

Assessment Malpractice			
Current Status	Operational	Last Review:	November 2021
Responsibility for Review:	Quality Manager	Next Review:	September 2022
Internal Approval:	SLT	Originated:	June 2012

1. Introduction

1.1. The purposes of the procedures are:

- a) To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or students.
- b) To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
- c) To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
- d) To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on students or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
- e) To define the processes involved in investigating and taking action against students who are suspected of assessment malpractice, that is, seeking or gaining unfair advantage in assessment.

1.2. In order to do this, Suffolk Academies Trust will:

- a) Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the student handbook to inform students of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- b) Show Students the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources.
- c) Make students aware of the Non-examination assessment policy, where applicable
- d) Ask Students to declare that their work is their own.
- e) Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- f) Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- g) Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.
- h) Document all stages of any investigation.

2. Definition of Gaining Unfair Advantage - Student

2.1. The following actions are defined as constituting the gaining of an unfair advantage in the context of the assessment process:

- a) The presentation by a student, as their own work, material which is wholly or partially the work of another, either in concept or expression, without acknowledgement of source through the correct use of quotations, references and a bibliography.
- b) Copying the work of another student.
- c) Seeking to obtain / obtaining access to examination papers prior to the commencement of the examination process.
- d) Any infringement of Trust procedures for the conduct of written examinations, including failure to comply with invigilator's instructions.
- e) Offering a bribe or other inducement to any person connected with the assessment process.
- f) Being party to an arrangement whereby a person, other than the named student to be assessed, fraudulently represents them in that assessment.
- g) Any other arrangement intended to gain unfair advantage.
- h) Collusion by working collaboratively with other students to produce work that is submitted as individual student work which contravenes published guidance. (Students should not be discouraged from teamwork, but mechanisms for making this explicit must be made clear to the student)
- i) 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 or test.
- j) Fabrication of results or evidence relating to an assessment.
- k) Introduction or use of unauthorized material contra to the requirements of a supervised assessment, examination or test conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), personal stereos, mobile phones or other similar electronic devices.
- l) Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment, examination or test related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written papers during supervised assessment, examination, or test conditions.
- m) Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment, examination or test.
- n) The alteration of any results document, including certificates.

3. Definition of Malpractice by Trust Staff

3.1.1. This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the centre at its discretion:

- a) Improper assistance to candidates.
- b) Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made.
- c) Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure
- d) Fraudulent claims for certificates.
- e) Inappropriate retention of certificates.
- f) Assisting students 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 college staff producing work for the student.
- g) Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the student has not generated.
- h) Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
- i) Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- j) Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where students are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
- k) Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
- l) Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

Malpractice by staff shall be dealt with according to the Staff Professional Behaviour Policy.

4. ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY TEACHERS and INVIGILATORS

4.1. Written Examinations

- 4.1.1. Where an invigilator suspects a student of infringing the Trust procedures for the conduct of written examinations, the following action should be taken, if possible in the presence of another invigilator to act as a witness.
- a) Confiscate any unauthorised material in the Student's possession.
 - b) Inform the Exams officer/Team immediately via the floating invigilator. The exams officer will determine if immediate action is required and be available to speak to the candidate during or at the end of the examination. The exams officer will speak with the student accompanied by their PPT or Senior PPT. Note brief details of the incident in the invigilator's report and draw the incident to the attention of the Examinations Officer.
 - c) The Examinations Officer shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate curriculum managers, as well as the awarding bodies.

4.2. All Other Forms of Course Assessments

- 4.2.1. Where a Teacher suspects a student has acted in a way that would gain unfair advantage, the Teacher will:
- a) Endorse the student's work or mark sheet (as appropriate) with a note detailing the nature of the suspected infringement.
 - b) Report the allegation in writing, as laid out in Suffolk Academies Trust's plagiarism policy.

5. INVESTIGATION AND JUDGEMENT

5.1. Investigation

- 5.1.1. Where a student has already signed a declaration this will be immediately reported to the awarding body.
- 5.1.2. The investigation should take place as soon as practicable after the assessment in question, and shall take the form of a meeting attended by the student and the teacher, and chaired by the Quality Manager, or in their absence an appropriate member of the college leadership team. The student can choose to be accompanied by another person acting in a supportive role. The meeting will consider the reports from invigilators and Teachers in the light of explanations from the student.
- a) Following the meeting the Quality Manager will make a judgement about whether or not the actions of the student conferred an unfair advantage; the judgement shall be communicated to the student in writing within 5 days of the investigation meeting.

- b) If the judgement is that no unfair advantage was sought or gained the assessment in question will be marked on its merits, and all records relating to the incident will be removed from the student's file
- c) If the judgement is that unfair advantage was sought or gained by the student then the sanctions in Section 3 will be applied
- d) Students who consider that the investigation was conducted unfairly, should follow the Appeals procedure as written in the Course Work Policy.

6. PENALTIES FOR SEEKING OR GAINING UNFAIR ADVANTAGE

6.1. Category 1

6.1.1. Where the infringement constitutes a first offence, or is in relation to an assessment that constitutes less than one half of the relevant unit or module the penalty will be:

- a) Failure in the particular assessment in question.
- b) A requirement to submit to re-assessment, and (where awarding body regulations permit), the award of the minimum mark required for a pass grade only.

6.2. Category 2

6.2.1. Where the infringement constitutes a first offence, or is in relation to an assessment that constitutes more than one half of the relevant unit or module the penalty will be:

- a) Failure in the assessment for the whole unit or module in question.
- b) A requirement to submit to re-assessment for the whole unit, and (where awarding body regulations permit), the award of the minimum mark required for a pass grade only.

6.3. Category 3

6.3.1. Where an infringement is a second offence, or involves a bribe or inducement or fraudulent representation of a candidate, the penalty usually will be dismissal from the College. In this case the incident will be dealt with under the terms of the Student Conduct and Discipline Policy. Any appeal will be dealt with under the terms of the Student Disciplinary Procedures.

7. APPEAL AGAINST THE JUDGEMENT FROM THE INVESTIGATION

7.1. The Head of Centre shall chair a Review Panel of two other members drawn from the College Leadership Team. Any member of staff involved in the investigation shall not be members of the Review Panel.

- 7.2. The Review Panel may arrange a meeting of the parties concerned if they consider that it will aid the process of making a judgement of the evidence, or if they consider that there is additional evidence to be brought forward.
- 7.3. The Head of Centre will make a decision based on the review and any additional evidence brought forward, which be confirmed to the complainant and other parties involved, in writing within 5 working days of the review.

Revision History – Assessment Malpractice Policy

Revision date	Reason for revision	Section number	Changes made
November 2020	SAT Review	Details box	Change title of person responsible for review.
		Throughout	References to the college have all been updated to refer to the trust.
September 2021	Annual Review	Rubik	Change reviewer to Quality Manager
		5.1.1.	Update chair of review to Quality Manager
		7.1 and 7.3	Update chair to Head of Centre