



LINCOLN COLLEGE

**ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE
PROCEDURE**

POLICY CQ/PR/20

SPONSOR

Head of Quality Improvement

Equality and Diversity Statement

Lincoln College strives to treat all its members and visitors fairly and aims to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, sexual orientation, spent criminal convictions, age or any other inappropriate grounds.

LINCOLN COLLEGE

ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE PROCEDURE

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ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE PROCEDURE

The Student Executive and members of staff in Student Services can help students in interpreting the following procedure.

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the procedure is to make students aware of the seriousness of assessment malpractice and the possible consequences of such misconduct.

2 AIMS

- 2.1 The procedure aims to give a clear structure that supports staff and students in upholding the integrity of students' work.
- 2.2 The procedure applies to all students at Lincoln College.

3 INTRODUCTION

The following are categories of assessment malpractice.

- 3.1 **Cheating** is any irregular behaviour during examinations, such as:

- Unauthorised possession of notes
- Communicating with, or copying from another candidate
- Using programmable calculators, mobile phones, pagers or other equipment when this has been forbidden
- Unauthorised obtaining of examination papers.

- 3.2 **Collusion** includes situations where:

- A student completes work in collaboration with another person and then submits it for assessment as entirely his /her own work
- A student collaborates with another person to complete work which is then submitted for assessment as entirely that other person's work.

- 3.3 **Misleading material** includes:

- Presenting data which has been invented or obtained by unfair means
- Re-submission in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement, of any work for which the student has already gained credit as part of the same or another award.

- 3.4 **Plagiarism** is the passing off of another person's thoughts, ideas, writings or images as one's own. Examples of plagiarism are:

- The inclusion of quotations from published works, the source of which is not properly acknowledged

- Summarising another person's published material by simply changing words or altering the order of presentation, without proper acknowledgement
- Copying the work of another student with or without that student's knowledge or agreement. In the former case, both parties are guilty of plagiarism.

The above lists are not exhaustive.

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 Allegations of assessment malpractice may be dealt with either by a summary procedure or by a full investigatory procedure by the Quality Improvement Unit.

4.2 Summary Procedure

4.2.1 The summary procedure is available to all students, except where the allegation relates to misconduct in an examination or where the student has previously had an allegation against him/her upheld.

4.2.2 Where a member of staff suspects a student of having committed an academic irregularity they shall notify the Quality Co-ordinator and provide evidence of the grounds for the suspicion.

4.2.3a Where the Quality Co-ordinator considers there is enough evidence to proceed, he/she will write to the student advising him/her of his/her right to have the matter dealt with under the summary or the full investigatory procedure and inviting the student to an interview under the summary procedure except:

4.2.3b Where a HE course is validated by a partner university the case shall be referred to this university and their procedures followed.

4.2.3c All other cases involving higher and professional awards will be reported to the Academic Affairs Committee for consideration.

4.2.4 If the student elects to attend the interview, the Quality Co-ordinator will explain the nature of the allegation to the student.

4.2.5 If the student provides a satisfactory explanation the Quality Co-ordinator will dismiss the case.

4.2.6 If the student admits the allegation then the Quality Co-ordinator may impose any of the sanctions detailed in section 6 as he/she deems appropriate.

4.2.7 If the student denies the allegation but does not offer a satisfactory explanation, the case will proceed to the full investigatory procedure.

4.3 Full Investigatory Procedure

- 4.3.1 Where the student elects not to attend the interview under the summary procedure, or in the case of 4.2.7 above, the Head of Quality Improvement will appoint an Investigating Officer to enquire into the facts of the case as soon as is reasonably practicable. The Investigating Officer will not subsequently be either wholly or partly responsible for determining the sanction.
- 4.3.2 The Investigating Officer may decide that there is no need to proceed with the full investigatory procedure and that it is sufficient to talk the matter over with the student or simply issue a reprimand. The Investigating Officer will determine whether the allegations potentially constitute assessment malpractice, and if they do, an investigatory meeting chaired by the Head of Quality Improvement will be established.
- 4.3.3 The investigatory meeting will normally be arranged within 14 working days of the appointment of the Investigating Officer and the student will be given at least 3 working days notice of the meeting. He or she will have the right to attend, be heard and to be accompanied or represented by a fellow student of Lincoln College or Student Executive official or parent/guardian/next of kin. Failure of the student to attend the meeting will not delay or affect the hearing of the case.
- 4.3.4 The Head of Quality Improvement will have the right to impose any of the sanctions detailed in section 6 as he/she deems appropriate. The decision of the Head of Quality Improvement will be made in writing to the student within seven working days of the meeting.

