

## **Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy**

Effective Date: 1 April 2026

Review Date: Annually, next review due: 1 April 2027

Approved by: Quality Assurance Board

### **1. Policy Statement**

Footprint School of Business (FSOB) is committed to maintaining the integrity, credibility, and validity of all qualifications delivered under NCFE awarding organisation requirements.

This policy establishes a robust framework for preventing, identifying, investigating, and managing malpractice and plagiarism, ensuring compliance with:

- NCFE Centre Requirements
- Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition
- Internal Quality Assurance standards

FSOB adopts a zero-tolerance approach to malpractice, including academic dishonesty, falsification of records, and maladministration.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All registered learners
- Tutors, assessors, and internal quality assurers
- Administrative and support staff
- Contractors and third parties involved in delivery
- Senior management and centre leadership

It covers all stages of the learner journey including:

- Recruitment and enrolment
- Teaching, learning, and assessment
- Internal quality assurance
- Certification and claims

### **3. Definitions**

#### **3.1 Malpractice**

Any deliberate action, negligence, or misconduct that:

- Compromises the integrity of assessment
- Undermines the validity of qualifications
- Results in unfair advantage

#### **3.2 Plagiarism**

A specific form of malpractice involving:

- Presenting another person's work, ideas, or data as one's own
- Copying from books, journals, or online sources without referencing
- Submitting AI-generated or third-party work without declaration
- Re-using previously submitted work (self-plagiarism)

#### **3.3 Maladministration**

Unintentional failure to comply with administrative requirements, including:

- Poor record keeping
- Delays in registration or certification
- Inaccurate data handling

### **4. Examples of Malpractice**

#### **4.1 Learner Malpractice**

- Plagiarism or copying work
- Collusion (unauthorised collaboration)
- Fabrication of data or evidence
- Impersonation
- Use of unauthorised materials in assessments

#### **4.2 Staff Malpractice**

- Assisting learners unfairly
- Falsifying assessment decisions
- Altering grades without justification
- Failure to follow assessment regulations

#### **4.3 Centre Malpractice**

- Failure to comply with NCFE requirements
- Inadequate quality assurance processes
- Withholding information from NCFE
- Systemic failures in assessment delivery

### **5. Prevention Measures**

FSOB implements the following controls:

#### **5.1 Academic Integrity Measures**

- Mandatory learner induction on plagiarism
- Clear referencing guidance (Harvard standard)
- Use of plagiarism detection software (e.g. Turnitin)
- Assessment design that reduces predictability

#### **5.2 Staff Controls**

- Standardised assessment and IQA procedures
- Regular staff training and CPD
- Assessment sampling and moderation

#### **5.3 Systems and Monitoring**

- Secure record-keeping systems
- Audit trails for assessment decisions
- Annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR) review

### **6. Reporting Malpractice**

Malpractice may be reported by:

- Learners
- Staff
- External stakeholders
- Whistleblowers (including anonymous reports)

Reports must include:

- Nature of allegation
- Individuals involved
- Evidence (if available)

FSOB ensures:

- Confidential handling of all allegations
- Protection for whistleblowers
- Compliance with data protection requirements

## **7. Investigation Procedure**

### **7.1 Initial Response**

- Acknowledge allegation within 3 working days
- Conduct preliminary review
- Notify NCFE where required

### **7.2 Formal Investigation**

- Appoint an impartial investigator
- Gather evidence (scripts, records, statements)
- Interview relevant parties
- Maintain full audit trail

### **7.3 Learner Rights**

- Written notification of allegation
- Opportunity to respond
- Right to be accompanied
- Right to appeal

## **8. Outcomes and Sanctions**

Sanctions are applied proportionately and may include:

### **Learners**

- Written warning
- Resubmission with penalty
- Disqualification from unit/qualification
- Suspension or removal

### **Staff**

- Disciplinary action
- Suspension or dismissal
- Removal from assessment duties

### **Centre-Level Actions**

- Increased monitoring
- Withdrawal of approval
- Reporting to regulators

## **9. Appeals**

All individuals have the right to appeal decisions through:

- FSOB Appeals Policy
- NCFE escalation procedures (where applicable)

Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of outcome notification.

## **10. Record Keeping**

FSOB will maintain comprehensive records including:

- Allegation details
- Investigation evidence
- Outcomes and sanctions
- Correspondence and reports

Records will be retained for a minimum of 5 years, in line with NCFE expectations

## **11. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Centre Management**

- Ensure policy implementation
- Report serious cases to NCFE
- Maintain compliance

### **Quality Assurance Lead**

- Oversee investigations
- Ensure consistency and fairness

### **Assessors/IQAs**

- Detect and report malpractice
- Maintain assessment integrity

### **Learners**

- Submit original work
- Follow academic integrity rules

## **12. Monitoring and Review**

- Annual review of malpractice cases
- Inclusion in SAR and QIP
- Continuous improvement based on findings

## **13. Links to Other Policies**

- Assessment Policy
- Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy