NWSLC

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE AND SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

Academic Integrity, Malpractice and Maladministration Policy 2026

North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

Title of Policy & Procedure Author: Vice Principal Quality

Target Audience: Staff / Students

Policy Location: Website / Staff SharePoint

Executive Approval Date: October 2026 Next Approval: October 2029

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Document History

Version Number	Amended By	Date of Revision	General Revision Description
1.0			Initial issue

1 Introduction

1.1 This Policy applies to all College centres, staff or candidates who are delivering or undertaking registered approved qualifications (including units), or accreditations and who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice and/or maladministration. It provides the framework for managing all suspected or confirmed cases of assessment misconduct, malpractice and maladministration and supports the College's commitment to maintaining academic integrity and confidence in the qualifications it delivers.

1.2 The Policy sets out the arrangements for preventing, identifying, reporting, investigating and responding to suspected or actual cases of malpractice and/or maladministration. It also defines the responsibilities of the College. Its staff and students in ensuring that all assessments are conducted fairly, securely and in accordance with awarding organisation, regulatory requirements such as the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and College requirements.

1.3 The College is committed to promoting a culture of honesty, fairness and academic integrity. Through effective assessment design, robust internal quality assurance processes, staff development, student guidance and the appropriate use of assessment authentication measures, including plagiarism detection software where applicable, the College seeks to prevent malpractice and maladministration wherever possible.

1.4 Where concerns regarding malpractice or maladministration arise, the College will investigate them within the timeframe set out by the relevant AO, fairly and proportionately, ensuring that investigations are conducted by appropriately qualified individuals who have no personal interest in the outcome. The College will cooperate fully with awarding organisations, JCQ and other relevant bodies, reporting suspected or confirmed cases where required.

2 Definitions

2.1 Definition of Academic Integrity

2.1.1 Academic integrity is the commitment to honest and fair learning and assessment. Students are expected to submit work that represents their own knowledge, understanding and skills, and to acknowledge appropriately where the ideas, words, data or work of others have been used.

2.1.2 Academic integrity includes the appropriate and authorised use of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Students must follow the requirements set by the College, their course and the relevant awarding organisation regarding when and how AI may be used within assessment.

2.1.3 A concern about academic integrity does not automatically constitute assessment malpractice. Where concerns arise, including through similarity checking, AI indicators or other evidence, they will be considered in accordance with the relevant awarding organisation requirements and the procedures set out in this Policy.

2.1.4 The use of AI in assessment is not automatically prohibited. Students must follow the requirements of the relevant qualification and awarding organisation on whether and how AI

may be used. Where AI is permitted, students must acknowledge and reference its use in accordance with awarding organisation requirements.

2.1.5 Failure to acknowledge the use of AI or submitting AI-generated content as the student's own work where this is not permitted, may constitute assessment malpractice.

2.2 Definition of Assessment Malpractice

2.2.1 Assessment malpractice is essentially any activity or practice, which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process and/or the validity of certificates. It covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise the:

i. assessment process;

ii. integrity of a qualification (including units) or accreditation;

iii. validity of a result or certificate;

iv. reputation and credibility of the College or awarding organisation.

2.2.2 Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems, to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

2.2.3 For the purpose of this Policy malpractice includes candidate malpractice, centre staff malpractice and, where applicable, centre malpractice as defined by awarding organisations and JCQ requirements. The Policy also covers misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain or groups of candidates.

2.3 Definition of Maladministration

2.3.1 Maladministration is any activity or practice, which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration within a centre (e.g. inappropriate candidate records).

3 Related Policies and Documents

3.1 This Policy should be read alongside other policies and procedures including:

- AI Usage Policy;
- Awarding organisation regulations or procedures applicable to the qualification concerned;
- Assessment, Quality Assurance and Appeals Policy;
- Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy;
- JCQ Malpractice Policies and Procedures;
- Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure;
- Staff Performance Support (Capability) Policy and Procedure;
- Student Conduct Expectations Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy.

4 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

4.1 College Responsibility

4.1.1 It is important that staff involved in the management, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications, accreditations and candidates are fully aware of the contents of this Policy, their awarding organisation requirements and any applicable JCQ regulations and guidance.

4.1.2 Failure to report suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration cases, failure to cooperate with an investigation, or knowingly provide inaccurate or misleading information during an investigation or have in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may itself constitute misconduct or malpractice and may lead to sanctions being imposed on the College.

4.1.3 Should an investigation be undertaken at the College, the Vice Principal Quality will:

i. ensure the investigation is carried out by competent investigators who have no personal involvement in the incident or interest in the outcomes;
ii. ensure the investigation is carried out in an effective, prompt and thorough manner as required by the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the investigator(s) look beyond the immediate reported issues to assure that arrangements at the College centre are appropriate for all qualifications;
iii. respond speedily and openly to all requests relating to the allegation and/or investigation;
iv. ensure that there is full cooperation of staff with any investigation and/or request for information.

