

Malpractice and Academic Misconduct Policy

This policy is applicable to IAOCR staff, subcontractors and learners/participants

1.0 PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

The following is a non-exhaustive list of malpractice examples. IAOCR reserves the right to include, edit, or amend any other type of malpractice under the terms of this policy:

- Failing to keep assessment evaluation or mark schemes secure.
- Alteration of assessment evaluation or mark scheme.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is, claiming for a certificate prior to the learner/participant completing all the requirements of an assessment.

Malpractice consists of those acts committed either by the trainer/assessor or the learner/participant which IAOCR reasonably deems to undermine or compromise.

- (a) the integrity and validity of the training/assessment process.
- (b) the content being assessed.
- (c) the certification of qualifications; and/or
- (d) damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.

IAOCR will ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the conduct of assessment. The correct discharge of this duty is essential to safeguard the legitimate interests of learners/participants and IAOCR's reputation.

Malpractice is and should be taken very seriously. IAOCR will take action against any learner/participant who contravenes the policy through negligence, recklessness, foolishness, or by deliberate intent.

Academic Misconduct is defined as any practice used by a learner/participant to gain an unfair advantage for their work. This includes any form of plagiarism, getting help from other persons, using artificial intelligence or submitting work that is not entirely their own work.

Learner and or participant definition:

A learner is someone who has registered to take part in an IAOCR training programme and has signed the relevant T&C's before starting the training.

A participant is someone who has registered to take part in an IAOCR Accreditation programme and read and signed the relevant T&Cs before starting the relevant accreditation programme

Trainers and or Assessor definition:

A trainer is someone who is responsible for delivering knowledge, guidance and information to help further a person's performance, knowledge and skills on a specific subject.

An Assessor is someone who evaluates quality and competence against an agreed criteria of learning outcomes and defined standards and ensures fairness and consistency.

2.0 AIMS

This policy aims to ensure that no malpractice or academic misconduct arises in IAOCR's practices. It recognises that malpractice and academic misconduct covers a range of practices that compromise the integrity and validity of assessment and that these can arise through intentional acts or as a result of ignorance or circumstances beyond control.

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall responsibility for ensuring the application of this Policy is vested in all individuals employed of or contracted by IAOCR. The Chief Executive Officer of IAOCR is responsible for ensuring all reasonable steps are taken to avoid a conflict of interest between the learner/participant and any IAOCR trainer/assessor.

IAOCR trainers/assessors are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of malpractice and academic misconduct as outlined in 4.0 are adhered to.

Learners/participants have a responsibility to meet the requirements of this Policy, and they are expected to:

- Read the Malpractice and Academic Misconduct Policy provided to them via a link at registration.
- Adhere to the Learner Declaration and terms and conditions, as detailed both at registration and in the Learner e-portfolio, which confirms that the accreditation submission they complete is entirely their own work.
- Not use any dishonest means in examinations or assessments, including but not limited to plagiarising the work of others or the use of AI or internet search provisions.

4.0 MALPRACTICE AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

Malpractice means any act, default, or practice which is in breach of this policy, or which compromises or attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification, or the validity of an examination result; and/or damages the authority, reputation, or credibility of an awarding body or IAOCR or of any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or IAOCR as defined above in section 1.0.

4.1 Learner/Participant Malpractice and Academic Misconduct

Misconduct covers a range of breaches by which an individual or group of individuals hopes to deliberately gain an award, such as an accreditation, certification, or any other type of award, under false pretences. The following is not an exhaustive list, and IAOCR reserves the right to include any other type of malpractice or academic misconduct under the terms of this policy:

- Plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learner's/participant's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including the ideas, discoveries, or judgements of another person, institution or body, whether published or not, thereby not properly acknowledging the original source (this particularly relates to material downloaded from the Internet, including AI resources, or copied from books, journals, or magazines).
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners/participants to produce work that is submitted as an individual learner's/participant's work.

