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**Malpractice and Maladministration incorporating plagiarism.**

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This Policy has been developed by Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning (SCIL), part of Somerset Council. All training programmes have a commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables all Students, Apprentices, Learners and Trainees (SALTs) who have chosen to study with SCIL to achieve their full potential.

**Introduction**

This policy sets out to define the procedures to be followed in the event of any dispute or allegation regarding malpractice or maladministration.

**Malpractice**

Attempted or actual malpractice activity will not be tolerated. The following are examples of malpractice, this list is not exhaustive:

* Tampering with candidates work prior to external moderation/verification
* Assisting candidates with the production of work outside of the awarding organisation guidance
* Fabricating assessment and/or internal verification records or authentication statements
* Cheating of any nature by learners including plagiarism
* Deliberate misuse of the awarding organisation logo

**Plagiarism**

**Plagiarism** is a specific form of cheating which applies to assignments completed by SALTs independently. It is the substantial, unacknowledged incorporation into a SALTs work of materials derived from published or unpublished work by another person.

**Examples of Plagiarism**

* Extracts from another person’s work without using quotation marks and/or acknowledgement of the source
* Summarising the work of another or using their ideas without acknowledgement of the source i.e. referencing
* Copying or using the work of another SALT (past or present) with or without that person’s knowledge or agreement
* Purchasing essays or downloading them from the internet to submit them as your own work.

**Study Centres** **Plagiarism Procedure**

Investigations into allegations will be coordinated by the named Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) at SCIL, who will ensure the initial investigation is carried out within ten working days.   If a SALT is on an ILM or NCFE course, SCIL will inform the relevant Investigation and Compliance team of the potential plagiarism case within 10 working days.

The investigation will involve establishing the full facts and circumstances of any allegation. It should not be assumed that because an allegation has been made, it is true. Where appropriate, the individual concerned, and any potential witnesses will be interviewed and their version of events recorded on paper.

The individual will be:

* informed in writing of the allegation made against him or her
* informed what evidence there is to support the allegation
* informed of the possible consequences, should plagiarism be proven
* given the opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a statement (if required)
* informed of the applicable appeals procedure, should a decision be made against him/her
* If the incident is proven to be plagiarism this will result in the SALT being withdrawn from the qualification.

**Preventing Plagiarism**

SCIL will actively seek to support SALTs in guiding them to avoid the practice for example, advice on referencing and bibliographies are provided to all SALTs undertaking accredited qualifications.

**Foundation Degree, BA Professional Practice and Somerset SCITT**

**Alleged Academic Misconduct**

Alleged Academic Misconduct is defined by the University of Worcester as any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment or assisting another Trainee to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment.

Alleged Academic Misconduct is a serious offence and takes many forms including:

* Plagiarism – passing off the work of someone else as if it is your own.
* Collusion – working closely with someone else to produce an assignment that is meant to be the work of an individual.

The internet is frequently used to download material to use in assignments. The University deals severely with trainees who cheat and penalties extend to suspension and withdrawal for a second (or particularly serious first) offence.  The University provides information on how to avoid [plagiarism](http://library.worc.ac.uk/guides/study-skills/plagiarism).

In order to avoid an allegation of Alleged Academic Misconduct, make sure that you follow guidance on conventions for referencing and for use of quotations. If you are in any doubt, check with the Academic Writing Lead who will be happy to advise you.

If a SALT on one of the above courses is found to have cheated, plagiarised or attempted to gain an unfair advantage, through falsification or deceit, then SCIL will follow the University of Worcester policies relating to Academic Misconduct found on the registry services assessment page (link below)

<https://www2.worc.ac.uk/registryservices/681.htm>

**Maladministration**

Is any activity, practice or omission which results in centre or learner non -compliance with administration regulations and requirements e.g. persistent mistakes or failure to keep appropriate learner records.

**Malpractice and Maladministration Procedure**

Investigations into allegations will be coordinated by the relevant Programme Manager with support from, the Service Manager at SCIL, who will ensure the initial investigation is carried out within ten working days.  SCIL will refer to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) ‘Suspected Malpractice policies and procedures’ during all stages. [Malpractice - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/)

The investigation will involve establishing the full facts and circumstances of any alleged malpractice or maladministration. It should not be assumed that because an allegation has been made, it is true. Where appropriate, the individual concerned, and any potential witnesses will be interviewed, and their version of events recorded on paper.

The individual will be:

* informed in writing of the allegation made against him or her
* informed what evidence there is to support the allegation
* informed of the possible consequences, should malpractice be proven
* given the opportunity to consider their response to the allegations
* given the opportunity to submit a written statement
* given the opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a supplementary statement (if required)
* informed of the applicable appeals procedure, should a decision be made against him/her
* informed that information relating to a suspected case of malpractice/maladministration will be shared with the relevant awarding organisation in line with their policies. **City and Guilds/ILM** – SCIL are required to report any suspicion of malpractice or maladministration to the Investigation and Compliance team within 10 working days, prior to commencement of an internal investigation.

**NCFE** – SCIL must complete the relevant Notification of Maladministration form via QualHub immediately after being made aware of a potential case of malpractice or maladministration.  [Malpractice and maladministration | NCFE](https://www.ncfe.org.uk/customer-and-learner-support/malpractice-maladministration/)

**Awareness of Malpractice and Maladministration**

SCIL makes the importance of avoiding malpractice and maladministration clear to SALTs and staff.  SALTs have inductions at the start of training programmes which cover plagiarism and any fraudulent activity. Staff have robust induction programmes and are mentored when they join the SCIL Study Centre team to ensure that all assessment decisions meet Awarding Organisation standards.  Administration Staff are aware of the requirements to keep appropriate learner records.  As part of annual CPD requirements, staff must read relevant polices around this area (such as JCQ Malpractice policy) to refresh their knowledge and understanding.