4.2 Preventing Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration

4.2.1 The College will ensure that the central examinations team are appropriately trained and resourced to ensure:

i. all exams and assessments are conducted in accordance with awarding organisation and JCQ requirements;
ii. all exams and internal and external assessments are planned and managed effectively;
iii. ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to protect the security and confidentiality of assessment materials, including digital assessment materials, in accordance with awarding organisation and JCQ requirements;
iv. ensure robust arrangements exist to identify, report and manage suspected malpractice and maladministration promptly in line with the relevant awarding organisation and JCQ requirements.

4.3 Preventing Staff Malpractice and Maladministration

4.3.1 Through staff induction, staff training and quality assurance processes the College will ensure:

i. staff involved in the delivery of assessments and examinations understand the requirements for conducting these in compliance with awarding organisation guidance and JCQ Regulations and take all steps to prevent malpractice and maladministration;

ii. staff who manage and implement special consideration and access arrangements are aware of the specific requirements of the awarding organisation and JCQ regulations;
iii. staff delivering/assessing coursework or non-examination assessments understand how to identify and respond appropriately to concerns relating to academic integrity, including plagiarism, collusion and the unauthorised use of AI, and know when such concerns must be escalated as suspected assessment malpractice in accordance with section 4.5 of this Policy;
iv. a culture of honesty and openness so that any concerns of potential malpractice can be escalated appropriately without fear of repercussion;
v. staff understand their responsibilities in relation to the appropriate use of AI within assessment outlined within this Policy and follow the College's AI Usage Policy, Assessment, Quality Assurance and Appeals Policy, the relevant awarding organisation's Policies and JCQ guidance;
vi. staff do not disclose confidential assessment information or materials, including via electronic communications or social media.

4.4 Preventing Student Assessment Malpractice

4.4.1 Through student induction programme and specific tutorials the College will ensure student are aware of:

i. the need for all coursework, controlled assessment, internal assessment, non-examination assessment and examined work submitted for assessment must be the student's own authentic work;
ii. conditions under which exams and assessments will be conducted;
iii. actions that constitute assessment malpractice, including plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, impersonation, unauthorised use of AI and breaches of examination regulations and the sanctions that may be imposed on those who commit malpractice;
iv. mechanisms for reporting concerns relating to assessment malpractice and / or maladministration;
v. the appropriate and inappropriate use of AI within assessments and the requirement to acknowledge AI use where permitted by awarding organisation requirements;
vi. the College's use of authentication measures, including plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin where appropriate, to support the identification of potential academic misconduct.

4.5 Reporting Malpractice or Maladministration

4.5.1 Any member of staff, student, partner organisation, or other individual who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time **must notify the Vice Principal Quality or a member of the Quality Assurance Team immediately** using the **College's Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Reporting Form located on Moodle Teacher's Hub under the Assessment Malpractice Tile**. In doing so, details should be provided to them in writing within the form with the appropriate supporting evidence enclosed. Staff should not undertake a formal malpractice investigation before referral unless requested to do so by the Quality Team.

4.5.2 Reporting of suspected malpractice or maladministration must include (where possible):

i. the nature of the suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration and associated dates;
ii. details of the qualification or accreditation affected, or the nature of service affected;
iii. candidate's name and candidate (s) registration number;
iv. details of centre personnel (e.g. name, job role) if they are involved in the case;
v. details of personnel (e.g. name, job role) if they are involved in the case;
vi. Details of the evidence available to support the concern, including relevant assessment materials, Turnitin reports, correspondence, witness information or other documentation where applicable.

4.5.3 On receipt of a reporting form, the Quality Team will review the information and evidence provided and determine the appropriate next steps. Where further investigation is required, this will be undertaken in accordance with sections 4.6-4.12 of this Policy and the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation or JCQ. The College will ensure that staff involved in the initial investigation are competent and have no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. The investigation will be led by the Vice Principal Quality (if there is an investigation into allegations of malpractice or irregularities against the Vice Principal Quality then such investigations should be carried out by the Principal/CEO of the College or his/her nominee with appeals to the Chair of the Corporation or his/her nominee).

4.5.4 A member of the Quality Team will notify the awarding organisation if they suspect malpractice or maladministration has occurred within a reasonable time period (no longer than 10 working days if an investigation is being undertaken. Within 48 hours if no investigation is deemed as a requirement).

4.6 Confidentiality and Whistleblowing

4.6.1 Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. Where there are concerns about potential adverse consequences arising from disclosure of their identity, the individual should notify the College that they wish their identity to remain confidential.

4.6.2 The College will always aim to keep the identity of the person making the allegations confidential where asked to do so, although this cannot guarantee this. The College may need to disclose your identity should the allegation lead to issues that need to be taken forward by other parties. For example:

i. the police, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies (to investigate or prevent crime, including fraud);
ii. the courts (in connection with any court proceedings);
iii. other third parties such as the relevant regulatory authority (e.g. Ofqual in England).

4.6.3 Please see our Whistleblowing Policy for further information.

4.7 Responsibility for the investigation

4.7.1 In accordance with regulatory requirements all cases of maladministration and malpractice reported under section 4.5 will be examined within 48 hours and, where required the College

will establish whether malpractice or maladministration has occurred. The College will take all reasonable steps to prevent any adverse effect from occurring as defined by the regulators.

4.7.2 All suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration will be passed to our Vice Principal Quality who will work in conjunction with the Human Resources Team. The College will acknowledge receipt, as appropriate, to external parties within 10 working days.

4.7.3 The Vice Principal Quality will be responsible for ensuring that the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this Policy. The College will allocate a relevant member of staff (e.g. a member of the quality assurance team) to lead the investigation and establish whether or not the malpractice or maladministration has occurred and review any supporting evidence.

4.7.4 At all times the College will ensure investigations will be conducted fairly and objectively, ensuring that personnel assigned to the investigation have the appropriate level of training and competence and they have had no actual or perceived conflict of interest.

4.8 Notifying Relevant Parties

4.8.1 In all cases of suspected or actual malpractice the Vice Principal Quality will advise the Principal of the College that the College will be investigating the matter. If the Principal is under investigation the communication will be with the Chair of the Corporation.

4.8.2 In the case of candidate malpractice, the College may investigate the issue in conjunction with the awarding organisations' personnel.

4.8.3 The College will communicate directly with members of staff who have been accused of malpractice and/or maladministration if appropriate (e.g. where the staff member is no longer employed by the centre). The College may also communicate directly with a student or their representative (e.g. if there is a contradiction in the evidence provided during an investigation or where the College is suspected of being involved in malpractice).

4.8.4 Where applicable, the College will inform the appropriate regulatory authority if there has been an incident of malpractice or maladministration, which could either invalidate the award of a qualification or if it could affect a number of awarding organisations.

4.8.5 Where the allegation may affect another awarding organisation and their provision the College will also inform them in accordance with the regulatory requirements and obligations imposed on by the relevant regulator and/or seek to undertake a joint investigation with them if appropriate.

4.8.6 If fraud is suspected and/or identified the College may also notify the police.

4.9 Investigation Timelines and Summary Process

4.9.1 The College aims to action and resolve all stages of the investigation within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation. However, in some cases the investigation may take longer (e.g. complex investigations). In such instances, the College will advise all parties concerned of any revised timescales.

4.9.2 The fundamental principle of all investigations is to conduct them in a fair, objective, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias. In doing so, investigations will be underpinned by terms of reference and based around the following broad objectives:

i. establish the facts relating to allegations in order to determine whether any malpractice and/or maladministration has taken place;
ii. identify the cause of any malpractice and/or maladministration and those involved;
iii. establish the scale of any malpractice and/or maladministration and whether other qualifications or accreditations are affected;
iv. evaluate any action already taken by the curriculum area manager;
v. determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered candidates and to preserve the integrity of the qualification or accreditation;
vi. ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued;
vii. obtain clear evidence to identify any sanctions to be applied to the College, and/or any actions/support relating to members of staff;
viii. identify any adverse patterns or trends.

4.9.3 The investigation may involve a request for further information from relevant parties and/or interviews with personnel involved in the investigation. The College will expect all parties, who are either directly or indirectly involved in the investigation, to co-operate fully.

4.9.4 The College will ensure that all material collected as part of an investigation is kept secure. All records and original documentation concerning a completed investigation that ultimately leads to sanctions against the College, staff or candidates will be retained for a period of no less than five years.

4.9.5 If an investigation leads to invalidation of certificates, or criminal or civil prosecution, all records and original documentation relating to the case will be retained until the case and any appeals have been heard and for five years thereafter.

4.9.6 Either at notification of a suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration and/or at any time during the investigation, The College will follow the College's investigation procedure and any additional awarding organisation or JCQ requirements applicable to the qualification concerned in order to protect the interests of staff, candidates and the integrity of the qualifications or accreditations.

4.9.7 The College also reserves the right to withhold any certificates claimed or candidates' results for qualification or accreditation they are registered for at the time of the notification/investigation.

4.9.8 If appropriate, the College may find that the complexity of a case or a lack of cooperation from those being investigated means that the College is unable to complete an investigation. In such circumstances the College will consult the relevant regulatory authority in order to determine how best to progress the matter.

4.9.9 Throughout the investigation the Vice Principal Quality will be responsible for overseeing the work of the investigation team to ensure that due process is being followed, appropriate

evidence has been gathered and reviewed and for liaising with and keeping informed relevant external parties.

4.10 Investigation Report

4.10.1 If the College believes there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual in malpractice and/or maladministration the Vice Principal Quality will:

i. inform the awarding organisation (preferably in writing) of the allegation;
ii. provide the awarding organisation with details of the evidence found to support the judgment;
iii. inform the awarding organisation of the actions undertaken;
iv. confirm any mitigating circumstances considered during the investigation;
v. inform the awarding organisation that information in relation to the allegation and investigation may be, or has been, shared with regulators and other relevant bodies (e.g. police);
vi. provide the awarding organisation with an opportunity to consider and respond to the allegation and our findings;
vii. inform the staff/candidates involved of the Appeals Policy should they wish to appeal against the decision.

4.10.2 After an investigation, the College will produce a draft report for the parties concerned to check the factual accuracy. Any subsequent amendments will be agreed between the parties concerned and the College. The report will:

i. identify where the malpractice/maladministration, if any, occurred;
ii. confirm the facts of the case (and any mitigating factors if relevant);
iii. identify who was responsible for the malpractice/maladministration (if any);
iv. contain supporting evidence where appropriate (e.g. written statements);
v. confirm an appropriate level of remedial action and/or sanctions being applied.

4.10.3 The College will make the final report available to the regulatory authorities and other external agencies as required.

4.10.4 If it was an independent/third party that notified the College of the suspected or actual case of malpractice and/or maladministration, the College may also inform them of the outcome, normally within 10 working days of making the decision, in doing so the College may withhold some details if to disclose such information would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

4.10.5 In the case of an internal investigation against a member of the College staff the Vice Principal Quality will agree the report with the relevant internal managers and appropriate internal disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

4.11 Investigation Outcomes

4.11.1 If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place, the College will consider what action to take to:

i. minimise the risk to the integrity of certification now and in the future;

ii. maintain public confidence in the delivery and awarding of qualifications, accreditation or Quality Assured Awards;
iii. discourage others from carrying out similar instances of malpractice or maladministration;
iv. ensure there has been no gain from compromising the College standards.

4.11.2 Following an investigation, there are a number of actions that may be taken to address the cause of, or the issues surrounding, the malpractice/maladministration to prevent a recurrence.

4.11.3 Although this list is indicative only and is not meant to form an exhaustive list, it shows the type of actions the College could expect from the awarding organisation. The awarding organisation could:

i. Impose sanctions on the centre;
ii. Undertake additional/increased visits to the centre to provide them with a greater level of support and/or monitoring depending on their needs and performance;
iii. Require specific College staff to undergo additional training and/or scrutiny by the centre if there are concerns about their ability to undertake their role in the effective delivery of qualifications or accreditations;
iv. Require specific College staff to be removed from the delivery or assessment of qualifications, or accreditations (e.g. not permitting an individual to invigilate online assessments or withdrawing an assessor's PIN);
v. Alter the way, and the period in which the College receives assessment materials from an awarding organisation, if there are concerns around their ability to maintain the security and confidentiality of such materials;
vi. Insist independent personnel (e.g. invigilators, assessors, internal verifiers) are used for the future delivery of the qualifications or accreditations;
vii. Take action against candidates in relation to proven instances of cheating, plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, impersonation, unauthorised use of AI, fraud or other confirmed malpractice. Such action will include some or all of the following:
    - Issuing a written warning that if the offence is repeated further action may be taken;
    - Loss of all marks/credits for the related work/unit;
    - Disqualification from the qualification (including units) or accreditation;
    - Placing a ban for a set period of time from taking any further qualifications or accreditations with us;
viii. Inform relevant third parties (e.g. funding bodies) of the findings in case they need to take relevant action in relation to the centre;
ix. Carry out additional, related investigations if the awarding organisation suspects the issue may be more widespread at the centre and/or at other centres.

4.12 Conflicts of Interest

4.12.1 The College manages conflicts of interest by informing the awarding bodies, before the published deadline for entries, of:

i. any members of centre staff who are taking qualifications at their own centre which include internally assessed components/units;
ii. any members of centre staff who are teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally assessed components/units;
iii. maintains clear records of all instances where:
    - exams office staff have members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments either at the centre itself or other centres;
    - centre staff are taking qualifications at their centre which do not include internally assessed components/units;
    - centre staff are taking qualifications at other centres;
iv. Any other actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest that may compromise, the integrity of assessment or quality assurance.

4.12.2 The College maintains records, which include details of the measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected. The records are available for inspection by a JCQ Centre Inspector and/or awarding organisation staff. The records will be retained until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.

4.12.3 When entering members of centre staff for qualifications at this centre it will only be as a last resort, in cases where the member of centre staff is unable to find another centre.

4.12.4 The College is responsible for ensuring that proper protocols are in place to prevent the member of centre staff having access to examination materials prior to the examination and that other centre staff are briefed on maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the examination materials.

