

# Academic Malpractice, Maladministration & Plagiarism Procedures

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## 1. Scope and Purpose

Wiltshire College & University Centre considers any element of plagiarism and other forms of assessment malpractice and maladministration to be a serious issue, and this procedure defines malpractice/maladministration from both student and staff perspective, and how instances of this would be dealt with in conjunction with the relevant Staff and Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

This procedure is applicable to all students and staff at all centres of the College and applies to all internal assessments, and internal and external examinations. *Where awarding organisations or validating HEI's have their own published procedures these will take precedent over the college policy.*

The main objectives of the policy are:

- 1.1** To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice/maladministration by staff or student.
- 1.2** To respond effectively to any incident of alleged malpractice/maladministration promptly and objectively
- 1.3** To standardise the recording and reporting of any investigation of malpractice /maladministration to the relevant awarding organisations
- 1.4** To impose appropriate penalties/sanctions on staff or students where incident (or attempted incidents) of malpractice/maladministration are proven.
- 1.5** To protect the integrity of the College and the qualifications delivered

## 2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to give full and active support for the policy by ensuring the policy is known understood and implemented.

### 2.1 Students

In all assessed work candidates should take care to ensure the work presented is their own and fully acknowledges the work and opinions of others. Candidates should declare that work is their own using the tools provided at point of submission. It is also the responsibility of the candidates to ensure that they do not undertake any form of cheating or to promote any other form of unfair advantage.

### 2.2 Wiltshire College & University Centre

The College will seek proactive ways to promote a positive culture that encourages learners to take individual responsibility for their learning and respect the work of others.

### 2.3 Lecturer / Assessor

These staff members are responsible for designing assessment opportunities which limit the opportunity for malpractice and for checking the validity of student's work. The programme / course leader must ensure the learner induction is comprehensive and includes all information relating to authenticity checks and submission processes. It is the programme / course leader's responsibility to ensure the course handbook, Teams pages and induction resources contain information about Plagiarism/Malpractice/Maladministration and outcomes. Tutorials should also contain reminders and refreshers as to the seriousness of the student plagiarism and malpractice.

## 2.4 Internal Verifier/Internal Quality Assurer (IV/IQA)

Responsible for maladministration, malpractice/plagiarism checks when internally verifying work. The Assessor should inform the IV / Deputy Head of any alleged plagiarism.

## 2.5 Quality Manager & Director of Teaching Learning and Assessment

Required to inform Awarding Organisations of any acts of malpractice/maladministration and follow their required processes. An investigation will be conducted by the Quality Manager and a report filed with the awarding organisation with specified actions.

## 2.6 Head of Centre (Principal) or the Quality Manager as Quality Nominee

Responsible for any investigation into allegations of malpractice/maladministration

## 3. Definitions

**Malpractice** is any irregular conduct through deliberate activity, neglect or default on the part of a student or member of college staff, which gives unfair advantage to a candidate or group of candidates or disadvantages other candidates. Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records to claim certificates. Failure by a centre to deal with identified issues may constitute Malpractice.

**Plagiarism** is where a student has included published material in submitted work, but has not cited the source, therefore, falsely claiming that the work is their own.

**Plagiarism** is also including another student work in submitted work falsely claiming it is their own

**Plagiarism / malpractice** also includes the contracted cheating process where a student has paid a company / individual to write the assignment for them and it is submitted as their own.

**Plagiarism** can also mean using the same assessed work in a different assessment. Students can **normally** only use work once for assessment. This is called self-plagiarism.

For **Higher Education students**, academic theft is a serious academic offence, which has significant consequences. Plagiarism is academic theft. **See Appendix 1 for actions relating to Academic Theft (HE only).**

**Maladministration** is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre or learner not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications and as set out in the awarding organisation requirements for approved centres and regulator documents.

**Examples** of actions that may constitute Malpractice/Maladministration are listed below. (These lists are not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice/maladministration may be considered)

Students	Staff	Centres
<p>Plagiarism, including the copying of work of another learner (including the use of ICT to aid copying).</p> <p>Collusion between two or more learners</p> <p>Deliberate destruction of another learner's work for assessment</p> <p>Fabrication of results or evidence</p> <p>False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.</p> <p>Impersonation by pretending to be someone else to produce the work for another or to take a different student's place in an assessment/examination/test.</p> <p>The purchase of any assignment from an external company / business / individual; identified as 'contract cheating'.</p> <p>Deliberate deceit using Turnitin or Microsoft Teams Assignments for example, regularly submitting 'draft' work in error; regularly submitting work late or incorrectly to obtain more time to complete work; not keeping up to date working knowledge of submission processes or systems throughout the year once already provided.</p>	<p>Unfair discrimination in assessment (for example, in relation to any protected characteristic or extenuating circumstance)</p> <p>Deliberate or wilful failure to assess in accordance with the assessment criteria or other assessment requirements</p> <p>Assisting or prompting learners with the production of answers</p> <p>Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment material prior to or after assessment</p> <p>Failure to abide by the conditions of supervision. designed to ensure the security of assessment.</p> <p>Fraudulent certificate claims</p> <p>Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence).</p> <p>Failure to keep learner coursework/portfolios of evidence secure.</p> <p>Adding dates and signatures to coursework/portfolio <del>after</del> post assessment</p>	<p>Failure to provide appropriate facilities for the security of assessment and of assessment records.</p> <p>Failure to keep externally set assessment papers secure prior to or after assessment</p> <p>Failure to keep learner, computer or other files secure.</p> <p>Failure to provide assessment records of <del>learners</del> to awarding bodies or representatives of awarding bodies.</p> <p>Failure to register learners with awarding bodies such that learners are prevented from obtaining the units or qualifications that they are taking.</p> <p>Consistent failure to follow actions resulting in external quality assurance visits &amp; sanctions.</p> <p>Insufficient management of conflicts of interest. (Assessment of own staff, family members etc.).</p>

## 4. Identifying malpractice/maladministration

Cases of malpractice/maladministration can be identified in several different ways. They may be (but not limited to):

Reported by a lecturer/assessor or examiner via a report where the behaviour of an Individual has had a disruptive effect on other candidates.

Reported by a lecturer/ assessor or examiner, who may identify shared answers in an examination script or identical wording in a coursework assignment.

Identified by an internal verifier or LIV who may identify identical work in coursework.

Identified by an external verifier, during a verification event.

## 5. Dealing with malpractice/maladministration (For HE see appendix 1)

In cases where malpractice is identified or suspected, the relevant Awarding Organisation guidelines will be followed. Advice may be sought via the Awarding Organisation if required.

## 6. Possible Actions Taken by the College

The College may take internal disciplinary action in line with College Policy and Procedures. This action will be commensurate with the seriousness of the Malpractice/Maladministration and comply with appropriate employment legislation and awarding organisation requirements who may impose penalties or sanctions.

## 7. Associated Documents

- Assessment & Academic Appeals Procedure
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Awarding Organisation Malpractice Guidelines
- Ofqual Guidelines

## 8. Equality Impact Assessment

Wiltshire College & University Centre strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all students, local people and the workforce. As an employer and a provider of education, the College aims to ensure that none are placed at a disadvantage because of its policies and procedures. It is intended that this policy and procedure is fair to all. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

## 9. Data Retention Statement

Wiltshire College & University Centre is committed to ensure the data it collects and holds is in line with the ICO's guidance and meets data protection law. Where appropriate a Data Protection Impact Assessment will be undertaken as and when policies are updated to ensure risks to the individual and college are considered and managed.

For further information please refer to Wiltshire College & University Centre's Data Protection Policy.

## 10. Monitoring Review and Evaluation

Internal monitoring/verification of assessment activity will include malpractice/maladministration checks.

Evidence of both assessment and internal verification/moderation must be available for audit by the Quality Team.

The policy will be reviewed and amended as required, and at least annually by the Director of Teaching, Learning & Assessment and Head of Higher Education with the support of the Quality Manager.

## 11. Amendments Log

Version	Date of Issue	Amendment summary	Author(s)
V1.0	29/04/2019	Approved by SMT	
V1.1	02/02/2021	Reviewed – no change – review date extended.	Adam Bushell
V1.2	01/09/2022	Reviewed – amendment to definitions, roles and responsibilities	Claire Whiting
V2	14/03/23	Removed reference to EQA from the reporting to A.O process. Add in the word “maladministration” when appropriate to make sure policy adequately covers both Malpractice and Maladministration.	Alison Jamieson

## Appendix 1

### Higher Education Students – Actions for Academic Theft

(HEIs follow their own policies)

