

## **FITNESS NORTHERN IRELAND**

### **Guidelines for Dealing with Instances of Suspected Malpractice**

#### **Definition:-**

Malpractice quoted in the text means any act, neglect, default or other practice which is a breach of the Regulations and which threatens the integrity of public examinations and certificates, and /or damages the authority of those responsible for conducting them. Also, it is attempting or planning such an act, whether it is successful or not.

#### **Centre Staff Malpractice**

Centre staff Malpractice is that which relates to a breach of security (affecting the confidentiality of examination questions or assisting learners while in examination conditions to produce responses to gain advantage. Also any form of maladministration is not acceptable.

Current examination papers should be retained and made secure

Only authorised access to examination papers is permitted

Learner's papers should not be tampered with after collection

Learners should be supervised at all examination sessions

Learners should not have access to work exemplars or previous learner's work

Learners should not be helped beyond regulations and boundaries

Learners should not have access to knowledge base materials during an examination

Course material should be secured and retained

Failing to issue warnings to learners involved in perceived malpractice

The examination venue should conform to requirements as set by the Awarding Body

## **Learner Malpractice**

The introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room eg. notes, electronic equipment.

Attempting to or obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing information which could be exam. related. Learners should not communicate by talking, writing or non-verbally, during an examination.

Plagiarism and or the submission of another's work will be classed as Malpractice.

The destruction of another learner's work.

The Collusion with another Learner and working collaboratively with another learner.

Personation to take another's place at an examination.

The production of offensive or obscene material in coursework and scripts.

Disruptive behaviour and the use of offensive language.

Altering any results documents or certificates.

## **Responsibility of the centre to follow Investigative procedures**

The Head of Centre must carry out an investigation into alleged learner malpractice.

A report must be written for the Awarding Body and evidence provided of the alleged malpractice.

Learners accused of malpractice should be made fully aware in writing at the earliest opportunity, of the nature of the malpractice and the consequences if proven.

At the close of an investigation the Head of Centre must give the Learner/s involved a copy of the report.

Learners will be given an opportunity to respond in writing to any allegation.

Where the Awarding Body is required to interview a learner during an investigation, the Head of Centre must be present and provide a suitable venue for the learner's solicitor if necessary.

## **Contents of a Report**

The responsibility lies with the Head of Centre on behalf of the Awarding Body to submit a full report of the investigation as follows.

A statement of the facts detailing the circumstances and the investigation by the centre.

Written statements from the invigilator or any other staff involved.

Written statements from the learners involved.

Any mitigating factors (medical reports).

Information on how learners are advised of the centres procedures and Awarding Bodies regulations.

Seating Plans.

Unauthorised material found in examination room.

Any work of the learner relevant to the investigation.

## **Scale of Penalties for Malpractice**

Depending of the seriousness of the act a penalty can be,

1. A warning - Minor infringement of the rules of the examination room eg disruptive behaviour but with no evidence of cheating to gain marks.
2. Loss of marks gained for a section, unit – eg. receiving information.
3. Loss of certificate opportunity – eg. repeated non compliance, cheating to gain answers, disruptive behaviour and physical assault etc.

In the event that a crime has been committed the police will be involved.

Learners always have a right to appeal decisions by the Awarding Body or Centre.