4.12.5 The Head of Centre must ensure that during the examination series the member of centre staff is treated in the same way as any other candidate entered for that examination, does not have access to examination materials and does not receive any preferential treatment.

4.13 Review Arrangements

4.13.1 The College will review this Policy every three years and revise it as and when necessary changes in the practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies, changes in legislation, or trends identified from previous allegations.

4.13.2 In addition, this Policy may be updated in light of operational feedback to ensure our arrangements for dealing with suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration remain effective.

5 Equality Analysis

5.1 By virtue of the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, the College has a duty to have due regard to the need to:

i. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct;

ii. advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups;

iii. foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.2 In implementing this Policy and associated procedures, the College will actively take these aims into account as part of its decision-making process and will demonstrate how this has been undertaken. The College will ensure that all allegations of assessment misconduct, malpractice and maladministration are managed fairly, consistently and objectively. Investigations and decision-making will have due regard to the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that no individual is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Reasonable adjustments will be considered where appropriate throughout the investigation process.

5.3 Where necessary a full equality impact assessment will be undertaken.

6 Data Protection Impact Assessment

6.1 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) are an essential part of the College's accountability obligations under the UK GDPR. Conducting a DPIA is a legal requirement for any type of processing, including certain specified types of processing that are likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. Under UK GDPR, failure to carry out a DPIA when required may leave the College open to enforcement action.

6.2 A DPIA, relating to any relevant areas within this Policy and Procedure, will therefore be undertaken to enable the systematic analysis, identification and minimisation of data protection risks and to demonstrate how the College complies with its data protection obligations.

Appendix 1: Further Education and Access to Higher Education Assessment Malpractice Procedure

Where concerns arise regarding the authenticity or academic integrity of assessed work, staff must initially follow the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation and procedure set out below. This may include discussion with the student and appropriate action to establish or assure the authenticity of the assessment. Where the circumstances give rise to a reasonable suspicion of assessment malpractice, the matter must be referred to the Quality Team in accordance with section 4.5.

Procedure	The Process	Possible Outcome / Next Steps
1. Academic integrity concern identified	Where a teacher/assessor identifies a concern regarding the authenticity or academic integrity of assessed work (i.e. suspected plagiarism, collusion, inappropriate or unauthorised use of AI, or concerns arising from Turnitin) they should review the available assessment evidence and the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation. A Turnitin similarity score, AI writing indicator or other automated indicator must not, in isolation, be treated as proof of malpractice.	The concern may be resolved as an academic integrity or poor academic practice issue, or further action may be required to establish the authenticity of the assessment.
2. Initial discussion and authentication	Where appropriate and permitted by the relevant awarding organisation, the teacher/assessor should discuss the concern with the student and give them an opportunity to explain their work and demonstrate their understanding. The teacher/assessor should record the concern, evidence considered and discussion with the student.	Where the concern does not give rise to reasonable suspicion of assessment malpractice, appropriate action may include academic practice guidance, resubmission, viva voce, professional discussion, presentation or another permitted method of assuring authenticity. Any action must comply with awarding organisation requirements. Such action should be shared with external quality assurer at the next visit.
3. Reasonable suspicion of	Where the available information gives rise to a reasonable suspicion that assessment malpractice may have occurred, the matter must no longer be	The matter moves to the formal malpractice reporting process. Curriculum staff should not determine that formal malpractice has occurred or undertake a separate

	assessment malpractice	managed solely as a routine academic integrity concern. This applies whether or not the student admits the alleged conduct.	formal investigation unless requested by the Quality Team.
4.	Referral to the Quality Team	The teacher/assessor or relevant member of staff must complete the College's Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Reporting Form as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the concern or incident is identified as set out in section 4.5 of this Policy. Relevant evidence should be submitted with the referral wherever possible.	The Quality Team assumes oversight of the case and reviews the referral. Assessment evidence and records relating to the case should be retained securely while the matter is considered.
5.	Initial Quality review	The Quality Assurance Team will review the information and evidence submitted, gather any additional information required and determine whether the matter falls within the scope of the formal malpractice procedure. It will also identify any immediate action required to protect the integrity of the assessment or qualification.	The Quality Team may determine that: (a) no further malpractice action is required; (b) the matter should be returned for appropriate academic integrity action in accordance with awarding organisation requirements; or (c) a formal malpractice investigation is required and reported to the relevant awarding organisation.
6.	Awarding organisation notification	Where notification is required, the Quality Team will notify the relevant awarding organisation as soon as practicable and normally within ten working days of the College becoming aware of the suspected malpractice, or sooner where the awarding organisation, JCQ or other applicable requirements specify an earlier timescale.	The College will follow any instructions provided by the awarding organisation, including requirements relating to investigation, assessment decisions, candidate communication or preservation of evidence.
7.	Formal investigation	Where an investigation is required, it will be managed through the Quality Team in accordance with the main Policy and relevant awarding organisation requirements. The student will be informed of the concern and provided with an appropriate opportunity to respond to the allegation and evidence. The investigation will be undertaken fairly, objectively and by appropriately authorised staff.	The investigation may conclude that: (a)malpractice has not occurred; (b) there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the allegation; or (c) assessment malpractice has occurred.
8.	Outcome and action	The outcome will be determined taking account of the evidence, awarding organisation requirements and any instructions or decisions made by the	Where malpractice is not upheld, the assessment will proceed normally, and no sanction will arise solely from

	awarding organisation. Assessment-related penalties must not be applied outside the requirements of the relevant qualification or awarding organisation.	the allegation. Where malpractice is upheld, appropriate assessment action or sanction will be applied in accordance with awarding organisation requirements. Separate action under the Student Conduct Expectations Policy may also be considered where appropriate.
9. Recording, communication and appeal	The College will maintain an appropriate record of the referral, evidence, investigation, decision and action taken. The student will be informed of the outcome in writing and provided with information about any applicable right of appeal. Relevant outcomes will be reported through appropriate College quality assurance arrangements.	Case closed following completion of any required actions, awarding organisation requirements and appeal process. Lessons arising from the case may inform staff development, student guidance, assessment practice or wider quality improvement.
10. Assessment Methodology Review	If appropriate to method of assessment utilised in the malpractice case, the quality team will review the assessment methodology and recommend changes in assessment design to prevent further malpractice cases.	If required, CAL works with teaching team to redesign assessment methodology to improve PUYP skills acquisition and reduce the likelihood of further malpractice. For example, moving from essays or reports to professional discussions and presentations.

Appendix 2: Higher Education Academic and Assessment Malpractice Procedure

The information in this Procedure should be read in conjunction with the College's Assessment, Quality Assurance and Appeals Policy.

Who Does This Procedure Apply To?

This procedure applies to all students enrolled on Higher Education Programmes at the College. It provides additional guidance for the management of academic integrity concerns and suspected assessment malpractice relating to Higher Education provision. It does not replace the College's formal requirements for reporting and investigating suspected assessment malpractice.

For students registered on courses validated by partner universities the Academic Regulations of the awarding University will be considered alongside this procedure. For students registered on franchised provision with partner universities only the Academic Regulations and associated policies of the awarding University will apply.

Examples of Academic and Assessment Misconduct

Students are required to act with honesty, integrity and accountability in fulfilling requirements in relation to assessment and academic conduct.

Below are some examples of what we consider to be academic or assessment misconduct. Note that these examples are not exhaustive, academic or assessment misconduct is any action which gains, attempts to gain, or assists others in gaining or attempting to gain unfair academic advantage.

Category A Offences

Category A Offences are related to poor academic / assessment practice.

Poor academic practice is the unintentional and / or minor presentation of work that is not the student's own as if it were. It is the presenting of ideas, data or other information as if originally discovered by the student, or the word for word duplication of work where the source is not acknowledged.

The College recognises that students develop their academic practice during the early stages of their higher education academic journey and may not initially be familiar with the expectations of good academic practice.

The College aims to support students in developing good academic practice, and to help students to understand where academic or assessment integrity has been compromised and how they can avoid repeat offences.

The expectation is that cases of poor academic practice are only likely to occur during the first level of an undergraduate award and within the first assessment period. Category A Offences are only likely to relate to plagiarism, self-plagiarism and collusion which rely on the development of good academic practice skills.

Types of Category A Offences include (but are not exclusive to)

Plagiarism: using someone else's ideas, words, data, or other material produced by them without acknowledgement.

Self-plagiarism: using the registered student's own ideas, words, data or other material produced by them and submitted for formal assessment without acknowledgement.

In Part False Authorship: a form of plagiarism where the student has engaged with an unauthorised or unacknowledged third party and/or software tool to complete an assessment in part. This may include work produced by another student, a family member or friend etc. and/or the submission of work that has been generated through the use of AI software (e.g. ChatGPT and/or the over reliance on translation and paraphrasing software (e.g. Grammarly).

Collusion: working with others and using the ideas or words of this joint work without acknowledgment, as though it is the students' own work, or allowing others to use the ideas or words of joint work without acknowledgment.

Fabrication, falsification or misrepresentation: of data, results or other outputs or aspects of research, including documentation and participant consent, or presenting or recording such data, as if they were real.

Category B Offences

Category B offences are not associated with the development of good academic or assessment practice and as such, all Category B offences are considered gross misconduct. Types of category B offences include (but are not exclusive to)

Subsequent Category A offence following final written warning

Contract cheating: contracting a third party to provide work, which is then used or submitted as part of a formal assessment as though it is the student's own work.

Intentional False Authorship: a form of plagiarism where the student has engaged with an unauthorised or unacknowledged third party and/or software tool to complete an assessment in majority, or in in whole. This may include work produced by another student, a family member or friend etc. and/or the submission of work that has been generated through engagement with an essay mill or through the use of AI software (e.g. ChatGPT and/or the over reliance on translation and paraphrasing software (e.g. Grammarly).

Exam cheating: attempting to see an exam paper or trying to obtain confidential information about an exam paper before the exam; copying or trying to copy from someone else during an exam; communicating or trying to communicate with another student during an exam; having notes that are not allowed or having electronic devices, such as mobile phones, that are not allowed; or trying to get someone else to take the exam for you.

Impersonating someone or being impersonated: in an examination or arranging for someone to impersonate someone else by sitting their examination.

Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations: in carrying out research. This includes failure to follow agreed protocol if this failure results in unreasonable risk or harm to humans, other sentient beings or the environment, and facilitating of misconduct in research by collusion in, or

concealment of, such actions by others. It includes any plan or conspiracy to attempt to do any of these things.

An academic integrity concern does not, in itself, establish that academic or assessment misconduct has occurred. Concerns may arise through the assessed view of students work, turn it in, similarity information, AI writing indicators, inconsistencies with the student's previous work, concerns regarding referencing or source use, or other information relating to the authenticity of the assessment.

Turnitin similarity scores, AI writing indicators, and other automated detection tools must not be treated as evidence of misconduct in isolation. The assessor must consider the assessed work and other relevant evidence and follow the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation or validating partner.

Where appropriate, the assessor should discuss the concerns with the student to establish their understanding of the work and its authenticity. Appropriate action may include resubmission, viva voce, professional discussion, presentation, or another method of authentication permitted by the awarding organisational validating partner. Where the available evidence gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of assessment malpractice, the matter must be reported at the relevant Programme Management and Assessment Board via HEenquiries@nwslc.ac.uk.

The Academic and Assessment Misconduct Procedure

The primary aim of this procedure is to:

- support students in developing and maintaining good academic practice and assessment integrity.
- identify cases when academic or assessment integrity has been compromised, and to address them appropriately in relation to the severity of the offence.

Procedure for Category A – Stage 1 Poor Academic / Assessment Practice.	Examples of offence	Action / Sanction
1. The teacher/assessor should report the poor academic / assessment practice case to the relevant College curriculum manager and the Programme Management and Assessment Board via HEenquiries@nwslc.ac.uk 2. The teacher / assessor will arrange a meeting with the student to hear their comments, to evaluate the case and will determine the level of seriousness and provide a report to the Programme Management and Assessment Board. 3. In all cases a note of the allegation, findings from the meeting with the student and the action / sanction applied will be reported to the Programme Management and Assessment Board and recorded on the student's file. 4. In all cases the student will be referred to the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) for guidance on good academic practice to prevent further offences.	**Plagiarism (first offence).** **Collusion (first offence)** **In Part False Authorship – Failure to acknowledge appropriate use of AI**	1. Student to attend a meeting with the teacher / assessor to discuss the incident. Findings are to be reported to the relevant Learning and Skills Manager and the Programme Management and Assessment Board. If case is upheld 2. Submission declined. Same assessment to be resubmitted by the student within 14 days of original submission date. (Mark capped at Pass grade). 3. Cause for Concern to be issued in line with stage 1 of Student Conduct Expectations Policy. 4. Student to undertake mandatory attendance at LRC academic practice training workshop.

Procedure for Category A – Stage 2 Poor Academic / Assessment Practice.	Examples of offence	Action / Sanction
1. The teacher/assessor should report the poor academic or assessment practice case to the relevant College curriculum manager and the Programme Management and Assessment Board via HEenquiries@nwslc.ac.uk 2. The relevant College curriculum manager will arrange a disciplinary hearing with the student to hear his/her comments, to evaluate the case and will determine the level of seriousness and provide a report to the Programme Management and Assessment Board. 3. In all cases a note of the allegation, findings from the meeting with the student and the action / sanction applied will be reported to the Programme Management and Assessment Board and recorded on the student's file. In all cases the student will be referred to the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) for compulsory attendance at academic practice workshop to prevent further offences.	**Plagiarism (Second offence).** Applicable to offences where up to and including one third of the assessment consists of offending material **Collusion (Second offence)** Applicable to offences where up to and including one third of the assessment consists of offending material **In Part False** **Authorship – (second offence) or intentional failure to** **acknowledge use of AI for part of assessment (first offence)** **Note - Offences where more than one third of the assessment consists of offending material should be referred to Category A – Stage 3**	1. Student to attend a disciplinary hearing with the teacher / assessor to discuss the incident. A full investigation is to be undertaken, and findings are to be reported to the relevant Learning and Skills Manager and the Programme Management and Assessment Board. If case is upheld 2. Submission declined. Student to complete a new assessment. (Mark capped at Pass grade) The programme team may opt to conduct the assessment under supervised conditions to ensure that plagiarism cannot take place. 3. Written warning to be issued in line with stage 2 of Student Conduct Expectations Policy. 4. Student to undertake mandatory attendance at LRC academic practice training workshop

