**Definition**

‘Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub (hereafter referred to as DCCH) defines Malpractice as any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process, and / or the validity of certificates. 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, or of a learner using malpractice to complete coursework or any examinations.

**Malpractice/Academic misconduct for the learner may include, but is not limited to:**

* Directly copying from physical, pictorial or written material, without crediting the source, e.g. using someone else’s craft or artwork, pictures or graphics (including graphs, spreadsheets etc.) as if they were made by you
* Paraphrasing someone else’s work, without crediting the source
* Allowing other learners to use or copy from your work and pass it off as if they had done it themselves
* Getting someone else to produce part or all of the work submitted
* Colluding with one or more learner(s) to produce a piece of work and submitting it as one’s own
* Copying the work of another learner, with or without their permission
* Knowingly allowing another learner to copy one’s own work
* Fabrication of results (including experiments, case studies, research, interviews, observations)
* Cheating in an exam
* Falsifying placement hours
* Falsifying witness statements/peer assessments

**Consequences for Learners**

Any report that suggests reasonable grounds for suspicion that a learner has committed or attempted to commit malpractice, will be thoroughly investigated by ‘DCCH. Situations where a learner is strongly suspected will be reported to the awarding body. Learners should be aware that awarding bodies will contact police authorities in serious cases and consider prosecution. Also, credits and certificates previously achieved may be withdrawn and details of the offence may be passed to other awarding bodies. Learners found to have committed malpractice following investigations will be withdrawn from the course and may be excluded from future enrolments on courses at ‘DCCH’.

**Malpractice/misadministration for staff may include:**

* Invigilating an exam which includes learners that you have taught
* Providing sight of, or an insight into external exam questions, prior to the exam.
* Falsifying records to ensure learner has achieved the requisite level/quantity/quality to pass
* Failing to identify and investigate where authenticity of learners’ work is in doubt
* Failing to attend regular standardisation and moderation events
* Assessing someone’s work with whom you have a vested and personal interest in
* Assessing someone’s work with whom you have a conflict of interest with
* Receiving gifts/monetary benefits, or any benefit in-kind in exchange for favourable assessment outcomes
* Failing to inform management and/or the Awarding Body, where there are suspicions of infringement.
* Failing to store exam papers securely, prior to the exam date.
* Failure to submit accurate assessment records
* Selling of / sharing of exam papers to third parties/students, to provide an unfair advantage of achievement

This list is by no means exhaustive.

**Consequences for Staff**

Any report that suggests reasonable grounds for suspicion that a member of staff has committed or attempted to commit malpractice or maladministration will be thoroughly investigated by ‘DCCH’. During that investigation, the member of staff may be suspended until an outcome is reported. Situations where a staff member is found to have committed malpractice/maladministration, will be reported to the awarding body. Staff should be aware that awarding bodies might contact police authorities in serious cases and consider prosecution. Staff found to have committed malpractice or intentional maladministration, following investigation, may be withdrawn from teaching that course, and may be the subject of a disciplinary hearing, which could result in immediate dismissal, or a probationary period being imposed.

**Policy for Prevention**

In order to reduce the likelihood of Malpractice occurring at ‘DCCH’, the following actions will be take:

* information clearly explaining the possible consequences of malpractice will be raised with
  + learners at the start of the course, during ‘ground rules’
  + staff during their contractual discussions and induction
* Examples of what constitutes learner malpractice will be on the website.
* Tutors will only mark work which has been produced at home by learners, for formal assessment, at a point in the course when the style and capacity of individual learners has become known to those who are assessing. (This should enable any irregularities in style, level and ability of working by a given learner, to be readily picked up by the assessor. However, caution should be made where a learner’s verbal ability outstrips their written ability, as this may indicate a learning difference. In this scenario, this should be explored more thoroughly.)
* Staff engaged in assessment must contribute to, and be part of regular Internal Moderation and Standardisation events
* Staff engaged in exam invigilation will be trained in complying with the Awarding Body’s requirements.
* The invigilator of any exam will always be a member of staff who was not involved in the delivery of the course
* Internal Quality Assurance processes will include random samples throughout each cohort of learners.
* Internal Quality assurance process will include an occasional and random sample of placement follow ups.
* Exam papers will be secure in a sealed and locked storage facility up until the day of the examination. Only the Exams administrator will have access to this.
* Contact details of placements will be held on file to ensure that any course requirements have been adequately fulfilled, directly with the appropriate personnel.

Last reviewed by CLH Sept 2020