



# HCT Learning

## Quality Assurance Manual

### 2020

#### **Malpractice and Maladministration Policy**

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### **1 Malpractice and Maladministration**

This policy describes how suspected or alleged incidents of malpractice and/or maladministration are dealt with by HCT Learning where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion or allegation.

It is designed to ensure that any such incidents are prevented where possible, and thoroughly investigated with appropriate action taken where malpractice/maladministration is suspected or alleged.

HCT Learning has appropriate systems and processes in place to identify and effectively deal with malpractice/maladministration.

#### **1.1 Malpractice**

Malpractice covers any deliberate actions, neglect, wrongdoing, misconduct or other practice that compromises, or could compromise the integrity of the training and/or assessment and validity of results. For example, the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

### **1.1.1 Types of Malpractice**

- Insecure storage of assessments and learner evidence.
- Misuse of assessment documents including inappropriate adjustments.
- Improper/excessive assistance to learners to aid their achievement.
- Deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.
- Plagiarism of another's work.
- Cheating during assessment.
- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment or examination material.
- Impersonating a candidate (i.e. claiming to be someone other than yourself).
- Submitting false claims for certificates or skills identity cards.
- False ID used at the registration stage.

### **1.1.2 Assessment Malpractice**

HCT Learning are fully committed to ensuring that any instances of malpractice relating to assessments are fully investigated and dealt with in an appropriate manner that is in line with the validity of an assessment. Any outcomes of the investigation will be documented and reported to an External Authenticator during the respected submission period.

Any alleged instances of plagiarism will be examined thoroughly by Trainers, the Pedagogical Reviewer and during the IV process to establish the facts and relative context of the alleged offence taking into account the nature and extent of the plagiarism and penalties will apply where plagiarism is confirmed to have taken place.

Where a Trainer, Pedagogical Reviewer or IV detects a suspected instance of plagiarism in a learners' assignment or examination the following will apply:

- The alleged instance will be documented in all IV reports - informing and outlining the outcome and will be communicated to the External Authenticator
- If a learners final grades are altered due to an alleged instance by 20% or more for the initial final grade, the learner or learner representative is contacted directly and the learner is given an opportunity to dispute the allegation. The Alleged Compromise of Integrity of Assessment Report Form will be filled.
- All learners that have taken part in plagiarism will automatically be deducted marks.
- A review and discussion of the situation will take place.
- The following course of action may be followed:

- Discussion directly with the learner on the issue. The learner is then required to resubmit their assignment along with an administration fee of €50.
- The learner will not be submitting an assignment for the programme in discussion.

## **1.2 Maladministration**

Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the inefficient, dishonest or just bad administration or management which may or may not be deliberate. For example, breach of security or confidentiality of assessment materials including loss or theft, persistent mistakes and inaccurate learner records.

### **1.2.1 Types of Maladministration**

- Persistent late learner registrations and certificates.
- Registering learners for the wrong training or qualification.
- Inaccurate claim for certificates.
- Failure to maintain appropriate records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence for assessments.
- Withholding of information, by deliberate act or omission.
- Misuse of HCT Learnings logo and trademark.
- Misuse of Awarding Organisation, Accrediting body or regulators logo and trademark.
- Failure to the requirements of reasonable adjustments and special considerations.
- Failure to provide adequate training, systems and processes or relevant knowledge to anyone directly involved in the process.

## **1.3 Investigation**

The fundamental principle of investigation is to conduct them in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring that all relevant information is considered without bias. Incidents will be investigated as follows:

- Establish the facts relating to allegations/complaints in order to determine whether any irregularities have occurred.
- Identify the cause of the irregularities and those involved.
- Establish the scale of the irregularities.
- Notify parties concerned and request an account of the incident.
- Gather relevant information from records held – these may include registration data, assessment records or any other information deemed relevant to the investigation.

- Consult with others in order to get a full picture if necessary.
- Undertake further discussions including face to face meetings if deemed necessary.
- Determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered learners and to preserve the integrity of the training or qualification.
- Identify and, if necessary, take action to minimise any risks.
- Ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued.
- Identify any changes to policies and procedures.
- Identify any adverse patterns or trends.
- Please see 1.1.2 for Assessment Malpractice.

#### **1.4 Outcome**

Where investigations establish that malpractice/maladministration has in fact occurred HCT Learning will take appropriate action. Such actions will be proportionate to the gravity and scope of the occurrence and may include the following:

- The implementation of corrective action plans to prevent re-occurrence.
- Additional monitoring.
- Suspending or removing course registration.
- Suspending or removing contract.
- Withdrawal of certificates.
- Imposing other sanctions as appropriate.
- Please see 1.1.2 for Assessment Malpractice.

HCT Learning will inform where appropriate any malpractice/maladministration and adverse effects to the appropriate relevant parties including Awarding Organisation/Accrediting Body. All outcomes will also be updated on MyHCT and will be flagged on our Red Flag system and may be brought forward under our Corrective Action Plan.

#### **1.5 Malpractice and maladministration process and timescales from notification**

- Report any malpractice or maladministration to HCT Learning.
- Acknowledge response of a malpractice or maladministration within 5 working days.
- Investigation and gathering of evidence 15 working days.
- Outcome letter within 20 working days of the acknowledgement.

### 1.6 Appeals

Everyone has the right to appeal where a case of malpractice or maladministration has been upheld.

- This must be submitted in writing to HCT Learning within 5 working days of the decision.
- The appeal will be investigated by a member of Management.
- A written response will be given to all reasonable written appeals, letter or email within 10 working days from the receipt of the appeal. If this time needs to be extended the applicant will be advised stating a predicted reply date.
- The decision will be final.

### 1.7 Alleged Compromise of Integrity of Assessment Report Form

Name of alleged offender/s:		
Name of alleged offender:(s):		
Name of alleged offender:(s):		

What area of assessment has been compromised  
Place an X in the appropriate box:  Assignment  Exam  Project  Collection of Work/ Learners Record  
 Skills Demo  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Details on how the assessment was compromised

What actions did you take?

Has the grade been altered by 20% or more?  Yes  No



Outcome of Actions?



Signature:



Date: