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Malpractice, Maladministration & Whistle Blowing Policy

Malpractice and Maladministration

Malpractice is a deliberate intentional act or omission by individuals to dishonestly claim awards or certificates for Learners through unethical and unprofessional conduct. Such malpractice may be illegal and may put into question the authenticity and integrity of all achievements for the assessment centre and the awarding bodies.

The South Wales and South West Roofing Training Group (SWRTG) as an Accredited Assessment Centre for QCF NVQ awards and a training provider are proud of its reputation with regard to the quality and integrity of its claims for achievements and training certificates and the certainty that any achievement award claimed or training certificates by the centre are fully justified. This is ensured by rigorous verification procedures to confirm that all evidence assessed is valid, authentic, current and sufficient. The SWRTG will take all necessary steps to ensure malpractice cannot and does not take place.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how allegations of malpractice in relation to all the SWRTG qualifications are dealt with. The scope of the policy is to provide:

Definition of malpractice: any act, or failure to act, that threatens or compromises the integrity of the assessment process or the validity of the SWRTG and awarding body qualifications and their certification. This includes maladministration and the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems, the deliberate falsification of records or documents for any reason connected to the award of the SWRTG qualifications, acts of plagiarism or other academic misconduct and/or actions that compromise the reputation or authority of the SWRTG and its centres, officers and employees.

Examples of student and learner malpractice: Obtaining examination or assessment material without authorisation, Impersonating another student to sit an assessment, collaborating with another student or individual, producing and using or allowing the use of forged or falsified documentation, falsely obtaining a SWRTG training certificate or one from another awarding body, knowingly allowing an individual to impersonate a student, completing an assessed assignment for a student or providing

them with assistance beyond that 'normally' expected, producing, using or allowing the use of forged or falsified documentation, deliberate misuse of our logo, brand, name and trademarks or misrepresentation of a centre's relationship with other awarding bodies, deliberate failure to continually adhere to our centre recognition and/or qualification approval requirements or actions assigned to your centre, learners still working towards qualification after certification claims have been made, selling certificates for cash for example.

Definition of Maladministration: Maladministration is defined as any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre, tutor, assessor, learner or quality assurer not complying with IQA agreements, training providers and other awarding bodies.

Maladministration is in effect any activity or practice which results to non-compliance with administrative requirements and regulations, this includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration within the centre including inappropriate learner records.

Examples of Maladministration: Persistent failure to adhere to our centre approval criteria and/or qualification requirements and/or associated actions assigned to the centre, inaccurate claim for certificates, late learner certification requests, e.g. beyond the certification end date for the qualification, failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence, withholding or the delaying of information, by deliberate act or omission, from us which is required to assure Safety Training Awards of the centre's ability to deliver qualifications appropriately, poor administration arrangements and/or records, failing to report a suspected case of student malpractice.

Process for Making an Allegation of Malpractice or Maladministration

Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time must immediately notify the Chair of the Training Group. In doing so they should put this in writing/email and enclose appropriate supporting evidence (centres can submit details of potential/actual cases of and other parties such as learners, parents or whistle-blowers may contact us directly).

REPORT OF SUSPECTED MALPRACTICE to include:

Centre's name, address

Learner's name

Centre personnel details (name, job role)

Details of the training course/qualification affected, or nature of the service affected

Nature of the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration and associated dates

Details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by the centre or anybody else involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances. In addition, we ask that the person making the allegation declares any personal interest they may have in the matter to us at the outset.

We expect that investigations would normally involve the Group Training Officer (if there is an investigation into allegations of malpractice and/or maladministration or irregularities against the GTO or the management of the centre then such investigations should be carried out by the chair of the Training Group).

Possible malpractice and maladministration sanctions: Following an investigation, if a case of malpractice or maladministration is upheld, the SWRTG may impose sanctions or other penalties on the individual(s) concerned. Where relevant we will report the matter to the Chair of the training group, awarding body and employer. Any sanctions imposed will reflect the seriousness of the malpractice that has occurred.

Possible study centre sanctions that may be applied to students

- a. A written warning about future conduct.
- b. Notification to an employer, regulator or the police.
- c. Removal from the course.

Possible sanctions that may be applied to trainers

1. A written warning about future conduct.
2. Imposition of special conditions for the future involvement of the individual(s) in the conduct, teaching, supervision or administration of students and/or examinations.
3. Informing any other organisation known to employ the individual in relation to SWRTG courses and other awarding bodies or examinations of the outcome of the case.
4. The SWRTG may carry out unannounced monitoring of the working practices of the individual(s) concerned.
5. Dismissal.

Whistleblowing Policy

The group directors operate an open-door policy to allow individuals to raise or report areas of concern; this Whistleblowing policy has been devised to encourage all members of the group to disclose any act of malpractice or to raise any concerns over possible malpractice. There will be no adverse consequences for any group member who raises a concern unless it was raised with malicious intent.

It is clearly in everyone's interest to ensure that malpractice does not occur, but also that disclosures must be made with a reasonable belief that malpractice has been committed, is being committed or is about to be committed.

The group directors will take all such disclosures seriously and every reasonable effort will be made to protect the identity of the whistleblower, if they so wish, whilst it is being investigated.

The group directors will conduct an initial investigation and if it is deemed to be valid will advise NOCN or other appropriate awarding bodies (via e-mail) of the disclosure. The whistleblower will be kept appraised of this decision. The group will co-operate fully with any requirements these organisations may have to ensure a prompt conclusion of the investigation and the resumption of award status.

The group has adopted the NOCN and CITB Malpractice Policy into its procedures.