Procedure for Category A - Stage 3 Academic / Assessment Misconduct.	Examples of offence	Action / Sanction
1. The teacher/assessor should report the poor academic / assessment practice case to the relevant College curriculum manager and the Programme Management and Assessment Board via HEenquiries@nwslc.ac.uk 2. The Assistant Principal for Higher Education will arrange a disciplinary hearing with the student to hear their comments, to evaluate the case and will determine the level of seriousness and provide a report to the Programme Management and Assessment Board. 3. In all cases a note of the allegation, findings from the meeting with the student and the action / sanction applied will be reported to the Programme Management and Assessment Board and recorded on the student's file. 4. In all cases the student will be referred to the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) for compulsory attendance at academic practice workshop to prevent further offences.	**Plagiarism (Second offence).** Applicable to offences where more than one third of the assessment consists of offending material. **Collusion (Second offence)**. Applicable to offences where more than one third of the assessment consists of offending material. **Plagiarism (Third offence)** Applicable to all cases regardless of the amount of assessment that consists of offending material. **Collusion (Third Offence**) Applicable to all cases regardless of the amount of assessment that consists of offending material. **False Authorship – (Third offence) or intentional failure to acknowledge use of AI for part of assessment (second offence)** **Fabrication, falsification or misrepresentation** **(First Offence)**	1. Student to attend a disciplinary hearing with the Learning and Skills Manager for the area to discuss the incident. A full investigation is to be undertaken and findings are to be reported to the Programme Management and Assessment Board. If case is upheld: 2. Submission declined. Unclassified grade applied to the module/unit. Student required to either complete a different unit in full or take the unit as compensation. 3. Final written warning to be issued in line with stage 3 of Student Conduct Expectations Policy. 4. Inform external examiners/verifiers in line with awarding organisation's procedures.

Procedure for Category B Gross Academic / Assessment Misconduct.	Examples of Offence	Action / Sanction
1. The teacher/assessor should report the academic / assessment misconduct case to the relevant College curriculum manager and the Programme Management and Assessment Board via HEenquiries@nwslc.ac.uk 2. The Assistant Principal for Higher Education will arrange a disciplinary hearing with the student to hear his/her case, to consider all of the evidence and will determine the level of seriousness and the appropriate action / sanction to be applied. 3. In all cases a note of the allegation, findings from the hearing and the action / sanction applied will be reported to the Programme Management and Assessment Board, the Vice Principal Quality and will be confirmed in writing to the student. The disciplinary outcome will be recorded on the student's file.	**Plagiarism (Subsequent offence following final written warning).** Applicable to all cases regardless of the amount of assessment that consists of offending material. **Collusion (Subsequent offence following final written warning).** Applicable to all cases regardless of the amount of assessment that consists of offending material. **False Authorship -** **intentional failure to acknowledge use of AI for whole assessment.** **Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation** (Second offence) **Contract cheating** **Exam cheating** **Impersonating someone or being impersonated** **Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional** **obligations** Any other intentional conduct that would give an unfair assessment advantage and / or is likely to affect the security of the assessment.	1. Student to attend a disciplinary hearing with the Assistant Principal for Higher Education to discuss the incident. A full investigation is to be undertaken, and findings are to be reported to the Programme Management and Assessment Board and Vice Principal Quality. If case is upheld 2. If the investigation concludes that a student has intentionally committed gross academic / assessment misconduct the student will be excluded from the College in line with stage 4 of Student Conduct Expectations Policy. The student may be permitted to receive an interim qualification if eligible. 3. External examiners/verifiers are informed in line with awarding organisation's procedures. Examples of intentional gross academic / assessment misconduct include but are not limited to: - submission of an assessment / assignment that has been solely produced by a third party for example generated fully through use of AI. - any form of cheating in an exam. - any form of intentional fabrication, falsification, misrepresentation, or impersonation. - intentional negligence in meeting legal, ethical, and professional obligations. If investigation finds that a student has unintentionally committed gross academic / assessment misconduct a Category A sanction, relevant to the severity of the offence, may be applied.

If an allegation of poor academic / assessment practice or misconduct is not upheld, this will be confirmed to the student in writing, and the assessment will be marked with no sanction applied and no detriment to the student.

If the student fails, without good reason, to attend meetings / hearings as requested a decision will be made at the discretion of the College based on the available evidence and information. The Right of Appeal - at all stages in the procedure the student will have the right of appeal.