



#TheWrd

Further Education Polices & Procedures

Policy_07: #THEWRD FE Academic Malpractice Policy

Policy Overview

The purpose of the FE Academic Malpractice Policy is to set out how #THEWRD intends to manage any incidents of malpractice by learners, staff or anyone involved in the assessment of FE courses.

The Policy

The policy aims to:

- identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners;
- facilitate a prompt and objective response to any incident of alleged malpractice;
- standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness;
- establish the range of appropriate penalties and/or sanctions that may be imposed on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven;
- protect the integrity of the centre and Further Education qualifications.

In order to do this, #THEWRD will:

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the student handbook to inform learners of the policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources.
- Require learners to declare that their work is their own.
- Ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used.

- Conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the Chief Education and Learning Officer and all the personnel linked to the allegation. It will proceed through the following stages:
 - Stage 1: informal investigation by the Course Leader or Chief Education and Learning Officer, involving an informal meeting with the student and/or member of staff concerned to establish whether there are grounds for a formal hearing of the Academic Malpractice Committee to be convened to consider allegations of malpractice. The case will either be dismissed at this stage or progress to Stage 2.
 - Stage 2: formal hearing by the Academic Malpractice Committee, which will comprise the Chief Education and Learning Officer and a senior academic member of staff not involved in the delivery of the course, to determine whether the allegation of academic malpractice should be upheld and to impose any sanctions/penalties as appropriate in accordance with the sanctions/penalties set out below. The student or member of staff against whom the allegation has been made will have the right to be accompanied by a friend/work colleague. A full written record of the hearing will be made and the outcome will be communicated in writing to all parties within 5 working days of the hearing.
 - Stage 3: appeal. The student or member of staff against whom an allegation of academic malpractice has been upheld has the right to appeal in writing to the Chief Education and Learning Officer (or nominee) within 5 working days of receiving notification of the outcome of the Academic Malpractice Hearing. Chief Education and Learning Officer (or nominee) will convene an appeal panel hearing within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. The panel will be chaired by the Chief Education and Learning Officer (or nominee) and a senior academic member of staff. A full written record of the appeal hearing will be made and the outcome will be communicated in writing to all parties within 5 working days of the appeal hearing.

Where malpractice is proven, #THEWRD will apply the penalties / sanctions as appropriate outlined below:

- I. issue a verbal warning to the student indicating the consequences of future misconduct, a record of which to be entered into the student's file removable after 6 months;
- II. issue a written warning to the student indicating the consequences of future

- misconduct, to be entered into the student's file removable after 12 months;
- III. issue a final written warning to the student indicating the consequences of future misconduct, to be entered into the student's file removable three months after the completion of the student's course;
 - IV. suspend the student with immediate effect for a fixed period of time from premises and/or services;
 - V. permanently exclude the student with immediate effect from premises and/or services.

Definition of Malpractice by Learners

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by #THEWRD 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 (including the use of ICT to aid copying).
- Deliberate destruction of another's work.
- Fabrication of results or evidence.
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or 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.

Definition of Malpractice by College Staff

- Improper assistance to candidates.
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made.
- Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure.
- Inappropriate retention of certificates.
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner.
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.

- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

Guide for Learners

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the work of others without acknowledging your sources of information or inspiration, thereby claiming it as your own. Any written work you submit for your assessments must be in your own words, and not copied from other sources, unless it is properly quoted or referenced as such. This includes:

- Using words more or less exactly as they have been used in articles, lectures, television programmes, books, or anywhere else
- Using other people's ideas or theories without saying whose ideas they are
- Paraphrasing what you read or hear without stating where it comes from
- Changing words or sentences you have 'borrowed' or putting them in a different order - the result is still plagiarism.

This means you must not copy and paste from the internet!

Why is plagiarism wrong?

- It is fundamentally dishonest
- Learners who commit plagiarism are seeking an unfair advantage over other learners
- Learners who commit plagiarism are devaluing the value of the qualification they seek
- It is disrespectful to your Assessors, and a betrayal of their trust.

#THEWRD takes plagiarism very seriously. We use anti-plagiarism software that can detect any issues instantly, and all suspicious submissions are thoroughly checked. Plagiarised work is usually detected by our marking team quickly, as they have all been trained in how to recognise it.

Wikipedia

Wikipedia is an online popular encyclopaedia that is based on facts people have sourced online, and public opinion. Wikipedia is open source information, not formally referenced. This means it can contain errors and information sources are not always known. Therefore, it is not an entirely trustworthy source.

When researching a subject, Wikipedia is a useful place to start in order to getting a basic understanding of a subject. There will usually be a number of credited sources at the bottom of each page that you can visit, where you can obtain more trustworthy information. In other words, it is unadvisable to use facts/quotes from Wikipedia when writing your essays. You should use it as a starting point to begin understanding the subject in question, and then confirm the information by backing it up from another source.

Disciplinary procedure

If a piece of work is found to be plagiarised, you will be required to attend a compulsory disciplinary tutorial with the Chief Education and Learning Officer. Disciplinary action will depend on how serious the malpractice appears to the investigators. In all cases where there is clear evidence of deliberate malpractice the relevant examining body will be informed. This is in accordance with the examining boards' requirements. The examination body will inform the college and the candidate of the action that they decide is appropriate.

Tips on how to avoid plagiarism

- Remember that referring to sources is a good thing to do, as it shows you have read up on it
- When reading, think about what the author is saying and your reactions before taking notes
- Only copy what you intend to quote. Ensure that you take full bibliographic details, including the page number
- The rest of your notes should be in your own words. This will save time and worry later
- If you have any further questions concerning plagiarism or how to reference your work properly, you should book a tutorial with your Chief Education and Learning Officer.