

Scope of the policy

This policy is aimed at our learners, course advisors, and staff who are using or delivering the Blackford Centre's training services and who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice .

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the steps course advisors, learners and centre personnel follow when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice and our responsibilities in dealing with such cases. It is also in place to review those processes which led to the suspected or actual case of malpractice and to support the individual involved in any investigations.

We will act upon any reports of suspected or actual cases of malpractice we receive about your activities, personnel or learners which may affect the integrity of the training programme(s) and quality assurance systems.

We also have a professional responsibility to report non-adherence to the endorsing body involved in the delivery of our courses.

Location of the policy

This policy is available at inst.org/policies

Communication of the policy

It is important that both the personnel involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our programmes and our learners are fully aware of the contents of the policy. We endeavour to ensure that all are aware of the policy.

Review of the policy

We will review the policy biennially and revise it as and when required in response to learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions required by accreditation bodies, external agencies or changes in legislation. Our review will ensure that our procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Definitions

Malpractice includes people who have behaved in a dishonest or negligent way and their actions have caused serious problems or errors through mismanagement. This includes any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the awarding body or the Blackford Centre. For the purpose of this policy this term also covers professional misconduct.

The categories listed below are examples of centre and learner malpractice. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are guidance on our definition:

- Plagiarism of any nature by learners
- Submission of false information
- Deliberate failure to carry out internal assessment, moderation or internal quality assurance monitoring in accordance with the awarding body requirements
- Withholding or the delaying of information, by a deliberate act or omission
- Discriminatory, bullying or harassing behaviour
- Unprofessional conduct
- Administration errors with course paperwork.
- Incorrect marking of learner portfolios, worksheets, not signing the declaration etc.
- Failure to adhere to our learner registration and certification procedures
- Late learner registrations
- Failure to maintain appropriate records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence.
- Failure to meet the awarding body requirements
- Breach of confidentiality of learners or the organisation

Reporting procedure

Anybody identifying cases of malpractice should report them to the support team (support@inst.org). We will investigate all cases of malpractice in liaison with the parties concerned. If an investigation finds evidence of malpractice, we will take the necessary steps to ensure that the learners' interests are protected as far as is reasonably possible.

This may include making arrangements for re-assessment. If the investigation reveals that certification is inappropriate we will take the necessary steps to revoke the certification.

Following contact by email, you should submit your own report accompanied by supporting evidence. Reports must include:

- The learner's name
- The Blackford Centre's personnel's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case
- The title of the Blackford Centre programme affected or nature of the service affected
- The date(s) suspected or actual malpractice occurred
- The full nature of the suspected or actual malpractice

Email your completed form or report to the support team as soon as possible.

We will report incidents to the Awarding Body prior to beginning any investigation. Then we will:

- acknowledge your report within 3 working days of receipt
- arrange for appropriate Blackford Centre personnel to review the report and commence the investigation
- aim to action and resolve all investigations within 10 working days of receipt of the report
- advise all those concerned of the outcome of our investigation within two working days of making our decision

When we receive the report, we will allocate a panel comprising Blackford Centre senior personnel and, where appropriate, external advisors such as external verifiers.

The panel will review the report and supporting evidence and carry out the investigation.

The investigation process

During the investigation the panel's review may involve:

- A request for further information
- Interviews (face to face or by telephone) with personnel involved in the investigation
- Informing the Regulatory/Awarding body. Where applicable, we will inform the appropriate regulatory authorities of any investigation into suspected or actual cases of serious malpractice and will agree the appropriate course of remedial action with them. In exceptional cases, the regulatory authorities may lead the investigation.

We will make informed decisions based on the evidence.

We will protect the identity of the 'informant' as required.

We will share information with other external parties, as required.

Learner malpractice

If the investigation confirms that learner malpractice has taken place, we may impose one or more of the following sanctions on the candidate. This list is not exhaustive.

- Disallowing all or part of the candidate's assessment evidence
- Disallowing all or part of the candidate's external assessment marks
- Not issuing the candidate's certificate(s)
- Not accepting any further registrations for the candidate
- Disqualification from the programme

In cases of malpractice by learners, Blackford Centre staff should make the learner aware that their final results may be void if the case is proven and any certificates which have already been issued may be deemed to be invalid and will need to be returned to the awarding body.

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact our Centre Support Team on Support@inst.org



Malpractice report for personnel to complete.

Date:	Learner name and number:
Course details: (full title)	
Date of suspected or actual Malpractice:	
Centre staff involved in the case: (name and role)	
Details of suspected or actual Malpractice:	
Signed:	



Malpractice log

Date	Learner name and number	Course details	Date of actual or suspected malpractice	Centre staff involved in the case: (name and role)	Details of suspected/actual malpractice	Outcome	Sign and date