



Param Qualifications

Malpractice and Maladministration Policy



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Introduction

We protect the integrity and credibility of our qualifications by setting clear rules on malpractice and maladministration. This policy provides clear guidance to staff, learners, and other stakeholders on identifying, reporting, and managing instances of malpractice and maladministration. This policy also demonstrates compliance with Ofqual General Condition Q, which requires awarding organisations to identify, investigate, and act upon all instances of malpractice and maladministration.

Purpose

The policy aims to:

- Ensure that learners and staff understand what constitutes malpractice and maladministration.
- Protect the integrity of assessment processes, qualifications, and certificates.
- Provide a structured approach for reporting, investigating, and resolving suspected incidents.
- Minimise risk to learners and the organisation.

Scope

This policy applies to all Param Qualifications staff, learners, contractors, and anyone involved in the delivery, assessment, or verification of qualifications.

Definitions

Malpractice

Malpractice refers to any deliberate, negligent, or reckless action that:

- Compromises assessment processes, the validity of results, or the integrity of qualifications.
- Damages the credibility, reputation or authority of Param Qualifications or relevant awarding authorities.
- Involves unlawful discrimination, harassment, or misconduct in relation to learners or staff.

Maladministration

Maladministration refers to errors, omissions, or failures in following administrative procedures, which:

- Result in non-compliance with awarding organisation requirements



- Compromise learner records, assessments, or qualification claims
- Include persistent mistakes, poor record-keeping, or procedural oversights

Prevention of Malpractice

Param Qualifications will:

- Provide learners with guidance on plagiarism, collusion, and acceptable assessment practices.
- Ensure staff receive training and induction on assessment integrity.
- Maintain robust internal quality assurance and assessment procedures.
- Review all assessment records before submission to awarding organisations.

Reporting Procedures

Suspected malpractice or maladministration may be reported verbally or in writing. Written confirmation is recommended for verbal reports. Reports should include:

- Name and contact details of the reporter.
- Learner(s) or staff involved.
- Date, time, and location of the incident.
- Details of the suspected malpractice/maladministration.
- Any preliminary actions taken and potential impact on learners.
- Allegations involving centres linked to associated entities will be reported, investigated, and escalated under the same process as all other centres.

We will normally confirm receipt of malpractice reports within 5 working days

Whistleblowing

Param Qualifications allows anonymous reporting, provided the individual states that they do not wish their identity disclosed. While confidentiality will be maintained, there may be circumstances where disclosure is legally required. Supporting evidence will be considered in all cases.

Investigation Procedure

- An impartial senior officer will be appointed to lead investigations, reviewing all evidence and interviewing relevant parties.
- Individuals under investigation will be given the opportunity to present a written response and may be accompanied by a representative.
- Investigations will normally be completed within 10 working days, though complex cases may require additional time with regular updates provided.
- Where malpractice or maladministration has the potential to affect learners or assessment integrity, Param Qualifications will notify Ofqual promptly under Condition B3.

Notification and Decision

- Findings will be communicated in writing, normally within 5 working days after the conclusion of the investigation.
- The notification will include the evidence considered, conclusions reached, and any corrective or disciplinary measures.
- Decisions may include:
 - Withdrawal of learners and suspension of staff
 - Reporting to the relevant awarding organisation, external quality reviewer, or regulator, where required.
 - Withholding or withdrawal of certificates.

All malpractice and maladministration cases will be logged in the Malpractice Register within the Parnassus system. Records of investigations, decisions, and outcomes will be securely retained for a minimum of three years for Ofqual inspection. A summary of malpractice and maladministration cases will be reported quarterly to the Board of Directors, providing governance oversight and ensuring lessons learned are embedded.

Right of Appeal

Individuals may appeal the outcome if they believe procedures were not followed fairly. Appeals will follow the Param Qualifications Appeals Procedure. The Compliance Officer will carry out annual trend analysis of malpractice cases, highlighting recurring issues, and recommend preventive actions such as staff training, centre guidance, or policy updates.



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Appendices

Appendix A: Guidance for Investigators

- Investigators must be impartial, experienced, and maintain thorough records.
- Interviews should follow a structured approach, including preparation, evidence review, and documentation.
- Minor or vulnerable learners must be accompanied by an appropriate adult during interviews.

Appendix B: Examples of Malpractice

Staff Malpractice

- Breaching security of assessment materials.

- Providing unauthorized assistance to learners.
- Failing to follow awarding organisation procedures.

Learner Malpractice

- Plagiarism, collusion, or cheating.
- Impersonation during assessments.
- Submission of falsified documents or certificates.

For detailed guidance on academic offences such as plagiarism, collusion, or cheating, please refer to the separate Plagiarism, Collusion & Cheating Policy

Appendix C: Malpractice Report Template

- Statement of facts and circumstances.
- Individuals involved.
- Evidence collected.
- Findings and decisions.
- Recommended corrective actions or sanctions.

Completed reports will be uploaded to the Malpractice Register and linked to the Corrective Action Log.