Severity of Plagiarism offence	Descriptions	Actions
First offence in the first semester of the first year.	Cause for concern by marker that published work has been used and not referenced. Work has been copied from published work, less than 50% copied. Poor referencing.	No penalties or disciplinary action taken. Student to book referencing session with tutor, LRC or academic mentor. To be noted on promonitor as an action to improve referencing. This is considered poor academic work rather than academic theft. Work to fail, and to be resubmitted after referencing session. Normal resubmission rules apply.
Large amount of submitted work is copied but under 50%. Higher counts of similarity or other evidence of copying from published work or another student's work.  First Offence	Cause of concern by marker that large chunks of submitted work is highlighted by Turnitin, or can be identified by marker that work has been copied (known written source for example)  Highlighted work is not referenced and may not be included in bibliography.	Interview with course leader and manager* and written warning issued. (*Quality Manager, HE Manager, Head of Faculty, Deputy Head). To be noted on promonitor. Student to book referencing session with tutor, LRC or academic mentor. Work to be resubmitted but capped at a pass.
Large amount of submitted work is copied but more than 50%. High counts of similarity or other evidence of copying from published work or another student's work.  Second offence of lower amount (less than 50%)	Cause of concern by marker that large chunks of submitted work is highlighted by Turnitin, or can be identified by marker that work has been copied (known written source for example)  Highlighted work is not referenced and may not be included in bibliography.	Interview with course leader and manager* and written warning issued. (*Quality manager, HE Manager or Head of Faculty, Deputy Head). To be noted on promonitor. Student to book referencing session with tutor, LRC or academic mentor, followed by 500 word reflective report of how to improve academic referencing, highlighting issues noted in own work (within 3 working weeks of written warning)



		A fail is recorded. Student to write new assignment in summer retrieval capped at a pass.
<p>100% of an assignment has been copied and falsely submitted as student's own work.</p> <p>Repeat offender (more than twice, see above) of more than 50% copied.</p>	<p>Marker has identified that work is 100% copied through Turnitin, which has been substantiated through an investigation by course leader and Manager* (*Quality Manager, HE Manager or Head of Faculty, Deputy Head)</p> <p>Third time offender of academic theft.</p>	<p>Disciplinary hearing following the college's disciplinary process. Outcome could be expulsion from course.</p>

## Appendix 2:

### Malpractice, Maladministration & Plagiarism Process

These templates must be used to report an offence and notify a candidate that an alleged, suspected or actual report of malpractice or maladministration has been made against them.

Note section 2.5 of the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice/Maladministration : Policies and Procedures states:

The Head of Centre / Quality Manager & Quality Nominee **must**...

- notify the appropriate awarding body **immediately** of all alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration. The only exception to this is candidate malpractice discovered in coursework or non-examination assessments before the authentication forms have been signed by the candidate (see paragraph 4.3). If staff malpractice is discovered in coursework or non-examination assessments, the head of centre **must** inform the awarding body **immediately**, regardless of whether the authentication forms have been signed by the candidate(s).
- report malpractice and/or maladministration using the appropriate forms in this appendix
- be accountable for ensuring that the centre and centre staff always comply with the awarding organisation instructions regarding an investigation.

In determining the information the centre provides to the candidate, this depends on the nature of the incident (whether alleged, suspected or actual). Regardless, the candidate must be informed of their rights and responsibilities.

Centres vary in how they work and how they communicate with candidates, however centres must be fully aware of the information they are required to provide to the candidate as detailed in the JCQ publication.

### Wiltshire College Reporting Process:

1. Assessor / Lecturer to notify IV / Deputy Head of suspected incident by email immediately.
2. IV / Deputy Head reviews the allegation and compiles evidence to be stored in secure location online.
3. IV / Deputy Head notify the HoF and Quality Manager by email immediately **(within 24hrs of identifying the offence)** and give a short account using the following information provided on the reporting template in Appendix 3 below:
  - a. Name, College & AO registration number for the student
  - b. Awarding body details and course / programme codes and names.
  - c. Date and time of the offence or when the offence was identified by the College.
  - d. Staff name and title.
  - e. Short report of the offence.
4. Quality Manager to notify the Awarding Organisation immediately **(within 48hrs of receiving offence material)**.
5. Quality Manager to notify the student using the template provided in Appendix 4 below.

Staff members **are not to discuss** the allegation of any suspected offence with their students. These are confidential personal matters and should be dealt with according to JCQ guidance.

## Appendix 3

### Report template (College staff to notify Quality Manager) for Malpractice, Maladministration & Plagiarism

This notification report is to inform the Quality Manager / Quality Nominee of an alleged academic offence. It has been sent to the Quality Manager / Quality Nominee within 24hrs of identifying a suspected offence (or as close to this as possible) – dated below.

Date		Staff member	Staff member completing this form
Student	Name: College Number: AO Registration Number: Programme / Course Leader: Deputy Head: HoF:	[insert] [insert] [insert] [insert] [insert] [insert]	
Course Name		Course Code	
Unit Name		Unit Code	
Assignment title / format:	Eg, Essay / Exam / Presentation	Assignment Code (if req)	

#### Details of the allegation / incident

Type of incident:  
 Identifying staff member:  
 Date of incident (date identified):  
 Details of incident: (including how the incident was identified)

I can confirm we have followed the Wiltshire College Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism reporting process as stated in the supporting policy and have enclosed all relevant documentary evidence for review. I confirm evidence is stored in accordance with the College GDPR policy.

