



Title	Date of Issue	Date to be reviewed	Written by (name/role)
<b>Plagiarism and Malpractice Policy 2020</b>	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sharon Davies and Kate Gillespie

### Context

Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment certification.

These procedures relate to malpractice in any assessment and certification context and set out the rights and responsibilities with regard to malpractice of learners and staff of SENDTAC LTD.

### Company Statement

The Company has a commitment to the highest standards of quality, honesty, openness and accountability. The Company does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by:

- Learners
- Staff at Sendtac Ltd in connection with any assessments and certification

There is therefore no scope for compromising the reputation of the qualifications and curriculum of the professional/awarding bodies and/or that of the Company, as laid out in the Code of Practice.

The Company is committed to investigate all cases of failure to abide by its regulations that may constitute malpractice. Where cases of suspected malpractice are proven, the Company is fully committed to taking appropriate action, including applying punitive measures and report suspected malpractice in order to maintain the integrity of all qualifications.

### Objective

The Company statement is designed to enable the Company, associates, linked institutions and/or awarding bodies to work together in detecting any irregularities and the implementation of appropriate sanctions.

### Malpractice: Identification

For the purposes of these procedures, malpractice is defined as any **deliberate** action, neglect or other practice that compromises, or could compromise:

- the assessment process;
- the integrity of a regulated qualification;
- the validity of a result or certificate;
- the reputation and credibility of the awarding body; or,

- the qualification or the wider qualifications community.

Malpractice is distinguished from maladministration: the latter is any activity, neglect or other practice that results in the centre or learner not conforming with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications (*i.e. not deliberate*) e.g. accidental claiming or issue of certificates or a simple mistake, while the former is a deliberate act of deception in order to obtain a qualification.

**Company malpractice** can include:

- Inadequately secured materials (Exam storage, marking guidance, learner evidence, assessment and IQA records).
- Misuse of assessments, inappropriate adjustments, improper assistance, and manufacturing evidence of competence, fabricating assessment or internal verification records.
- Deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates

**Examples of Company malpractice** can include:

- Failing to keep assessment mark schemes secure
- Alteration of assessment mark scheme
- Alteration of an awarding bodies assessment and grading criteria
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves staff producing work for the learner
- Use of falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment failing to keep learner computer files secure
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration or substitution,
- Failing to keep assessment/examination/test papers secure prior to the assessment /examination/test
- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment /examination/test material prior to an assessment/examination/test.
- Interfering with coursework/scripts after collection and before dispatch to awarding body/moderator

**Learner/Student Malpractice** - in assessment can occur in:

- The compilation of portfolios.
- The presentation of practical work.
- The preparation and authentication of evidence.
- Conduct during an internal or external assessment

**Examples of learner/student malpractice** can include:

- Plagiarism of any nature. Plagiarism is presenting the ideas, work or words of other people and passing off the work as the learner's own, whether whole or part(s) of another individual's work. This can include artwork, graphics, images, words, computer generated work (including Internet

sources), whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without acknowledging the source.

- Falsification of assessment evidence or results
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other students to produce work that is submitted as individual work. Likewise, it is also collusion to copy someone else's work and submit it as though it were their own. Both students would be open to a charge of academic malpractice. However, students should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an important skill, however the use of minutes and task allocation, etc. are a key part of team work, and this must be made clear to students.
- Copying from another candidate (including the use of ICT to assist copying), or allowing work to be copied
- Deliberate destruction of another's work
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
- Impersonation: pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment, test or examination
- Failure to abide by instructions or advice given by an assessor, supervisor, invigilator, or Awarding Body conditions in relation to an assessment, test or examination.
- Introduction and/or use of unauthorised material or instruments in the examination room or assessment session, e.g. study guides, notes, mobile phones, tablets or other similar electronic devices.
- Disruptive, offensive or in appropriate behaviour.
- Misuse or attempted misuse of examination/assessment material. The Company retains at its discretion to identify further areas of malpractice beyond the areas identified above.

