

REC PROFESSIONALS ACCREDITED CENTRE

Policy Document:

Maladministration and Malpractice Policy

Dated: June 2020

The REC Professionals Accredited Centre (known as REC Professionals Centre) role is to successfully deliver qualifications certificated by REC's Awarding Organisation (RECAO).

As part of our commitment to quality standards and therefore protecting our learners, RECAO ensures that any regulatory requirements imposed upon us are met. REC Professionals' policies are integral to our approach and articulate in a consistent way how we meet our regulatory requirements. These are reviewed annually to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Maladministration and Malpractice Policy

Purpose

Incidents of malpractice/maladministration can potentially lead to learners being disadvantaged, can require the conducting of costly and time-consuming investigations and may cause reputational damage to the REC Professionals Centre. It is, therefore, desirable to prevent malpractice or maladministration from occurring, whenever possible. Cases of suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration should be dealt with quickly, thoroughly and effectively. This policy has been prepared with reference to Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition.

Scope

It is the responsibility of all REC Professionals Centre staff to be vigilant with regard to any events which may lead to malpractice/maladministration occurring, and report promptly to the REC Professionals Centre Manager where they suspect malpractice/maladministration has and/or may occur so that appropriate action can be taken to address this with immediate effect.

The REC Professionals Centre Manager is responsible for notifying the RECAO of cases of suspected/actual malpractice and maladministration to ensure the appropriate action may be taken.

Objectives

- to identify and minimise the risk of malpractice,
- to identify and minimise the risk of maladministration,
- to respond to any incident promptly and objectively,
- to standardise and record any investigation to ensure openness and fairness,
- to impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners where incidents are proven,
- to protect the integrity of the REC Professionals Centre and RECAO.

Definitions

Learner malpractice is any action by the learner which has the potential to undermine the integrity and validity of the learner's work (plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc.).

Examples of Malpractice by learners

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the REC Professionals Centre at its discretion:

- plagiarism of any nature,
- collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work,
- copying,
- deliberate destruction of another's work,
- fabrication of results or evidence,
- false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of coursework,
- impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test,
- Inappropriate behaviour that causes disruption to others,
- Inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material in assessment evidence,
- Frivolous content - producing content that is unrelated to the coursework,
- Unauthorised aids - physical possession of unauthorised materials.

Expectations

All learners are expected to:

- submit work for assessment that is their own original work,
- seek advice on coursework best practice and procedures from course tutors prior to submitting work,
- avoid sharing electronic versions of their work with other learners.

Investigations

Investigations will adhere to the following principles:

- Confidentiality – all material collected as part of an investigation will be kept secure and not normally disclosed to any third parties.
- Impartiality – investigations will be undertaken by a senior REC Professionals Centre employee and assessed against the specific facts/evidence of the case in arriving at a decision about intention and culpability.
- Rights of individuals – where an individual is suspected of malpractice, they will be informed of the allegation made against them in writing and the evidence that supports the allegation. They will be provided with the opportunity to consider their response to the allegation and submit a written statement or seek advice, if they wish to. They will also be informed of what the possible consequences could be if the malpractice is proven and of the possibility that other parties may be informed e.g., RECAO. The appeals process will also be communicated to them.
- Retention and storage of evidence and records – all relevant documents and evidence will be retained by the REC Centre.

Decisions and action plans

All conclusions and decisions will be based on evidence. A course of proposed action will be identified, agreed between the REC Professionals Centre & the learner, implemented and monitored by the REC Professionals Centre to the point of completion.

Any decision on the outcome will reflect the weight of evidence and the minor or major nature of the case – the learner does not have to admit malpractice. Any sanctions applied to the learner will be proportionate with the level of non-compliance identified (and evidenced) during the investigation.

Outcome

REC Professionals Centre will decide the appropriate outcome for the learner which could result in expulsion from their qualification.

Appeals

If the learner is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may contact the RECAO via their Formal Appeals Policy found at: <https://www.rec.uk.com/about-the-rec/awarding-organisation/information-centres>