- Submitting work done by another learner/participant as their own (including work paid for from professional sources).
- Fabrication of results and/or evidence.
- Failing to abide by the instructions or advice of a trainer/assessor, a supervisor, an invigilator, or awarding body conditions in relation to the assessment, test or examination.
- Using unauthorised equipment, notes, or books to produce work for submission.
- Impersonating another candidate in an examination or assessment, introducing unauthorised materials into the exam, unauthorised communication during an exam, and obtaining an advanced copy of an 'unseen' exam paper.
- Falsely claiming extenuating circumstances to gain an unfair advantage in assessment outcomes.
- Bribing or attempting to bribe trainers/assessors or any employee or subcontractor of IAOCR.

4.2 IAOCR Trainer / Assessor / Staff Malpractice and Academic Misconduct

The following are examples of by IAOCR staff Malpractice/academic misconduct. The following is not an exhaustive list, and IAOCR reserves the right to include any other type of malpractice under the terms of this policy:

- Alteration of an examination body's assessment and grading criteria.
- Assisting learners/participants in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment to the advantage of the learner/participant, for example, where the assistance involves IAOCR staff producing work for the learner/participant.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the IAOCR staff member not to be the learner's/participant's own, to be included in a learner's/participant's assignment, task, portfolio or coursework.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Misusing the conditions for special learner/participants requirements, for example, where a learner/participant is permitted support, such as an amanuensis, is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment, task, portfolio or coursework.
- Failing to keep learner/participant computer or electronic files secure.
- Falsifying records or certificates, for example, by alteration, substitution, or fraud.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner/participant completing all the requirements of the assessment.
- Failing to keep an assessment, examination or test papers secure prior to the assessment, examination or test.
- Accepting any form of gift, monetary or any other inducement or bribe.

4.3 Consequences of Malpractice and/or Academic Misconduct

IAOCR does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice or academic misconduct. Cases will be investigated, and where appropriate, the IAOCR's disciplinary procedures will be applied.

4.4 Dealing with Staff Malpractice and Academic Misconduct

Where staff malpractice and academic misconduct is detected, all cases will be treated in a consistent manner in accordance with the IAOCR disciplinary procedures.

4.5 Dealing with Learner/Participant Malpractice and Academic Misconduct

The aim of any investigation into suspected learner/participant malpractice and academic misconduct is to search for the truth and to establish the facts so that any consequential action is based on sound evidence and an objective assessment of the circumstances. All investigations will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner ensuring all relevant evidence is considered without bias.

Stage 1 Initial Procedures

Where a member of staff suspects a learner/participant is culpable of malpractice or academic misconduct in relation to assessed work, they shall:

- Write a brief factual and objective report detailing the evidence of any suspected plagiarism, including but not limited to, internet searches, the use of AI, collusion, or any other form of malpractice or academic misconduct.
- In the case of plagiarism, provide a copy of the submission and plagiarised sources.
- Report the suspicions in writing and verbally directly to IAOCR 's Chief Quality & Client Officer.
- Maintain strict confidentiality and refrain from discussing details of the suspected malpractice, except with the IAOCR Chief Quality & Client Officer.