## **Implementation**

The Company will use the Learner Conduct and Performance Policies and Procedures with students where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice and/or plagiarism have been proven. Where assessment malpractice is proven by awarding authorities/bodies may also impose penalties or sanctions. The Company will use the disciplinary procedure with staff of the Company where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven. Where assessment malpractice is proven by awarding authorities/bodies may also impose penalties or sanctions.

## **Process of Implementation**

- The Company will inform its students of its procedures on assessment malpractice and plagiarism during induction and through handbooks.
- Students will be shown the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites.
- The Company staff should include assessment procedures which reduce the opportunity for malpractice including.
- Learners should be asked to declare that their work is their own when submitting assessments.
- Incidents of learner assessment malpractice should be reported to the Head of Faculty.
- Incidents of staff assessment malpractice should be reported to the Head of Faculty and the Assistant Principal – Teaching, Learning and Assessment.
- When a case of alleged assessment malpractice has been reported the incident should be investigated using the appropriate disciplinary procedure.

## **Identification**

### **Malpractice may be identified:**

- At course and unit level when marking relevant work
- At centre level through on-going quality assurance activity and monitoring e.g. internal verification activity.
- At centre level through intelligence, complaints or feedback received e.g. from centre staff, learners etc.
- Through scheduled quality assurance activity and monitoring e.g. external verification/moderation activity
- Through internal examinations sampling
- Through intelligence, complaints or feedback received e.g. from learners, centre staff, whistle blowers or other stakeholders.
- Through information from other organisations e.g. other awarding bodies, sector skills councils or funding agencies etc.
- At regulator level through intelligence, complaints or feedback received.

### **Reporting Malpractice: Responsibility**

- The Company accepts the responsibility to report any suspicion of malpractice to the link institutions and/or professional body and will facilitate investigation of the alleged irregularities.
- When dealing with an incident of suspected Malpractice the Company will :
  - ensure staff leading the investigation are independent of the staff, students, learners being investigated.
  - inform those who are suspected of malpractice that they are entitled to know the necessary details of the case and possible outcomes.
- In all cases, it will notify the regulatory authorities/awarding bodies/institutions once malpractice has been proven. In certain cases, it will notify the regulatory authorities/awarding bodies/institutions if malpractice is suspected, if this initial notification is required. The Company will also indicate the proposed action and an estimated timescale for the investigation to the regulatory authorities of the link institutions/professional bodies maintain confidentiality of the relevant materials and will ensure that they are kept secure and not disclosed to any third parties.

### **Reporting Suspected Cases of Malpractice**

In all cases where a student is suspected of malpractice during an examination or assessment, he/she will first be warned by the invigilator that his/her actions are in breach of regulations and therefore might constitute malpractice. The student will also be informed that the invigilator is obliged to report his/her (the student's) actions.

The student concerned has the right to provide a statement explaining his/her conduct that will be included in the invigilator's written report. The student is however not obliged to provide a statement before leaving the assessment venue. In such cases, the invigilator will note this in the report. In cases where a student is discovered to be in possession of any unauthorised materials during an examination/assessment, the invigilator will confiscate the materials, with a record the time and point within the script at which the discovery was made, along with a list of the confiscated materials which the student will be asked to sign to confirm its accuracy.

Students will be allowed to continue working for the remainder of the assessment without prejudice to the final outcome. In cases where the assessment invigilator suspects that students may have been communicating/collaborating the invigilator will note on each suspected student's assessment script the time and point within the script at which the discovery was made. Any

written evidence relevant to the incident, e.g. confiscated materials, statements from other individuals involved, must accompany the report.

### **Suspected Malpractice by Assessment Venue Staff/Invigilators**

Suspected cases of malpractice by a staff member or invigilator may be reported by students, other assessment venue staff, other assessment invigilators or a member of the public.

Information should be submitted to the Line Manager and Examinations Office.

Information should include location, date, title and time of the assessment. In addition where applicable the student's name and his/her student number plus the name of the member of staff in question should also be supplied.