

THE RECORDING WORKSHOP



Policy on Assessment Malpractice

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Assessment Malpractice

Policy Statement

Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.

Academic misconduct is subject to disciplinary measures. It has three types in terms of our Assessment and Examinations procedures.

1. Plagiarism – Utilising unacknowledged quotations from, or direct copying of another person's work and presenting it for assessment as if student's own work
2. Collusion – Copying from other student's work without his / her permission and working with other students (without tutor's permission) and presenting as if student's own work
3. Infringement of Examination Room Rules – communicate with other candidates, passing notes to another candidate, taking notes to your table in the examination room or referring to notes during the examination.

Personnel involved in the academic management, assessment and quality assurance of the programmes and candidates studying the programmes are fully aware of the contents of the policy.

Any allegations will be notified to the Examinations Officer by the Assessor (1st Marker of the Assignment) prior to the Assessment Board meeting. The Assessment Board will formulate the final decision and then will be notified to the candidate in a letter with copy to the Head of the Academic and Quality Assurance.

Introduction

The college deals with malpractice within an open and fair manner.

The policy on malpractice aims to:

- define malpractice in the context of assessment and certification for BTEC Edexcel Higher National qualifications
- set out the rights and responsibilities, with regard to malpractice, of the learner, centre and Edexcel.

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Guidance on assessment malpractice

The college requires the assessors to ask learners to declare that their work is their own and

- for BTEC internally assessed units, assessors are responsible for checking the validity of the learner's work.

- learners must provide a written declaration that the evidence is authentic and that the assessment was conducted under the requirements of the assessment specification.

The college takes positive steps to prevent or reduce the occurrence of learner malpractice with the following steps

- using the induction period and the student handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- showing learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites.
- Learners should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades.

However, the submitted work must show evidence that the learner has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.

- introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, eg plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc. These procedures may include:
 - periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework is produced by the learner
 - altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis
 - the assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of learners
 - using oral questions with learners to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application within their work
 - Assessors getting to know their learners' styles and abilities, etc.

Learner malpractice

The learner malpractice is due to

- plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learner's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including Internet sources), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source
- collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work. Learners should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential key skill for many sectors and subject areas, but the use of minutes, allocating tasks, agreeing outcomes, etc are an essential part of team work and this must be made clear to the learners
- impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test
- fabrication of results and/or evidence
- failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an assessor, a supervisor, an invigilator, or Edexcel conditions in relation to the assessment/examination/test rules, regulations and security
- misuse of assessment/examination material
- introduction and/or use of unauthorised material contrary to the requirements of supervised

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assessment/examination/test conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), personal stereos, mobile phones or other similar electronic devices

- obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment/examination/test related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written papers/notes during supervised assessment/examination/test conditions
- behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment/examination/test
- the alteration of any results document, including certificates

Staff malpractice

It is a deliberate action from a staff for example an assessor which has the potential to undermine the integrity of qualifications. The list hereunder and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this College at its discretion. This will encompass

- failing to keep any Edexcel mark schemes secure
- alteration of any Edexcel mark schemes
- alteration of Edexcel's assessment and grading criteria
- assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner
- producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/ coursework
- facilitating and allowing impersonation
- misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- failing to keep learner computer files secure
- falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment
- failing to keep assessment/examination/test papers secure prior to the assessment/examination/test

Investigating alleged malpractice

When dealing with alleged malpractice in the college it will deal primarily with the Examinations officer or a nominated representative and for investigation purposes, the college retains the right to:

- involve the learner and others in the investigation process
- during the investigation period, Edexcel may refuse learner registrations/entries
- withhold the release of results/certificate,

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Dealing with malpractice

It is the responsibility of Examinations officer to carry out an investigation into allegations of malpractice. Investigations into alleged malpractice against the Head of a Centre/Principal will normally be conducted by the Trustees of the centre, the Vice Principal, the responsible employer or an appointed nominee.

If a centre discovers or suspects anyone of malpractice, the college make the individual fully aware (preferably in writing) at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.

The College will Deal with malpractice through the following ways.

The College will

- Inform the individual of the issues and of the possible consequences
- Inform the individual of the process and appeals rights
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond
- Investigate in a fair and equitable manner
- Inform Edexcel of any malpractice or attempted acts of malpractice, which have compromised assessment. Edexcel will advise on further action required
- Give penalties and it should be appropriate to the nature of the malpractice under review
- Consider the gross misconduct should refer to learner and staff disciplinary procedures.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Academic Committee. Academic Staff will be penalized by terminating / suspending from academic activities for the college.

Penalties and sanctions applied by Edexcel to Centres

Where malpractice against a centre/member of staff/learner is proven, Edexcel will have to consider whether the integrity of its assessments/examinations/tests might be jeopardised if the centre/member of staff/learner in question were to be involved in future Edexcel assessments/examinations/tests. Edexcel may take action to protect the integrity of its assessments/examinations/tests in the future.

This action may include for BTEC qualifications:

- Edexcel refusing to accept assessment/examination entries from a centre in cases where malpractice is established
- Edexcel reserving the right to withdraw programme approval from centres where malpractice has been identified
- Edexcel reserving the right to refuse to issue or to withdraw certificates.

Appeals

Edexcel has established procedures for centres that are considering appeals against penalties and sanctions arising from malpractice. Appeals against a decision made by Edexcel will normally be accepted only from Heads of Centres/Principals/CEO (on behalf of learners and/or members of staff) and from individual members of centre staff (in respect of a decision taken against them personally).