

Malpractice and Maladministration Policy DSIS-MMP01

**CDS Defence & Security Internal Standard
DSIS 17483**

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Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

1 Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how CDS Defence & Security (CDS DS) will ensure that the actions of its staff and candidates remain in line with acceptable standards and practices and how any cases of suspected malpractice or maladministration will be dealt with. The policy is aimed at staff involved in the delivery and assessment of CDS DS courses and qualifications and also at the candidates who participate in these course and qualifications.

Also, it sets out the steps it will take if there is any suspicion of malpractice or maladministration from staff or candidates. It is also in place to identify our processes in light of suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration. CDS DS will act upon any reports of suspected or actual cases it receives which may affect the integrity of its training courses and quality assurance systems.

For the purpose of this policy, the following terms apply:

- 'Staff' refers to any person requested by CDS DS to deliver and or assess products or services on its behalf regardless of their employment or contractual status
- 'Candidate' refers to any person receiving a product or service offered under the brand of CDS DS whether directly or through a third party
- 'Awarding Organisation' refers to any organisation whose courses or qualifications are delivered by CDS DS under a licensed, contracted or Approved Centre status agreement and to whom CDS DS has a quality assurance responsibility
- 'Head of Centre' refers to the person, usually the Managing Director (Academic), who is responsible to an awarding organisation for ensuring that qualifications or programmes are delivered and assessed in line with their requirements

CDS DS is committed to pursuing the highest standards of delivery, assessment and management of its services and products. It aims to eliminate malpractice and maladministration in all aspects of the functioning of the organisation and aims to promote accountability and a climate of openness to encourage the disclosure of allegations of malpractice.

2 Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout this policy (see Appendix A for examples):

- **Malpractice:** An act or an instance of improper practice including maladministration. Malpractice is any activity, practice or omission which is either wilfully negligent or deliberately contravenes regulations. It may compromise the internal or external assessment and quality assurance process, the integrity of a regulated qualification, the validity of a result or certificate or the reputation and credibility of CDS DS or an awarding organisation it works with

- **Maladministration:** Any activity, practice or omission which results in CDS DS, staff or candidate non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements
- **Plagiarism:** A specific form of cheating which applies to assignments completed by candidates independently. It is the substantial, unacknowledged incorporation into a candidate's work of materials derived from published or unpublished work by another person and presented as if it were the candidate's own work. Published work includes books, articles and materials found on the internet while examples of unpublished work could be a piece of work previously submitted by another candidate or work about to be submitted by another candidate
- **Collusion:** A form of plagiarism that involves unauthorised co-operation between at least two people with the intent to deliberately mislead or deceive
- **Cheating:** A deliberate attempt to act dishonestly, defraud or deceive any assessor, examiner and/or internal or external verifier.

3 CDS DS Obligations

CDS DS will ensure that:

- Candidates will be given access to advisory documentation (e.g. Definitions of Malpractice and Annex A - Examples of Malpractice) either directly or via signposting to this and related policy documents on the CDS DS website
- Candidates have received adequate guidance on what malpractice is and how to reference work that is not their own, and acknowledge this by signing a declaration
- Staff have adequate training and guidance relating to malpractice and reporting procedures (e.g. face-to-face training and Annex B – What to look out for – Assessors Guide) and signposting to this and related policy documents
- Arrangements are in place to offer individuals a safe and accessible procedure for reporting allegations of malpractice in a confidential manner, on the basis that CDS DS will take appropriate steps to ensure that individuals reporting allegations are not penalised, are protected and that individuals accused will be protected against false, malicious or anonymous accusations
- Staff and candidates and any relevant third parties/individuals are encouraged to report allegations without fear and will ensure that any disclosure is treated with the utmost confidentiality
- Anonymous allegations will only be considered if they are of a serious nature and the evidence is sufficient to warrant an investigation and for appropriate action to be taken
- Staff, candidates and any relevant third parties/individuals who commit malpractice (any forms of the definitions above) be allowed to offer a defence and have their case investigated appropriately
- Staff, candidates and any relevant third parties/individuals found guilty of malpractice (any forms of the definitions above) be punished in a proportionate manner

- The outcome of an internal investigation conducted by CDS DS is conveyed to the awarding organisation if malpractice is suspected within 20 Days of the incident
- Any suspected cases of malpractice or non-compliance by Staff, candidates and any relevant third parties/individuals are reported promptly. The untimely withholding of information or failing to report may result in the imposition of sanctions/penalties on staff, candidates or CDS DS with a possible outcome being the suspension of any employment, certification, registration or recognised centre status.

4 Staff Obligations

CDS DS will ensure that staff:

- Access adequate training and guidance relating to malpractice and its reporting procedures – (e.g. face-to-face training and Annex B – What to look out for – Assessors Guide) as well as regularly familiarising and updating themselves with all relevant CDS DS advisory documentation
- Report any suspected cases of malpractice or non-compliance by staff, candidates and any relevant third parties/individuals in an appropriate and timely manner
- Follow the CDS DS Malpractice Reporting Procedure laid out in this policy.

5 Candidate Obligations

The candidate will ensure that:

- They access and familiarise themselves with all relevant CDS DS advisory documentation (e.g. Definitions of Malpractice and Annex A - Examples of Malpractice and this and any related policy documents)
- They take every reasonable step to avoid malpractice (any forms of the definitions above) when completing and submitting work for assessment
- On submitting any assessment material, they sign the Candidate Declaration statement accompanying any work to confirm that their work:
 - is their own work
 - has not, in whole or in part, been knowingly shared with another candidate who is submitting, or has submitted, or likely to submit, work for the same qualification
 - has not, in whole or in part, been knowingly submitted elsewhere for assessment
- Where material has been used from other sources it has been properly acknowledged
- They have not, in whole or in part, knowingly shared their work with another candidate who is submitting, or has submitted, or likely to submit, work for the same qualification.

6 General Process and Procedures

Malpractice may be detected in a number of ways including:

- Identification by a CDS DS member of staff or a partner deliverer or assessor
- Identification by a CDS DS Internal Quality Assurer or another member of staff performing a quality assurance role
- Identification by an External Quality Assurer from an awarding organisation or external licensed, contracted or Approved Centre status partner
- Verbal or written allegations that are reported openly or anonymously by a candidate, third party or other interested party. This could be an individual who has been made aware by word of mouth through a third party that something untoward has happened or is happening that has not been authorised or is inappropriate, or something they have identified or witnessed personally.

All suspected or alleged cases of malpractice or maladministration must be reported to the Higher Education and Accreditation Lead using the form in Annex C (Step 1 – Reporting of Initial Suspicion) within 10 days of being identified. If the allegation is against the Higher Education and Accreditation Lead, then the incident should be reported to the Head of Professional Development & Accreditation.

The Higher Education and Accreditation or the Head of Professional Development & Accreditation will either act as, or appoint, an independent Investigating Officer who will then make an initial judgement regarding the allegation based on the evidence offered. If sufficient suspicion is present the case will be escalated to Step 2 – Internal Investigation. If insufficient suspicion exists, then the Investigating Officer will record a No case to answer decision, and the case will be closed.

In exceptional cases or where the allegation is against a senior member of CDS DS staff the Investigating Officer may refer the case directly to the CDS DS Head of Professional Development & Accreditation for consideration.

Should the case be escalated to Step 2 then the Investigating Officer will seek further information from either the person(s) reporting the malpractice or from additional parties who may have relevant information and/or a statement of defence from the person(s) accused of malpractice.

The Investigating Officer will then make a further judgement regarding the allegation. Based on the additional evidence offered the Investigating Officer may conclude that:

- there is no case to answer, and the case will be closed, or
- the allegation is upheld and an appropriate, proportionate sanction should be applied, or
- a final decision cannot be reached, and the case is referred to the CDS DS Head of Professional Development & Accreditation or, where appropriate, the relevant awarding organisation.

CDS DS, via the designated Investigating Officer, will keep the person(s) accused of malpractice informed of the progress of their case in writing at each Step throughout the process.

They have the right to appeal any decision in line with the CDS DS Appeals Policy and if they wish to do so should do so within 10 days of the final decision being conveyed to them.

7 Policy Review

This policy is kept under regular review.

Annex A – Examples of Malpractice

Example 1: Assessor Signing Off Competence Without Evidence

Scenario: An assessor marks a learner as competent in a practical unit without observing the activity, collecting sufficient evidence, or confirming the learner has met all assessment criteria.

Why this is malpractice:

- The assessment decision is not based on valid evidence.
- The integrity of the qualification is compromised.
- Learners may receive certification they have not earned.

Potential actions:

- Investigation by the centre.
- Withdrawal of certification claims.
- Additional IQA sampling.
- Notification to City & Guilds.

Example 2: Learner Plagiarism

Scenario: A learner submits work copied from the internet or another learner and claims it as their own evidence.

Why this is malpractice:

- The evidence is not authentic.
- Assessment decisions are based on fraudulent information.

Potential actions:

- Evidence rejected.
- Reassessment required.
- Formal disciplinary action.

Example 3: Falsification of Records

Scenario: An assessor records workplace observations that never took place and creates assessment records retrospectively to meet deadlines.

Why this is malpractice:

- Assessment records are inaccurate.
- Qualification requirements have not been met.

Potential actions:

- Immediate investigation.
- Suspension of certification claims.
- Possible removal of assessor status.

Example 4: Unauthorised Assistance During Assessment

Scenario: A tutor provides answers during a controlled knowledge test or examination.

Why this is malpractice:

- The assessment is no longer fair or valid.
- Other learners are disadvantaged.

Potential actions:

- Assessment result invalidated.
- Reporting to City & Guilds.
- Staff disciplinary action.

Example 5: Premature Certification Claims

Scenario: A centre submits a claim for certificates before all units have been completed and internally quality assured.

Why this is malpractice:

- Certification is being claimed without meeting qualification requirements.
- Public confidence in qualifications may be affected.

Potential actions:

- Certificates withheld or withdrawn.
- Increased EQA monitoring.
- Centre sanctions.

Sample Malpractice Case Study for a QA Strategy

Issue Identified: During an Internal Quality Assurance sampling activity, the IQA discovered that an assessor had signed off three learners as competent in Unit 204 without retaining observation records or witness testimonies.

Investigation Outcome: The assessor admitted that assessments had not been completed in accordance with qualification requirements.

Actions Taken:

1. Assessment decisions were withdrawn.
2. Learners were reassessed by a different assessor.
3. The assessor received additional training.
4. Increased sampling was implemented for six months.
5. The incident was reported to City & Guilds in accordance with the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Lesson Learned: The centre strengthened its assessment record checks and introduced monthly quality file audits.

Distinction Between Malpractice and Maladministration

Malpractice	Maladministration
Deliberate wrongdoing or dishonest practice	Unintentional error or poor administration
Example: falsifying assessment records	Example: learner registration entered incorrectly
Usually results in disciplinary action	Usually resolved through corrective action
May require reporting to City & Guilds	May require process improvement

Annex B – What to Look Out For – Assessors Guide

An Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) plays a key role in detecting malpractice by checking that assessment and verification activities comply with City & Guilds requirements and the centre's quality assurance procedures.

How an IQA Detects Malpractice

1. Sampling Learner Portfolios

The IQA reviews learner evidence to identify anomalies such as:

- Identical answers from multiple learners
- Evidence that appears copied from websites
- Missing evidence for assessment decisions
- Evidence that does not meet assessment criteria
- Sudden improvements in learner performance without explanation

Example: Three learners submit assignments containing identical wording, spelling errors, and formatting. This may indicate collusion or plagiarism.

2. Reviewing Assessment Decisions

The IQA checks whether assessment decisions are supported by sufficient evidence.

Warning signs include:

- Units signed off with little or no evidence
- Assessments completed unusually quickly
- Incomplete assessment records
- Evidence not matching the assessment criteria

Example: An assessor signs off a practical welding unit, but no observation records, photographs, witness testimonies, or learner evidence are available.

3. Observing Assessors

The IQA may observe live assessments to ensure procedures are followed correctly.

The IQA looks for:

- Fair assessment practice
- Appropriate questioning techniques
- Consistent assessment decisions
- No excessive support being given

Example: During an observation, the assessor repeatedly provides learners with the answers rather than assessing their knowledge. This could be malpractice.

