



BCT Malpractice & Maladministration Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

Big Creative Training (BCT) is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the conduct of assessment, the administration of qualifications and the certification of learner achievement.

BCT has a duty to protect the integrity and validity of assessment and certification and to safeguard the legitimate interests of learners, awarding bodies and the organisation. Malpractice and maladministration are therefore taken seriously and will be investigated and addressed appropriately.

This policy applies to:

- learners;
- tutors, assessors and internal verifiers (IVs);
- support and quality staff;
- senior leaders;
- contractors; and
- anyone involved in assessment, examination, quality assurance or qualification administration on behalf of BCT.

BCT will take appropriate action where malpractice or maladministration occurs through negligence, recklessness, deliberate intent, error or poor practice, taking account of the circumstances of each case and the requirements of the relevant awarding body.

Serious cases of malpractice will be reported to the relevant awarding body in accordance with its requirements.

2. Definitions

2.1 Malpractice

Malpractice consists of acts or omissions that undermine, or have the potential to undermine, the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications or the authority of those responsible for conducting assessment and certification.

Malpractice may involve deliberate wrongdoing, recklessness or serious negligence by a learner or member of staff.



2.2 Maladministration

Maladministration refers to mistakes, errors, omissions, mismanagement or poor administrative practice by BCT or its staff that could compromise:

- the integrity of assessment;
- the accuracy of grades;
- learner experience and fairness;
- compliance with awarding body regulations, including those of RSL, Pearson and JCQ; or
- Ofqual regulatory requirements.

Maladministration may result in:

- incorrect assessment decisions;
- failure to follow awarding body requirements;
- loss of learner work or evidence;
- errors in registration or certification;
- incorrect handling of examinations or controlled assessments;
- inadequate internal quality assurance;
- incorrect communication of information to learners; or
- failure to maintain secure records.

Maladministration is distinguished from deliberate malpractice but can still have serious consequences, even where an error or omission was accidental.

3. Preventing and Reducing Learner Malpractice

BCT aims to take positive steps to prevent and reduce learner malpractice. Good practice includes:

- using induction, the learner handbook and the BCT website to inform learners about BCT's policy on malpractice and the possible consequences of attempted or actual malpractice;
- showing learners how to acknowledge and reference texts, materials and other information sources, including websites and AI-generated content;
- ensuring learners understand that research is encouraged and can contribute to higher achievement, but submitted work must demonstrate that the learner has interpreted and synthesised relevant information and appropriately acknowledged the sources used, including AI-generated material such as ChatGPT;
- designing and conducting assessment in ways that reduce the opportunity for, and help identify, plagiarism, inappropriate use of AI, collusion, cheating and other forms of malpractice;



- using supervised sessions, where appropriate, during which learners produce evidence for assignments, tasks or coursework;
- regularly reviewing or altering assessment assignments, tasks and tools where appropriate;
- where appropriate, assessing work for a particular assignment or task across a cohort within a defined period;
- using oral questioning to establish learners' understanding of the concepts, application and content within their submitted work;
- ensuring assessors are familiar with their learners' usual styles, abilities and standards of work;
- using appropriate plagiarism, originality or AI-screening tools as one source of evidence when identifying potential academic misconduct; and
- ensuring appropriate access controls are in place to prevent learners accessing or using other people's work on networked computers.

4. Learner Malpractice

Attempting to carry out, or actually carrying out, malpractice is not permitted.

The following are examples of learner malpractice. This list is not exhaustive, and other conduct may be considered malpractice by BCT in consultation with the relevant awarding body.

4.1 Plagiarism

Copying and presenting as the learner's own all or part of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer-generated work, internet sources, AI-generated content, thoughts, inventions or discoveries, whether published or unpublished, without appropriately acknowledging the source.

4.2 Collusion

Working collaboratively with another learner or learners to produce work that is subsequently submitted as an individual's own work.

Learners should not be discouraged from legitimate teamwork, which is an important skill in many sectors and subject areas. Where collaborative working is permitted, however, the contribution of individual learners should be clear, for example through minutes, allocation of tasks and agreed outcomes.

4.3 Inappropriate Use of Artificial Intelligence



Using AI technologies to produce work that is submitted as the learner's own where this is not permitted, or failing to acknowledge the use of AI where acknowledgement is required.

Learners should not automatically be discouraged from using AI technologies where their use is permitted, as these may be important tools within many sectors and subject areas. However, learners must follow assessment and awarding body requirements and make their use of AI clear within their work where required.

4.4 Other Examples of Learner Malpractice

These include:

- impersonating another person in order to produce work for them, or arranging for another person to take the learner's place in an assessment, examination or test;
- fabricating results and/or evidence;
- failing to follow the instructions or advice of an assessor, supervisor or invigilator, or the requirements of the relevant awarding body in relation to assessment, examination or test rules, regulations and security;
- misusing assessment or examination material;
- introducing or using unauthorised materials contrary to the requirements of supervised assessment, examination or test conditions, for example notes, study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries where prohibited, mobile phones or other electronic devices;
- obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on assessment-, examination- or test-related information, or attempting to do so, through talking, written papers, notes or other means during supervised assessment, examination or test conditions;
- behaving in a way that undermines the integrity of an assessment, examination or test;
- altering any results document, including certificates; and
- cheating or attempting to gain an unfair advantage.

Serious cases of learner malpractice will be reported to the relevant awarding body, for example Pearson, OCR, SQA, NOCN, AQA or NCFE, in accordance with the awarding body's requirements.

