

# DeGesh School of Entrepreneurship

## Malpractice Policy

Policy Review Date	30/01/2025
Next Review Date	29/01/2026

## **Part A - Policy**

### **1. Scope of the policy**

This policy is aimed at all the School learners and key stakeholders namely Study Centres, (termed 'Centres'), their staff and learners and the School associates and staff, within and outside the UK, who are using any the Institute products and services and who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

The policy sets out how centres, learners or other personnel should work with us to deal with such cases and the steps which must be followed when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice and maladministration. It also identifies the Institute's responsibilities in dealing with such cases and the steps that will be followed when reviewing such cases.

### **2. Definitions of Malpractice**

For the purposes of this policy 'Malpractice' is defined as:

"Any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates."

For the purposes of this policy it also includes some forms of misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain groups or groups of learners.

Malpractice may include a range of issues from failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

### **3. Examples of actions that may constitute malpractice**

Examples of centre and learner malpractice are provided below. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive.

- Failure to meet the Institute centre recognition and qualification approval requirements as stated in the centre contract and the Institute policies. Examples of this would include:
  - failure to continually meet the Institute centre recognition and qualification approval requirements e.g. failure to advise the Institute of centre changes related to the delivery of the Institute qualifications; external verifier action plans repeatedly not implemented within agreed timescales;
  - failure to meet the Institute requirements for assessment and internal verification.
- Failure by the centre to implement the agreed internal Malpractice policy relating to staff and learners. Examples of this would include:
  - improper assistance to learners over and beyond normal levels of supervision such as to put in doubt learner ownership of work inventing or changing judgements for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) without following agreed internal policies and processes repeated incidences of

- insufficient evidence of the learners' achievements to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made (fraudulent claims for certificates)
  - inappropriate retention of certificates,
  - fraudulent use of the School logo and/or claiming to offer the Institute qualifications without formal recognition as an Institute centre.
- Failure to deal appropriately with learner malpractice such as:
  - plagiarism of any nature
  - collusion with others
  - copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
  - deliberate destruction of another's work
  - false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework impersonation
- Failure to meet the requirements of the regulations for the conduct of timed assessments or other forms of assessment under controlled conditions including:
  - non-adherence to any arrangements agreed with the Institute for such assessments amendments to assessment materials without permission .
  - failure to provide access arrangements for assessment in accordance with the Institute requirements.

#### **4. Definition of Maladministration**

For the purposes of this policy this is defined as:

“Activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre or candidate not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications as set out in the relevant regulatory and awarding organisation requirements.”

For the purposes of this policy it also includes persistent mistakes or poor administration within a centre.

#### **5. Examples of Maladministration**

Examples of actions that may constitute maladministration are listed below. These are examples and the School reserves the right to consider as maladministration other actions not listed but falling under the general definition of maladministration.

- Delay in issuing certificates
- Unreasonable delay in responding to requests for information or other communications from the Institute
- Inaccurate claims for certificates
- Incorrect action or failure to take any action when requested to by the Institute Failure to provide information when reasonably requested to do so
- Inadequate record-keeping for example in relation to assessment of learners Failure to investigate
- Misleading or inaccurate statements

## **6. Dealing with Malpractice or Maladministration**

In accordance with the requirements of the regulatory authority, all allegations of malpractice or maladministration must be investigated. The nature of the investigation, and of the actions taken if malpractice or maladministration is proven, will be commensurate with the nature and the gravity of the malpractice or maladministration. The Institute regards all allegations and suspicions of malpractice or maladministration as potentially serious issues, and as such all must be investigated and recorded formally, no matter how trivial they may at first appear.

## **7. Academic Malpractice**

This section identifies the steps that the Institute will take in detecting and dealing with academic malpractice. As such it is applicable to its own operations and those of its centre.

- Definition:
  - Academic malpractice is any activity – intentional or otherwise - that is likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research. It includes; plagiarism, collusion, fabrication or falsification of results, anything else that could result in unearned or undeserved credit for those committing it. Academic malpractice can result from a deliberate act of cheating or may be committed unintentionally. Whether intended or not, all incidents of academic malpractice will be treated seriously by the Institute.
- Safeguards:
  - Wherever practicable assessment tasks and topics will vary from year to year.
  - Assessment will focus on demonstration of the understanding of knowledge rather than the relatively straightforward repetition of such knowledge.
  - Students will be asked to submit a draft or outline of major pieces of work; this allows useful formative feedback, affords you the opportunity to spot possible plagiarism, and helps to combat plagiarism from the Web.
  - All assignments issued to Distance Learning students will require that they sign a declaration that it is the student's own work. This will be countersigned by a designated Mentor using Form SAF.
  - Wherever practicable assignments will be submitted for electronic scrutiny using the plagiarism detection systems (usually 'Turnitin') to check for passages found elsewhere on the web, in books and journals or in work submitted previously. The Institute will inform students of this procedure as required.
  - The Institute will give students clear guidance on the appropriate styles of referencing, the need for bibliographies and their layout, etc.
  - Students working in groups or teams will be given specific guidance on how assignments arising from their legitimate collaboration are to be assessed and to what extent 'shared' material may be appropriate in individual assignments submitted for assessment.
  - A single instance of the copying or close paraphrasing of two or three sentences of perhaps no more than 50 words in total of someone else's material, without direct acknowledgement, or the reproduction of a single unacknowledged diagram should not necessarily be regarded as plagiarism. These might better be described as 'poor academic practice', rather than malpractice. In such

cases, students should be informed why they fall below the standards required, and should then be penalized accordingly through appropriate assessment criteria, which explicitly mention the need for the use of quotation marks, referencing and the provision of a full bibliography.

