

## Learner Malpractice Policy (Vocational)

Policy Code:	VO4
Policy Start Date:	December 2016
Policy Review Date:	December 2019

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- VO8 Reasonable Adjustment and Special consideration Policy (Vocational)



## **1. Aims and Objectives of the policy**

### **1.1 Aims**

The Priory Federation of Academies Trust (The Trust) is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of our awarding bodies.

### **1.2 Objectives**

- a) To ensure all learner assessment decisions are open and transparent
- b) To ensure all learners have the right to appropriate redress

## **2. Range and Scope of the Policy.**

The policy covers all vocational courses offered within the Trust (including BTEC, City and Guilds, Cache, Gateway and Apprenticeship Qualifications) but may well apply to other assignment-based courses should they become a part of the curriculum in future.

## **3. Definition of Learner Malpractice**

Malpractice is any action instigated by a learner, which undermines the integrity and validity of assessment or the certification of qualifications.

## **4. Examples of Learner Malpractice**

The following list is not an exhaustive one but gives a flavour of the types of offences that constitute learner malpractice

- a) Plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learner's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work, thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originators permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source.
- b) Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as the individual learner's work. Learners should not be discouraged from teamwork however.
- c) Impersonation by 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/examination/test.
- d) Fabrication of results and/or evidence.
- e) The deliberate destruction of another's work.



## 5. Learner Malpractice Prevention

The Trust must ensure that staff do all in their power to prevent learner malpractice. Although not exhaustive, the list below highlights ways in which learner malpractice can be prevented.

- a) Using the induction period and the student handbook to inform learners of the Centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- b) Showing learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Learners should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the learner has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.
- c) Ensuring access controls are installed to prevent learners from accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.
- d) Introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, e.g. plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc. These procedures may include
  - i. Periods of supervised sessions during which the learner produces evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework.
  - ii. Altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis.
  - iii. The assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of learners.
  - iv. Using oral questions with learners to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc within their work.
  - v. Assessors getting to know their learners' styles and abilities.

## 6. Investigating Alleged Malpractice

Allegations from whatever source, must be investigated thoroughly. Once a malpractice offence has been raised, an investigating officer, appointed by the head teacher, assumes all responsibility for all aspects relating to the alleged malpractice offence.

### 6.1 Procedure

The following procedure must be instigated by the investigating officer once an allegation has been made

- a) The learner accused of malpractice must be informed of the allegation made against him or her both verbally and followed up in writing within 48 hours of the allegation being made



- b) The learner must be informed of the evidence that has brought to light the accusation
- c) The learner must be informed of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven;
- d) The investigating officer must inform the learner of the appeals procedure.
- e) The learner's parents/guardian must be contacted and informed of the allegation, unless the learner is over the age of 18.
- f) The learner has 48 hours in which to prepare a response to the allegations.
- g) The investigating officer must convene an interviewing body consisting of no more than three people including the head of department.
- h) The interviewing body must interview the learner affected by the alleged malpractice within an appropriate timeframe.
- i) Should the learner so wish, he/she can be accompanied by an appropriate adult or friend during the investigating interview.

## **7. Penalties for malpractice**

Should the alleged malpractice offence be proven, an appropriate penalty should be awarded from the list below.

- a) Written warning – the learner is issued with a written warning. The learner is issued with a warning that if the offence is repeated, further specified sanctions will be applied. The discrete section of work to which the malpractice refers will be discounted.
- b) Disqualification from certification for the specific unit subject to malpractice.
- c) Disqualification from the course.

Any alleged malpractice involving the administration of learner work will be reported immediately to the respective awarding body.

## **8. Appealing the Decision**

Should the learner wish to appeal the decision made by the panel, the learner must do so within 7 (seven) working days. The Head teacher/Head of Centre must convene an independent panel consisting of no more than 3 people to consider the appeal, which must not include any person sitting on the panel that made the original decision. The learner must be informed of the decision of the appeals panel within 3 working days. The decision of the appeals panel is final.



**Policy Document**

The Priory Federation of  
Academies Trust

**Policy Status:** Approved

**Ref.** VO4

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Page 4 of 5

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**9. Policy changes**

This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.



**The Priory Federation of Academies Trust**

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This Policy has been approved by the Priory Federation of Academies Education and Standards Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.