5 RIGHT TO APPEAL

- 5.1 The student will have the right to appeal against the outcome of the full investigatory procedure. Appeals must be made to the Director of Performance and Planning and received within 5 working days of the date of the letter advising the student of the decision resulting from the investigatory meeting.
- 5.2 The Appeal Hearing will be arranged within 14 working days of the receipt of the appeal and the student will be given at least 3 working days notice. The student will have the right to attend and be heard and to be accompanied or represented by a fellow student of Lincoln College or Student Executive official or parent/guardian/next of kin.
- 5.3 The decision of the Director of Performance and Planning at appeal will be final.

6 SANCTIONS

6.1 If a minor case is identified (examples are listed in Appendix One), one or more of the following sanctions may be applied:

- (i) Warn the student about future conduct and make a note on the student's file.
- (ii) Deduct marks from the student's work or return work to be re-done and resubmitted for marking.
- (iii) Notify the awarding organisation/examining body, in line with their procedures.
- (iv) Inform external examiners/verifiers in line with awarding organisations/examining body's procedures.

6.2 If a moderate case is identified (examples are listed in Appendix One), one or more of the following sanctions may be applied:

- (i) Award a mark on a scale between a minimum pass mark and zero for the examination or assessed piece of work, and make a note on the student's file.
- (ii) Withdraw the right of the student to re-sit the examination or test, or withdraw the right to resubmit the assessed piece of work.
- (iii) Notify the awarding organisation/examining body, in line with their procedures.
- (iv) Inform external examiners/verifiers in line with awarding organisation/examining body's procedures.

6.3 If a serious case is identified (examples are listed in Appendix One), one or more of the following sanctions may be applied:

- (i) Award a mark of zero for the examination or assessed piece of work and make a note on the student's file.
- (ii) Withdraw the right of the student to re-sit the examination or test, or withdraw the right to resubmit the assessed piece of work.
- (iii) Disqualify the student from the course.
- (iv) Recommend expulsion of the student from the college.
- (v) Notify the awarding organisation/examining body, in line with their procedures.
- (vi) Inform external examiners/verifiers in line with awarding organisation/examining body's procedures.

7 STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

7.1 A student found guilty of having committed assessment malpractice may also be subject to action under the college Student Disciplinary Procedure.

APPENDIX ONE

EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE

Examples of *minor cases* could include:

1. Receiving undue help in good faith because instructions have been misunderstood.
2. Copying a couple of sentences or using someone else's diagrams.
3. Copying small amounts of text from books without direct acknowledgement, but which does not make a significant contribution to the overall work.
4. Downloading small amounts of information from the internet without acknowledgement, using another's disk or copying small amounts of work from another's disk.
5. Using another's artwork.
6. Not referencing work properly.
7. Failing to acknowledge the source of a small section of an assignment.

Examples of *moderate cases* could include:

1. Copying from books without acknowledgement which has a significant contribution to the overall work.
2. Limited plagiarism from professional work.
3. Limited copying of another candidate's work (hard copy or from a disk), or excessive help within one piece of work.
4. Limited downloading of information from the internet or the use of model answers downloaded from the internet.
5. Repeated minor cases.

Examples of *serious cases* could include:

1. Extensive copying of textbooks in one piece of work or limited copying in two or more pieces of work which makes a significant contribution to the work/s.
2. Extensive plagiarism of professional works (more than 100 words).
3. Buying, selling or stealing of work.
4. Repeated evidence of extensive use of information from the internet without acknowledgement or using model internet answers.
5. Using past candidates' work from previous years.
6. Undue help from outside the college.
7. Repeated moderate cases.