

WEST BERKSHIRE TRAINING CONSORTIUM MALPRACTICE, MALADMINISTRATION AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy describes the process for Malpractice, Maladministration and Conflict of Interest at West Berkshire Training Consortium (WBTC). It has been produced to guide and support WBTC staff in order to identify and deal with Malpractice, Maladministration and Conflict of Interest.

INTRODUCTION

Attempting to or actually carrying out any Malpractice, Maladministration or Conflict of Interest activity is not permitted by WBTC or the Awarding Organisation. The following are examples of Malpractice, Maladministration or Conflict of Interest by learners and members of staff; this list is not exhaustive and other instances of Malpractice, Maladministration and Conflict of Interest may be considered by the Centre and/or the Awarding Organisation at its discretion.

If a member of staff suspects Malpractice, Maladministration and/or Conflict of Interest with any work then the Lead IQA or Director of Curriculum should be alerted immediately.

MALPRACTICE

In the event of suspected malpractice, learners will be made aware of this policy.

- 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. However, learners should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential skill
- 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/test
- Fabrication of results and/or evidence
- Misuse of assessment/examination material
- Use of unauthorised materials against the requirements of supervised assessment/test conditions, for example: notes, study calculators, mobile phones or other similar electronic devices
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment/test related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written papers/notes during supervised assessment/test conditions
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment/test

MALADMINISTRATION

- The alteration of any records, results document, including certificates
- Failing to keep any Awarding body mark schemes/test papers secure
- Alteration of any Awarding Organisation mark schemes/test paper
- Alteration of Awarding Organisation'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.
- Failing to keep learner computer files secure
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest can arise at anytime, however WBTC will do their utmost to ensure this doesn't happen and will reduce the impact wherever possible.

- Staff of WBTC cannot work for competitors concurrently, unless authorised by the Executive Leadership Team
- Assessments to be arranged taking into account individual learner needs but on a non-biased basis
- WBTC staff cannot assess/IQA learners in placements where they have previously been employed
- Wherever possible every effort will be made to avoid WBTC staff Assessing/Quality Assuring in placements where they have a close connection with employers and/or employees, for example:
 - A spouse/partner is employed at the work placement
 - A relative works is employed at the work placement
 - A close friend works is employed at the work placement
 - A former colleague works is employed at the work placement
- Wherever possible, WBTC will avoid staff assessing, quality assuring, invigilating a learner with whom they have a relationship and/or connection, for example:
 - Relative
 - Spouse/Partner
 - Close Friend
 - Former colleague

The above conflicts of interest will be monitored by the Executive Leadership Team and/or the Quality Team.

However, in certain circumstances, where the above cannot be avoided due to a small programme or few staff, an Independent Assessor will be appointed to sample decisions made and possibly carry out a learner interview or discussion to include with the portfolio.

CONSEQUENCES

If a case of Malpractice, Maladministration or Conflict of Interest is identified with regards to a learner, they will automatically be suspended from further assessment by the Lead IQA/Director of Curriculum or Director of Training, during an investigation period conducted by the quality team following internal and relevant Awarding Organisations guidance and paperwork. If proven this will be reported to the Awarding Organisation for further investigation.

- Whilst an investigation is being completed the portfolio will be removed from the Learner and given to the Lead Internal Quality Assurer
- If it is identified that no malpractice had been conducted the learner will be reinstated automatically and portfolio re-issued
- If the Learner is proven of malpractice, the Director of Curriculum or Director of Training will inform the learner's employer and Awarding Organisation and the processes following on from this will be in accordance with the Awarding Organisation's procedures

If a case of Malpractice, Maladministration or Conflict of Interest is identified with regards to a member of WBTC staff, they will be reported to the Director of Curriculum and Director of Training for further investigation. Whilst under investigation the member of WBTC staff will be suspended from all duties within WBTC until the investigation has been completed.

If the member of staff has been proven to be not guilty they will be reinstated back to their original role.

If proven guilty of malpractice the member of WBTC staff will be dealt with according to WBTC's Disciplinary Procedure. WBTC will also inform the Awarding Organisation and where appropriate the police may be involved.