4. Learner Interviews

The IQA may speak directly with learners.

Questions might include:

- Did you complete this work yourself?
- Were assessments conducted as recorded?
- Did the assessor observe you carrying out the task?
- Were you given excessive assistance?

Example: A learner confirms they were never observed completing a task that has already been signed off as competent.

5. Standardisation Meetings

Comparing assessment decisions across assessors can reveal inconsistencies.

Red flags include:

- One assessor consistently achieving unusually high pass rates
- Significant differences between assessors' standards
- Units being signed off with less evidence than others require

Example: One assessor signs off units after a single observation, whilst others require multiple pieces of evidence.

6. Audit of Assessment Records

The IQA reviews:

- Assessment plans
- Feedback forms
- Observation records
- Witness testimonies
- Tracking documents

Indicators of malpractice might include:

- Missing signatures
- Altered dates
- Identical handwriting on learner and assessor sections
- Records completed retrospectively

7. Monitoring Certification Claims

Before claiming certificates, the IQA should ensure:

- All units are complete
- Sampling has occurred
- Evidence is available
- Assessment decisions are justified

Example: A certification claim is submitted for a learner whose portfolio is incomplete.

Common Malpractice Indicators

Indicator	Possible Concern
Identical learner work	Plagiarism or collusion
Missing evidence	False assessment decisions
Backdated records	Falsification
Unusually high achievement rates	Inappropriate assessment practice
No observation records	Fabricated assessment activity

Indicator	Possible Concern
Learner disputes signed-off assessments	False claims of competence
Assessments completed too quickly	Insufficient assessment
Assessor-only signoffs with no learner input	Potential record falsification

What an IQA Should Do if Malpractice Is Suspected

1. Gather evidence objectively.
2. Secure relevant learner and assessment records.
3. Record findings accurately.
4. Inform the Quality Nominee and Centre Management.
5. Follow the centre's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.
6. Suspend certification claims if necessary.
7. Report to City & Guilds where required.
8. Implement corrective and preventive actions.

Example IQA Finding

IQA Sample Review

Issue Identified: Unit 302 was signed off for five learners on the same day.

Evidence Found:

- No observation records.
- No witness testimonies.
- Learners confirmed they had not completed the practical activity.

Conclusion: Potential assessor malpractice through false assessment decisions.

Action Taken:

- Assessment decisions withdrawn.
- Learners reassessed.
- Assessor suspended from assessment activities pending investigation.
- Incident reported to the Quality Nominee and City & Guilds.

This type of example is particularly useful in a City & Guilds Quality Assurance Strategy because it demonstrates how the IQA process acts as a safeguard to protect the integrity of qualifications and certification.

Annex C – Malpractice Investigation Form

(Step 1: Reporting of Initial Suspicion)

Details	
Centre number	007333
Who is the suspected allegation against?	
Qualification or Programme title and code	
Unit code	
Candidate(s) involved	
Staff involved	
Location of incident	
Nature of incident	
Person reporting incident	
Supporting evidence attached	
Summary of issue of concern	
For CDS DS office use only:	
CDS DS Investigation code	
Initial comment by CDS DS Investigating Officer	
Date of initial reporting	
Action to be taken	
Date passed to Step 2	

Malpractice Investigation Form

(Step 2: Internal Investigation)

Details	
For CDS DS office use only:	
Action from Step 1	
CDS DS Investigation code	
Date of initial reporting	
Date of progression from Step 1	
Further details as necessary (e.g. Defence statement, Investigation report)	
Final comment by CDS DS Investigating Officer	
Date of final internal reporting	
Final internal action to be taken	
Date passed to Stage 3	
Details of any sanctions	

Malpractice Investigation Form

(Step 3: External Notification to Awarding Organisation)

Details	
For CDS DS office use only:	
CDS DS Investigation code:	
Date of initial reporting:	
Date of progression from Step 2:	
Awarding organisation alerted on:	
Date report sent to Awarding Organisation:	
Comments:	
Outcome of Awarding Organisation Investigation:	
Date of final conclusion:	
Final action to be taken:	
Date case closed:	
Details of any Awarded Organisation sanctions:	
Any further action to be taken by CDS DS:	
Date action addressed:	

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