

UK Open College Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

This policy is available to all students of UK Open College, to include all learners and staff members who are using or delivering courses and qualifications offered by UK Open College who are suspected of being involved of malpractice or maladministration.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the steps to follow when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration. It is also in place to review those processes which led to the suspected or actual case of malpractice and/or maladministration and to support any investigation.

As an approved centre, we will act on any reports of suspected or actual cases of malpractice and/or maladministration that we receive regarding our staff or learners, which may affect the integrity of UK Open College. We also have a responsibility to report non adherence to the affiliated awarding body.

Location of the policy

This policy is available for viewing on the college website for all students and staff members to access as required.

Communication of the policy

It is important that all staff involved in the management, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications and learners undertaking a qualification are aware of this policy.

Review of the policy

UK Open College will review the policy annually and revise as and when required in response to feedback, changes in legislation, practices or actions required by any of the affiliated awarding bodies. Our review will ensure that our procedures remain consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Statement of Principles

Definitions of malpractice:

Malpractice is an activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or validity of certification. For the purpose of this policy this term also covers misconduct.

Definitions of Maladministration:

Maladministration is an activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements. This includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration within a centre.

See examples below of learner and centre malpractice and maladministration

- Plagiarism of any nature by learners
- Forgery of evidence

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- Submission of false information to gain a qualification
- Unprofessional conduct
- Breach of confidentiality
- Failure to meet awarding body standards
- Falsifying assessment records
- Falsifying admin records

Reporting procedure

Any person identifying cases of malpractice and/or maladministration should report them to a senior member of staff or centre manager to investigate.

If senior members or centre managers are suspected of malpractice and/or maladministration, the awarding body can be contacted direct.

UK Open College have to investigate all cases of malpractice or maladministration in liaison with any parties concerned. If an investigation finds evidence of malpractice or maladministration, we will take the necessary steps to ensure that learners are protected as far as is reasonably possible.

Reports into malpractice and/or maladministration must include:

- The learners name
- Staff member details if they are involved in the case
- The dates the case occurred
- The full nature of the suspected/actual malpractice or maladministration
- Acknowledgement of reports within 3 working days
- Arrangement of appropriate personnel to review any report and commence investigation
- Action and resolve all investigations within 7 working days of receipt of the report
- We will advise on the outcome of our investigation within 2 working days of making our decision
- We will report any suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration to the relevant awarding body

When we receive a report of malpractice or maladministration, we will allocate a panel comprising of senior UK Open College staff members to investigate. The panel will review the report and supporting evidence and carry out the investigation.

The investigation Process

During the investigation the panels review may involve:

- A request for further information
- Interviews (Face to face or via telephone) with personnel involved
- We will make informed decisions based on the evidence submitted
- We will protect the identity of the 'informant' if required

As part of our approved status, UK Open college must inform the relevant awarding body of any investigations into suspected malpractice or maladministration.

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The relevant awarding body reserve the right to lead or review any reported investigations into malpractice or maladministration within an approved centre.

If issues are reported directly to the awarding body UK Open College must allow them access to the centre, including staff members, learners, learners work and third party information as required to fully investigate.

Learner malpractice

If the investigation confirms that learner malpractice has taken place, UK Open College have no alternative but to impose one or more of the following sanctions on the learner. This list is not exhaustive:

- Disallowing all or part of the learners assessment evidence
- Not requesting the learners certificate
- Disallowing a learner to take a course with UK Open College
- Disqualification from the course/qualification

In cases of malpractice or maladministration by learners, UK Open College will make learners aware that their final results may be void if the case is proven. Any certificates already awarded may be deemed invalid. Certificates may need to be returned to the relevant awarding body.

If a learner is not satisfied with the investigation process or outcome conducted by UK Open College, they can escalate their issues direct to the awarding body for investigation. Any decision by the awarding body will be final.