

CPCAB POLICY ON MALPRACTICE

CPCAB's policy for dealing with malpractice is designed to meet the requirements set out in paragraphs 5.29 to 5.32 of *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework* (Ofqual, August 2008).

This policy aims to:

- define malpractice in the context of the delivery of CPCAB qualifications or units;
- set out the rights and responsibilities, with regard to malpractice, of the candidate, centre and CPCAB;
- outline procedures to be followed by centres.

Definition of malpractice:

Malpractice is defined as any act by candidates or centre staff that threatens the integrity and/or validity of assessment and certification leading to a recognised qualification/unit.

Examples of candidate malpractice may include:

- the introduction of unauthorised material in external assessment;
- the alteration of any assessment documents, including certificates;
- passing off work by another individual as if it was the candidate's own;
- behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the qualification/unit.

Examples of centre generic staff malpractice may include:

- moving the time or date of fixed external assessments without prior permission;
- obtaining unauthorised access to external assessment material;
- assisting or prompting candidates during external assessment;
- failing to follow CPCAB requirements for handling external assessment material.

Examples of centre tutor staff malpractice may include:

- failing to declare a conflict of interest (e.g. when they are related to a candidate, or a candidate's close friend);
- assisting candidates in the production of coursework beyond that permitted by CPCAB;
- falsifying assessment records.

Procedures for dealing with malpractice:

It is the responsibility of the heads of centres, or their nominees, to carry out an investigation into allegations of malpractice by centre staff or candidates. Such an investigation may be initiated by the centre itself or at the request of CPCAB. In the event of an allegation of malpractice against the head of centre, an investigation must be carried out by the Chair of the Governing Body of the centre or another appropriate nominee and reported to the awarding body when completed. In the event of a centre not cooperating with an investigation, CPCAB will contact the regulatory authorities.

In suspected cases of malpractice that involve a CPCAB representative (e.g. external verifier, external assessor), CPCAB will conduct an investigation appropriate to the nature of the allegation. Such an investigation may require the full support of the head of centre and all personnel linked to the allegation.

In the event of malpractice by candidates or centre staff, centres must:

- inform CPCAB of any alleged malpractice where the allegation is likely to affect the integrity of a CPCAB qualification;
- inform the person implicated (preferably in writing) of the nature of the alleged malpractice at the earliest opportunity;

- give the person implicated the opportunity to respond (in writing) and make clear what avenues of appeal exist within the centre in the event of a judgment being made against them;
- keep CPCAB informed of the progress and outcome of any centre investigation into allegations of malpractice.

CPCAB will:

- inform the centre of any allegations of malpractice brought to CPCAB's attention, in order to initiate an investigation where appropriate;
- require the centre to report the progress and outcome of any investigation into allegations of malpractice to CPCAB, whether initiated by the centre or by CPCAB;
- inform the Office of the Qualifications & Examiners Regulator (Ofqual) of any cases of malpractice likely to affect the validity of certificates;
- inform the regulatory authorities in the event that a centre fails to cooperate with a CPCAB request to investigate an instance of alleged malpractice by centre staff;
- agree a time frame with the centre for the conduct of any investigation, appropriate to the nature of the alleged incident, which the centre must make known to the person(s) implicated.

Penalties and sanctions applied by CPCAB:

CPCAB reserves the right (in suspected cases of malpractice during the period of investigation) to:

- suspend candidate or group registrations;
- withhold the publication of results;
- suspend, withhold or cancel the issuing of certificates;
- withdraw approval for any tutor implicated in malpractice.

In the event of a centre failing to respond to required procedures for investigating allegations of malpractice or being involved in significant cases of malpractice that affect the integrity of the CPCAB qualifications, the centre may be de-registered according to the procedures outlined below.

Procedures of centre de-registration:

- The centre will be advised in writing of the reasons for, and the date of, the proposed action and will be invited to appeal in writing.
- The proposal for de-registration, and any appeal, will be considered by a formal panel of senior CPCAB staff. A decision to de-register the centre will only be made after a full discussion of all the circumstances, with particular regard to the integrity of the qualification and the reputation of CPCAB.
- The centre will be advised of the outcome in writing and if de-registered will be required to return CPCAB materials and documentation.
- Where applicable the centre file will be flagged as de-registered and the centre advised that they can re-apply for approval at any time in the future once suitable remedial action has been taken.

In the event of certificates becoming invalid following the outcome of an investigation, CPCAB will inform Ofqual and agree appropriate remedial action.

All suspected cases of malpractice are monitored and tracked by CPCAB's Head of Qualifications, who reports annually to the CPCAB Executive Committee on CPCAB malpractice policy. In addition, an independent consultant is employed to evaluate the effectiveness, validity and conduct of CPCAB policy on malpractice, so as to ensure that it meets the regulatory requirements.