Signed\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Electronic signatures will be accepted.*

## Appendix 4

### Report template for Notifying Student of Suspected Plagiarism / Offence

Dear [insert],

This email / letter is to inform you that the College has identified suspected academic offence in your assignment / exam submission (*delete as appropriate*). The assignment being investigation is [insert].

Please find below details of the alleged offence along with enclosed accompanying evidence and your rights as a Wiltshire College student. Please read these through thoroughly and keep for your records. The documentation enclosed and below has been sent through to the Awarding Organisation for them to review and confirm the process they require us to follow.

The College will contact you shortly about providing a written statement where you will be able to acknowledge the offence and provide any supporting mitigating evidence as to why and how this offence occurred. We will also notify you of the next steps as this may include an investigative interview where we can discuss the case and the possible outcomes.

Please note that we will always ensure your confidentiality and this matter will be investigated objectively and impartially by the College Quality Manager and the Awarding Organisation in accordance with the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) guidance provided (link below).

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me should you need to regarding this case, Alison Jamieson, Alison.Jamieson@wiltshire.ac.uk

Many Thanks

Date		Staff member	Staff member completing this form
Student	Name: College Number: AO Registration Number: Programme / Course Leader: Deputy Head: HoF:	[insert] [insert] [insert] [insert] [insert] [insert]	
Course Name		Course Code	
Unit Name		Unit Code	
Assignment title / format:	Eg, Essay / Exam / Presentation	Assignment Code (if req)	

This notification is to inform you that an alleged, suspected or actual report of malpractice has been made against you.

#### Details of the allegation / incident

Type of incident:

Identifying staff member:

Date of incident (date identified):

Details of incident: (including how the incident was identified)

As an approved examination centre, Wiltshire College is required to follow the policies and procedures in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice and/or Maladministration: Policies and Procedures publication available here [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice). We are also required to meet the Quality Assurance, Maladministration, Malpractice and Plagiarism standards and requirements set by the Awarding Organisation, Ofqual and our own internal College standards in our relating policies and procedures.

The head of centre / Quality Manager / Quality Nominee **must** notify the appropriate awarding body **immediately** of all alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration. The awarding body will not communicate with you directly unless circumstances warrant this.

Enclosed you have been provided with:

- a completed copy of the form used to notify the awarding body of the allegation/incident and copies of relevant supporting evidence.
- a copy of your rights as a student at Wiltshire College and University Centre.
- a copy of any investigation report and accompanying evidence.

The awarding organisation will determine the application of a sanction according to the evidence presented, the nature and circumstances of the malpractice or maladministration and the type of qualification involved.

You may be required to attend an investigation interview to establish facts and/or provide a written statement detailing any mitigation. Details of this will be forwarded to you shortly.

Once a decision has been made, it will be communicated in writing to the head of centre / Quality Manager / Quality Nominee as soon as possible.

On receiving the communication from the awarding body, the head of centre / Quality Manager / Quality Nominee will inform you of the decision and any sanctions and actions imposed, together with information on the process for submitting an appeal, where relevant.

It should be noted that awarding bodies may share information about individuals found guilty of malpractice in accordance with paragraphs 13.2, 13.3 and 13.4 of the JCQ publication.

Please read through all the information provided to you. If anything is unclear, please contact Alison Jamieson, Quality Manager, [Alison.Jamieson@wiltshire.ac.uk](mailto:Alison.Jamieson@wiltshire.ac.uk)

## Appendix 5

### **Rights of the Accused as a Student of Wiltshire College and University Centre.**

The information below is taken directly from the publication JCQ Suspected Malpractice and/or maladministration: Policies and Procedures 2021.

#### **Rights of the accused individuals**

If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual in malpractice, that individual (a candidate or a member of staff) **must**:

- be informed (preferably in writing) of the allegation made against him or her.
- be advised that a copy of the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice and/or Maladministration, Policies and Procedures can be found on the JCQ website:  
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>.
- know what evidence there is to support the allegation.
- know the possible consequences should malpractice or maladministration be proven.
- have the opportunity to consider their response to the allegations (if required).
- have an opportunity to submit a written statement.
- be informed that he/she will have the opportunity to read the submission and make an additional statement in response, should the case be put to the Malpractice/Maladministration Committee.
- have an opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a supplementary statement (if required).
- be informed of the applicable appeals procedure, (see paragraph 14.1) should a decision be made against him or her.
- be informed of the possibility that information relating to a serious case of malpractice and/or maladministration may be shared with other awarding bodies, the regulators and other appropriate authorities.