

# Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

## Introduction

This policy is aimed at our learners, who are registered on BCS approved qualifications or units who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration. It is also for use by centre staff to ensure they deal with all malpractice and maladministration investigations in a consistent manner.

## Definition of Malpractice

Malpractice is essentially any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process and/or the validity of certificates. It covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default 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 Test Centre
- the reputation and credibility of BCS
- the qualification or the wider qualifications community.

Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates. For the purpose of this policy this term also covers

misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain or groups of learners.

### **Definition of Maladministration**

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration (eg within a centre, inappropriate learner records).

### **Process for making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration**

Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time should initially report to the Test Centre Manager. If the centre manager (or authorised member of staff) cannot be given these details then the case should be reported directly to the BCS via the British Computer Society website.

All allegations must be made in writing/email and where possible include:

- centre's or associated third parties name, address and number
- learner's name and BCS registration number
- centre/BCS personnel's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case
- details of the BCS course/qualification affected or nature of the service affected
- nature of the suspected or actual malpractice and associated dates details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by the centre

or anybody else involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances

- any supporting evidence Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

The centre manager will conduct an initial investigation prior to formally notifying BCS (in all cases). In all cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration reported to BCS the identity of the 'informant' in accordance with our duty of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

### **Confidentiality and whistle blowing**

Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. It is preferable to reveal identity and contact details. If there are concerns about possible adverse consequences a request to the Centre or BCS can be made not to divulge your identity.

### **Responsibility for the investigation**

In accordance with regulatory requirements all suspected cases of maladministration and malpractice will be examined promptly by BCS to establish if malpractice or maladministration has occurred and will take all reasonable steps to prevent any adverse effect from occurring as defined by the regulator Ofqual.

### **Notifying relevant parties**

In all cases of suspected or actual malpractice, BCS will notify, where appropriate, the Head of a Centre involved in the allegation that we'll be investigating the matter and/or in the case of learner malpractice, we may ask your centre to investigate the issue in liaison with our own personnel – in



doing so we may withhold details of the person making the allegation if to do so would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

### **Investigation report**

After an investigation, BCS will produce a draft report for relevant parties concerned to check the factual accuracy where appropriate. Any subsequent amendments will be agreed between the parties concerned and BCS.

### **Investigation outcomes**

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place BCS will consider what action to take to. If a relevant party wishes to appeal against a BCS decision to impose sanctions, please refer to BCS Appeals Policy.

Please use this policy in association with the BCS Malpractice Policy.