- Internal Appeals Procedure

## **Responsibilities**

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The associated policies for staff and learner disciplinary procedures have their own clearly laid out responsibilities if these are invoked.

## **Risk Analysis**

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Failure to have a malpractice/maladministration policy leaves the training provider at risk of complaints of unfair treatment. It also has become a requirement of examining bodies. The policy ensures that we are meeting examining body regulations and mitigating the risk of complaints.

## **Data Protection**

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All notes, letters and incident logs pertaining to malpractice/maladministration procedures will be stored securely for a period of 5 years. If a crime has been committed then information relating to the crime and perpetrator may need to be passed to the police under strict information sharing protocols.

## **Procedure**

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### **Malpractice by learners**

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- Some examples of learner malpractice are described below. These examples are not exhaustive and all incidents of suspected malpractice, whether or not described below, will be fully investigated, where there are sufficient grounds to do so.
- Obtaining examination or assessment material without authorisation.
- Arranging for an individual other than the learner to sit an assessment or to submit an assignment not undertaken by the learner.
- Impersonating another learner to sit an assessment or to submit an assignment on their behalf.

- Collaborating with another learner or individual, by any means, to complete a coursework assignment or assessment, unless it has been clearly stated that such collaboration is permitted.
- Damaging another learner's work.
- Inclusion of inappropriate or offensive material in coursework assignments or assessment scripts.
- Failure to comply with published examination regulations.
- Disruptive behaviour or unacceptable conduct, including the use of offensive language, at centre or assessment venue (including aggressive or offensive language or behaviour).
- Producing, using or allowing the use of forged or falsified documentation, including but not limited to:
  - personal identification;
  - supporting evidence provided for reasonable adjustment or special consideration applications; and results documentation, including certificates.
  - Falsely obtaining, by any means, a certificate.
  - Misrepresentation or plagiarism
  - Fraudulent claims for special consideration while studying.
- Possession of any materials not permitted in the assessment room, regardless of whether or not they are relevant to the assessment, or whether or not the learner refers to them during the assessment process, for example notes, blank paper, electronic devices including mobile phones, personal organisers, books, dictionaries / calculators (when prohibited).
- Communicating in any form, for example verbally or electronically, with other learners in the assessment room when it is prohibited.
- Copying the work of another learner or knowingly allowing another learner to copy from their own work.
- Failure to comply with instructions given by the assessment invigilator, i.e. working beyond the allocated time; refusing to hand in assessment script / paper when requested; not adhering to warnings relating to conduct during the assessment.

## Malpractice by centre employees and stakeholders

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Examples of malpractice by trainers, coaches and other officers, are listed below. These examples are not exhaustive and all incidents of suspected malpractice, whether or not described below, will be fully investigated, where there are sufficient grounds to do so.

- Failure to adhere to the relevant regulations and procedures, including those relating to centre approval, security undertaking and monitoring requirements as set out by the examining body.
- Knowingly allowing an individual to impersonate a learner.
- Allowing a learner to copy another learner's assignment work, or allowing a learner to let their own work be copied.
- Allowing learners to work collaboratively during an assignment assessment, unless specified in the assignment brief.
- Completing an assessed assignment for a learner or providing them with assistance beyond that 'normally' expected.
- Damaging a learner's work.
- Disruptive behaviour or unacceptable conduct, including the use of offensive language (including aggressive or offensive language or behaviour).
- Allowing disruptive behaviour or unacceptable conduct at the centre to go unchallenged, for example, aggressive or offensive language or behaviour.
- Divulging any information relating to learner performance and / or results to anyone other than the learner.
- Producing, using or allowing the use of forged or falsified documentation, including but not limited to:
  - personal identification;
  - supporting evidence provided for reasonable adjustment or special consideration applications;
  - results documentation, including certificates
- Falsely obtaining by any means a certificate.
- Failing to report a suspected case of learner malpractice, including plagiarism, to the examination body.

- Moving the time or date of a fixed examination.
- Failure to keep examination question papers, examination scripts or other assessment materials secure, before during or after an examination.
- Allowing a learner to possess and / or use material or electronic devices that are not permitted in the examination room.
- Allowing learners to communicate by any means during an examination in breach of regulations.
- Allowing a learner to work beyond the allotted examination time.
- Leaving learners unsupervised during an examination.
- Assisting or prompting candidates with the production of answers.

## Examples of maladministration

The categories listed below are examples of Centre and learner maladministration. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are only intended as guidance on our definition of malpractice:

- Persistent failure to adhere to Sutton College learner registration and certification procedures;
- Failure to adhere to Sutton College and regulated policies, procedures and practices;
- Persistent failure to adhere to Sutton College Centre Agreement and/or qualification requirements and/or associated actions assigned to the Centre;
- Failure to adhere to Sutton College financial payment terms and/or plans (both infrequent and persistent);
- Late learner registrations (both infrequent and persistent);
- Unreasonable delays in responding to requests and/or communications from Sutton College;
- Inaccurate claim for certificates;
- Failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, for example, certification claims and/or forgery of evidence;
- Withholding of information, by deliberate act or omission, from Sutton College which is required to assure Sutton College of the Centre's ability to deliver qualifications appropriately;

- Failure to adhere to, or to circumvent, the requirements of Sutton College's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.

## **Possible malpractice/maladministration sanctions**

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- Following an investigation, if a case of malpractice is upheld, Sutton College may impose sanctions or other penalties on the individual(s) concerned. Where relevant we will report the matter to the examination body, who may impose one or more sanctions upon the individual(s) concerned. Any sanctions imposed will reflect the seriousness of the malpractice that has occurred.
- Listed below are examples of sanctions that may be applied to a learner, or to a trainer, coach, invigilator or other officer who has had a case of malpractice upheld against them. Please note that:
  - this list is not exhaustive and other sanctions may be applied on a case-by-case basis.
  - where the malpractice affects examination performance, the examination body may impose sanctions of its own.

## **Possible study centre sanctions that may be applied to learners**

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- A written warning about future conduct.
- Notification to awarding body, an employer, regulator or the police.
- Removal from the course.

## **Possible sanctions that may be applied to trainers, coaches, invigilators, and other officers**

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- A written warning about future conduct.
- Imposition of special conditions for the future involvement of the individual(s) in the conduct, teaching, supervision or administration of learners and/or examinations.

- Informing any other organisation known to employ the individual in relation to courses or examinations of the outcome of the case.
- Notification to awarding body.
- Sutton College may carry out unannounced monitoring of the working practices of the individual(s) concerned.
- Dismissal

## **Process for making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration**

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Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time must immediately notify Sutton College. In doing so they should put them in writing/email and enclose appropriate supporting evidence.

- All allegations must include (where possible):
- Centre's name, address and telephone number;
- Learner's name and Sutton College registration number;
- Centre/Sutton College personnel's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case;
- Details of the Sutton College course/qualification affected or nature of the service affected;
- Nature of the suspected or actual malpractice and associated dates; and
- Details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by the Centre or anybody else involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances.
- In addition, Sutton College asks that the person making the allegation declares any personal interest they may have in the matter to us at the outset.

## **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

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- Students who misuse AI such that the work they submit for assessment is not their own will have committed malpractice, in accordance with JCQ regulations, and may attract severe sanctions. For further information please see [JCQ](#)

[Document: AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications](#) ;  
[AI and Assessments: A Quick Guide for Students](#) and [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Policy](#).

## **Further References**

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- For further information please see [JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures](#)