The awarding body may investigate or require further investigation and may determine sanctions that fall within its authority. Depending on the circumstances and the relevant awarding body's regulations, sanctions may affect an individual assessment, unit, qualification or the learner's future access to qualifications with that awarding body.

5. Staff Malpractice



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The following are examples of malpractice by BCT staff. This list is not exhaustive, and other instances may be considered malpractice in consultation with the appropriate awarding body:

- altering assessment or grading criteria without authorisation;
- assisting learners in producing work for assessment where the support has the potential to influence the assessment outcome, including producing work on behalf of a learner;
- producing falsified witness statements, including statements relating to evidence that the learner has not generated;
- knowingly allowing evidence that is not the learner's own to be included in the learner's assignment, task, portfolio or coursework;
- facilitating or allowing impersonation;
- misusing access arrangements, reasonable adjustments or other permitted learner support in a way that has the potential to influence the outcome of an assessment;
- failing to keep learner computer files secure;
- falsifying records or certificates through alteration, substitution, fraud or other means;
- making fraudulent certificate claims, including claiming certification before a learner has completed all assessment requirements; and
- failing to keep assessment, examination or test papers secure prior to the assessment, examination or test.

6. Reporting and Investigating Suspected Malpractice

Overall responsibility for dealing with malpractice lies with the Managing Director of BCT.

Where appropriate, the Managing Director may nominate another suitable person, such as the Exams Officer, to investigate or manage a case.

Suspected or alleged malpractice will be reported to the appropriate awarding body where this is required by the awarding body's regulations.

6.1 Notification

Where malpractice is suspected, the individual concerned will be informed in writing of:

- the nature of the alleged malpractice;
- the evidence or circumstances giving rise to the allegation, where appropriate;
- the possible consequences if malpractice is established;



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- their opportunity to respond to the allegation; and
- any applicable appeal procedure.

The individual may be a learner or a member of staff.

6.2 Investigation

BCT will investigate suspected malpractice in a fair, appropriate and structured manner.

The investigation will normally include:

1. documenting the report or allegation;
2. informing the individual of the allegation in writing;
3. informing the individual of the relevant process and their opportunity to respond;
4. providing the individual with reasonable time and opportunity to respond to the allegation, normally in writing;
5. gathering and reviewing relevant evidence;
6. considering the individual's response alongside the other available evidence;
7. contacting or reporting the matter to the relevant awarding body where required;
8. reaching an outcome on the basis of the available evidence; and
9. communicating the outcome to the individual in writing.

All relevant stages of the investigation will be documented. Records will be retained for three years following the decision, subject to any longer retention period required by an awarding body or other applicable requirement.

Where malpractice is established, appropriate and proportionate sanctions or actions will be applied according to the nature and seriousness of the incident and any relevant awarding body requirements.

Where appropriate, learner or staff malpractice may also be addressed through BCT's relevant disciplinary procedures.

7. Sanctions and Actions Following Malpractice

A range of sanctions and/or corrective actions may be applied to learners or staff where malpractice is established. The action taken will depend upon the nature, seriousness and circumstances of the incident and the requirements of the relevant awarding body.

7.1 Learners

Possible actions may include:



- issuing a written warning regarding future assessment conduct;
- requiring work to be resubmitted in order to demonstrate that the relevant assessment criteria have been met;
- refusing to accept or assess work where its authenticity cannot be established;
- applying appropriate action where malpractice is repeated;
- withholding achievement of a unit where the assessment requirements have not legitimately been met; and
- referring the matter to the relevant awarding body for any sanctions within its authority.

Where a learner repeatedly engages in malpractice, this may affect their ability to achieve the relevant unit or qualification.

7.2 Staff

Where malpractice is established against a member of staff, appropriate action may include:

- restricting or removing access to relevant records or administrative systems;
- restricting, suspending or removing authority to assess, internally verify or certify;
- requiring additional training, support or supervision;
- referring the matter to the relevant awarding body; and/or
- taking action under BCT's staff disciplinary procedures, where appropriate.

The action taken will be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the malpractice.

8. Reporting Suspected Maladministration

Any member of staff who becomes aware of suspected maladministration must report the concern to one or more of the following:

- the Quality Representative (QR);
- the Lead IV; or
- a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

BCT will not tolerate retaliation against individuals who raise concerns in good faith.

9. Investigation of Maladministration

When maladministration is reported or suspected, BCT will take the following steps.

9.1 Initial Review



The Quality Representative or Lead IV will review the concern and gather initial information.

9.2 Formal Investigation

Where a formal investigation is required, this may include:

- collecting statements;
- reviewing relevant evidence;
- checking assessment and/or IV records; and
- interviewing relevant members of staff.

9.3 Contacting the Awarding Body

Where required, the relevant awarding body will be informed in accordance with its requirements. This includes relevant qualifications regulated or administered through organisations such as RSL, Pearson or JCQ.

9.4 Findings and Actions

Following the investigation, BCT will take appropriate action. This may include:

- correcting identified errors;
- taking steps to prevent recurrence;
- implementing staff training, support or development where required; and
- applying BCT's disciplinary procedures where appropriate.

10. Record Keeping and Review

BCT will maintain appropriate records of malpractice and maladministration investigations, outcomes and actions in accordance with this policy and relevant awarding body requirements.

Lessons arising from incidents should be used, where appropriate, to improve assessment practice, quality assurance, staff training, administrative processes and controls in order to reduce the risk of recurrence.

Date Updated	To Review	Responsibility
July 2026	Jul 2027	JD