Stage 2 Formal Investigations

- Upon receipt of any allegation of malpractice or academic misconduct, the IAOCR Chief Quality & Client Officer shall decide if there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the learner/participant has contravened the assessment regulations. Where possible, this investigation will be completed within 15 days of receipt of the allegation.
- A disciplinary panel will be held, comprising the course trainers/assessors, and one other IAOCR senior manager, to determine if there is sufficient reason to believe there has been malpractice or academic misconduct. Where such allegation relates in whole or in part to a trainer/assessor, that trainer/assessor shall be prohibited from being a member of the disciplinary panel.
- If malpractice or academic misconduct is suspected, the relevant Accreditation Team member will inform the learner/participant by email of the investigation outcome and potential hearing within 5 working days of the disciplinary panel's determination of the allegation.
- The learner/participant must respond to the email within 5 working days, and upon receipt, will be given all information regarding the suspected malpractice or academic misconduct, including all relevant documents (e.g., evidence) and a copy of this Policy.
- The learner/participant will be given the opportunity to respond and be invited to attend a hearing with reasonable notice. The hearing involving the learner/participant will include the trainer/assessor and the IAOCR Chief Quality & Client Officer.
- A written record of the hearing will be retained, including the conclusions of the meeting, and a copy will be sent to the learner/participant within 6 working days of determination by the hearing.
- The IAOCR Chief Quality & Client Officer will inform the IAOCR CEO, who will inform the learner's/participant's employer about the existence and outcome of the panel meeting (if appropriate).
- If IAOCR deems it appropriate or if requested by the learner/participant or their employer, a written record of the outcome will be provided by IAOCR to the learner's/participant's employer.
- IAOCR will inform the external regulation body of an outcome where malpractice or academic misconduct is found to have occurred.

4.6 Consequences of Malpractice and/or participant Academic Misconduct

- IAOCR does not tolerate malpractice or academic misconduct or attempted malpractice or academic misconduct.
- If a learner/participant is found to have committed malpractice or academic misconduct on an IAOCR accreditation programme, any associated accreditations or certifications will also be invalidated. All costs or fees paid will be retained by IAOCR and are non-refundable.

5.0 APPEAL

5.1 Appeal by a learner/participant against the findings

Appeals against malpractice and academic misconduct can only be made on the basis that the learner/participant disputes the allegation of malpractice and academic misconduct, and a learner/participant can only appeal to the CEO if they feel a wrong judgment has been made during the process.

No appeal can be made on the grounds that the learner/participant did not read or understand the relevant T&Cs which they agreed to on registration or before completing their assessment

A learner/participant may appeal any finding as follows:

- The learner/participant will write a letter of appeal addressed to CEO of IAOCR.
- If after the hearing the learner/participant or their employer feels they have grounds for dispute, they are to submit in writing a request for a meeting of the Appeals Panel. The details of the complaint and the reasons for the appeal must be made clear in the letter of appeal.
- The letter of appeal must be submitted within 14 working days of receipt of the written hearing outcome and sent to the IAOCR CEO.
- The IAOCR CEO will inform the learner/participant (and their employer, if appropriate) that there is to be a meeting of the Appeals Panel at which a review will be sought.
- The Appeals Panel will meet within 28 working days of receiving the letter of appeal.
- The Appeals Panel will be made up of two members of the IAOCR Executive Leadership team who have not previously been involved with the case. They may, at their discretion, also request additional support from a member of the IAOCR's accreditation staff, or relevant independent external support.

5.2 The Appeals Panel Meeting

- Before the Appeals Panel meeting takes place, the learner/participant will have sight of all the relevant documents (e.g., evidence) which will be considered by the Appeals Panel.
- A learner/participant or trainer/assessor presenting their own case is permitted to be accompanied by one colleague, friend, or relative.
- The trainer/assessor or the learner/participant will have the opportunity to hear each other's submissions to the Appeals Panel at the hearing with a member of the IAOCR Accreditation Team.

5.3 The Appeals Panel Decision

The Appeals Panel will:

- Consider all the available evidence.
- Judge the evidence and decide if malpractice or academic misconduct has taken place.
- Will inform the learner/participant in writing of the Appeal Panel's decision within six working days of its determination.
- A learner/participant will not be allowed to take any IAOCR assessment in the future, unless under extenuating circumstances it is agreed by the CEO that a period of 12 months be allowed to elapse prior to commencing any future accreditation programmes
- The Appeals Panel decision will be final.



Tracking Record

Policy Owner : Sarah Everitt, Chief Quality & Client Officer
Created : July 2024
Status : Final
Last Reviewed : Sept 2024