

Guidance on Malpractice in Internal Assessment

SQA centres should have procedures for dealing with instances of suspected malpractice in internal assessments, as well as in externally-assessed examinations or coursework. **Internal verifiers may be asked to provide a second opinion during investigations of suspected malpractice.**

Candidate malpractice means malpractice by a candidate in the course of completing an assessment and can arise in:

- ◆ the preparation and authentication of coursework
- ◆ the presentation of practical work
- ◆ the compilation of portfolios of assessment evidence
- ◆ conduct during the assessment

Examples:

- ◆ Collusion — with others when an assessment must be completed by individual candidates
- ◆ Copying — from another candidate (including using ICT to do so)
- ◆ Frivolous content — producing content that is unrelated to the assessment in question
- ◆ Misconduct — inappropriate behaviour during an assessment that causes disruption to others. This includes shouting and/or aggressive behaviour or language
- ◆ Offensive content — inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material in assessment evidence
- ◆ Impersonation — pretending to be someone else
- ◆ Plagiarism — failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person's work as if it were the candidates own
- ◆ Unauthorised aids — physical possession of unauthorised materials (including mobile phones, MP3 players, notes etc)

Dealing with suspected cases of candidate malpractice

Pupils must be made aware of what malpractice and plagiarism are and the potential outcomes of committing malpractice.

Where a teacher suspects plagiarism or academic dishonesty, the internal verifier should be alerted in the first instance and asked for a second opinion. If doubt remains over the authenticity of the pupil's work, then further investigation should be carried out by a senior member of staff. This may result in a pupil disciplinary process. Different sanctions may be applied for different categories of malpractice.

A log and records of all instances of suspected and confirmed malpractice should be retained for three years. SQA can request to see these records.

Centre malpractice

The following are examples of centre malpractice:

- ◆ Misuse of assessments, including inappropriate adjustments to assessment decisions
- ◆ Non-compliance with defined conditions for assessment for a qualification
- ◆ Failure to comply with requirements for accurate and safe retention of candidate evidence, assessment and internal verification records
- ◆ Failure to comply with SQA procedures for managing and transferring accurate candidate data
- ◆ Excessive over-direction to candidates on how to meet national standards
- ◆ Deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates

Staff must make every effort to avoid centre malpractice, and should report any concerns to the head teacher. Candidates or other members of the public can report any instances of suspected malpractice to the SQA, who will then investigate the matter.

The internal verification process should be used to ensure that the required conditions for assessment are in place and that correct assessment and resulting records are completed and retained.