



Malpractice Policy and Procedure – Agored Cymru Courses

Definition

“Malpractice means non-compliance with the regulations pertaining to the assessment procedures which may adversely affect the integrity of a qualification or award of credit” (Joint Council for Qualifications)

Policy

- Interlink is committed to providing a fair, consistent and accurate approach to the assessment and recommendation of award of credit for Agored Cymru units and qualifications.
- Interlink will ensure that its relevant staff are fully aware of their duties and responsibilities, demonstrate honesty and integrity in the award of units and qualifications and understand the nature and implications of malpractice.
- Staff responsible for quality assurance are fully aware of the malpractice policy, procedures and implications for Interlink of suspected or proven malpractice.
- Interlink does not tolerate attempts or instances of malpractice by learners or staff relating to the award of Agored Cymru units or qualifications.

Audience

The intended audience for this document are:

- Quality Assurance Manager
- Assessors
- Internal Verifiers (IVs)
- Management Team
- Interlink Finance and Delivery Sub-committee
- External Verifiers (EVs) appointed by Agored Cymru
- Qualifications Regulators

The policy and procedure will apply to:

- QCF approved qualifications (NOCN or Agored Cymru)
- OCN ‘locally approved’ units

Procedure

- Interlink makes learners aware of malpractice and explains their

responsibilities relating to research, the work and tasks that they present for assessment and their role in group work.

- Procedures are in place to verify that learners are presenting their own work for assessment e.g. signed authenticity statements. Any suspicions that this is not the case are investigated efficiently.
- Interlink will train relevant staff in conducting fair and robust assessment and to verify that the work being assessed is that of the learner.
- Interlink will monitor, through robust internal verification, that assessment is being conducted appropriately and will support the role of the External Verifier as the representative of Agored Cymru securing the validity of the award of units or qualifications.

Assessment & Certification

Interlink will not:

- Allow evidence, which the member of staff knows does not belong to the learners, to be submitted for assessment.
- Permit impersonation of a learner.
- Misuse the conditions for special requirements.
- Allow fraudulent certificate claims.
- Fail to retain learners' work or evidence in a secure manner.
- Permit collusion between staff and the IV or EV.

Investigation of Malpractice

- Interlink will be vigilant about assessment malpractice and be open and prompt in reporting possible instances of malpractice to Agored Cymru. If malpractice is identified or suspected, Interlink will put in place an appropriate investigation process, which may be led by Agored Cymru or the Centre Manager depending on the nature and severity of the suspected malpractice.
- Interlink's Centre Manager will report to the Management Team and to the Finance and Delivery Sub-committee on any possible instances of malpractice and on any impending investigation.
- Agreement will be reached on the detail of the investigation:
 - selection of the investigating officer either from Agored Cymru or Interlink as most appropriate
 - the key evidence to be gathered
 - the staff or learners to be involved in the investigation
 - how confidentiality will be secured
 - approximate timescales
 - any sanctions to be applied during the investigation process
 - the investigation will take account of other related policies e.g. disciplinary, whistle blowing etc
- These details will be confirmed confidentially in writing between Interlink and Agored Cymru.
- The investigating officer will have responsibility to:
 - complete the investigation thoroughly and efficiently to the agreed format and timescale

- analyse the evidence and access any required additional evidence
- reach a robust conclusion with a clear audit trail
- provide a report on the investigation with recommendations for further action or sanctions
- report back to Agored Cymru, Interlink and the Qualifications Regulators
- inform the police if necessary.
- Interlink may suspend the assessment and verification role of any member of staff involved in a suspected case of malpractice until the investigation is completed.
- Every effort will be made by Agored Cymru and Interlink to complete the investigation within 30 working days of the agreement to investigate.
- At the conclusion of the investigation, if malpractice is proven, Agored Cymru will confirm to Interlink within 5 working days in writing any sanctions to be applied.
- Agored Cymru has a procedure to appeal against any sanctions of conditions arising from malpractice.