



DH Associates Malpractice Policy

Scope of policy

This policy applies to all qualifications offered by DH Associates (DHA). This policy sets out the course of action DHA will take in responding to and investigating an allegation of suspected malpractice relating to the assessment of qualifications and/or the quality assurance of the assessment process conducted.

Definition

'Malpractice' means a contravention or the ignoring of the regulatory requirements pertaining to the assessment process (including the conduct of examinations), which puts at risk the integrity, credibility and validity of a qualification, its assessment and learner certificates. The term 'malpractice' also covers both maladministration and misconduct.

Purpose of policy

The purpose of the policy is to explain the circumstances in which DHA will undertake an investigation and to provide key information to those preparing to make an allegation of malpractice. The policy is informed by guidance from awarding bodies, eg City & Guilds publication *Managing cases of suspected malpractice*. Any member of centre staff, learner or other member of the public who suspects assessment malpractice may contact the Quality Assurance Manager at DH.

Making an allegation

Centre staff who suspect malpractice must report it immediately to DHA Quality Assurance Manager. Learners, employers or members of the public may report suspected malpractice and the member of staff receiving the report must immediately inform the Quality Assurance Manager.

Those reporting or disclosing suspected malpractice will normally be asked to provide as much evidence as possible to support the disclosure. Each disclosure will be considered sensitively and carefully and appropriate action will be taken.

It should be noted, however, that DHA's ability to investigate allegations will be dependent on the availability of documentary evidence. This becomes more difficult to produce and authenticate after a considerable amount of time has elapsed. Therefore we encourage anyone who suspects malpractice to notify us as soon as possible.

We will endeavour to keep a complainant's identity confidential where asked to do so, although this cannot be guaranteed and identity may need to be disclosed. Those disclosing information should also recognise that they may be identifiable by others due to the nature or circumstances of the disclosure. Information received in disclosures may be shared with third parties where necessary. Individuals who are concerned about being identified should discuss their concerns at the time of disclosure. Anonymous disclosures will be considered but it may not always be possible to investigate them.

Investigating an allegation

The Quality Assurance Manager will plan the investigation of suspected malpractice. This may include interviewing of the complainant, learner, employer, DHA delivery staff or any person relevant to the investigation. If necessary the awarding body will be contacted for advice on conducting the investigation.

Investigations will be within 3 days of receipt of disclosure. Detailed records will be kept and copies of relevant documents retained.

Unfounded reports may be resolved quickly.

If malpractice has been found the Quality Assurance Manager will consider appropriate action which may include the following

- Removing a learner from programme
- Requiring a learner to resubmit evidence for their qualification
- Starting disciplinary proceedings for staff malpractice
- Informing the awarding body of the outcome of the investigation
- Any other action required

Where possible the outcome of the investigation will be shared with the complainant.

Circumstances Resulting in Malpractice

- Centre staff failing to meet awarding body centre and approval requirements
- Centre staff influencing the assessment, certification or examination process
- Learners breaching examination or assessment rules or regulations
- Learner behaving inappropriately during an exam or assessment