- Before reporting suspected instances of collusion, the Institute will check with the students concerned, at the earliest opportunity, that they have properly understood what is required of them in terms of the submission or presentation of assignments. In cases where misunderstandings have apparently occurred, a request for resubmission or re-presentation would probably be the most appropriate form of action.
- The School appreciates that international students, who come from different academic cultures that may have different practices and expectations, should be treated with special consideration.

Appropriate induction arrangements will be put in place in order to clarify the conventions that are considered important within the UK system of HE, but once these conventions have been shared with these groups of students, they will be enforced in the same way as with all other students.

## **8. Copies of the policy**

Copies of the policy can be downloaded from our website.

## **9. Responsibility of Study Centres**

It is important that all personnel involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of the Institute qualifications are fully aware of the contents of this policy. Staff in the Institute centres and learners studying for the Institute qualifications must be clear that the Institute will take action in all cases of alleged malpractice. When a centre is seeking recognition, it will need to confirm that they have read and understood the Institute Malpractice and Maladministration Policy. In addition, the centre must have robust internal policies in place to combat malpractice and maladministration and this will be checked by the Institute. Centres must ensure these policies are fully implemented and that staff and learners strictly adhere to the procedures stated in this documentation.

A failure by a centre to report suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration, or a failure to have in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may lead to sanctions being imposed on the centre. Details of sanctions that may be imposed are set out below.

A centre that requires guidance or advice on how to prevent, investigate and deal with malpractice and maladministration should contact the Institute which will provide such advice and/or guidance.

A centre's compliance with this policy and how it takes reasonable steps to prevent and/or investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration in the institution will be reviewed by the Institute periodically through the centre monitoring arrangements. On their centre visits, External Verifiers will check not only that centres have received this policy but have also

prepared internal malpractice policies which are being implemented and that all relevant colleagues and learners are aware of the contents and purposes of both documents.

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

An annual report on any cases of malpractice or maladministration including those found not proven will be made to the Institute Management Board. The School will review this policy annually as part of its annual self-evaluation arrangements, the Institute will take into account the operation of the policy in the previous time period, feedback from stakeholders, or changes brought about by external agencies and regulatory authorities. The review will ensure that procedures continue to be consistent with the Ofqual Conditions of Recognition and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

## **Part B**

Procedures to be followed in cases of alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration

### **1. Terminology**

In all cases, to avoid prejudicial language, until an investigation has been completed and the allegation or suspicion proved, centres and the Institute will use the terms 'alleged malpractice or maladministration' or 'suspected malpractice or maladministration', as appropriate to the circumstances, in relation to the case in question.

### **2. Allegations of malpractice or maladministration**

Allegations may be made by any person having knowledge of the assessment process, including learners, assessors, centre employees, the Institute employees or associates and members of the public. Allegations should normally be made in writing. Where an allegation is made orally, the receiver of the allegation should attempt to obtain written confirmation from the person making the allegation, but if this is not possible he/she should make a written record. In such cases, care will need to be taken in noting accurately the details of the allegation.

Allegations may be made to centres, centre employees, or the Institute staff or associates. Allegations may also be made indirectly via a third party (for example, the police or the regulatory authority).

Cases of alleged malpractice in centres will initially be dealt with by applying the centre malpractice policy. There will however be cases where suspected cases of alleged malpractice or maladministration are notified directly to the Institute. In such cases allegations should normally be put in writing (which may include email) and enclose appropriate supporting evidence. Such allegations should normally be reported to the Institute within 5 working days of the discovery of the alleged malpractice.

All allegations should include (where possible):

- centre's name, address and number
- learner's name and the school registration number (where relevant)

- centre or the Institute person's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case
- details of the Institute course or qualification affected or nature of the service affected nature of the suspected or actual malpractice 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 all cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration reported to the Institute it will protect the identity of the 'informant' in accordance with its duty of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

### **3. Anonymous allegations**

An anonymous allegation should normally only be acted upon if there is sufficient supporting evidence, but may require investigation without such evidence depending on the nature of the allegation. While the Institute is prepared to investigate issues which are reported anonymously and/or by whistle-blowers it will always try to confirm an allegation by means of a separate investigation before taking up the matter with those persons about whom the complaint or allegation relates.

Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. Although it is always preferable for 'informants' to reveal their identity and contact details to the Institute, the person may be concerned about possible adverse consequences and request the Institute not to divulge their identity to third parties. If it helps to reassure the 'informant' on this point, the Institute should confirm that it is not obliged (as recommended by Ofqual) to disclose information if to do so would be a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

### **4. Suspected malpractice or maladministration**

Suspicion of malpractice or maladministration may arise when assessing a learner's work, but may also arise under other circumstances, for example, when analysing assessment records.

### **5. Application of these procedures**

These procedures are designed to cover a wide range of circumstances in relation to: the subject of the allegation or suspicion; the person making the allegation or developing the suspicion; the person or organisation receiving the allegation; the nature and gravity of the alleged malpractice or maladministration. Examples of malpractice or maladministration may arise where these procedures are not wholly appropriate and they may therefore need to be adapted in some cases to suit the actual circumstances. In cases where there is an allegation or suspicion of centre malpractice, the Institute will immediately inform the regulatory authority irrespective of whether the investigation has been completed.

### **6. Sanctions and Penalties**

The School reserves the right in suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration, both during the period of the investigation and when the outcome is known, to apply sanctions.

Sanctions/penalties may only be imposed based on the evidence presented and must be justifiable and reasonable and consistent in their application. Examples of sanctions include:  
Suspending individual learner or group registrations  
Withholding results  
Withdrawing approval for any assessor/internal verifier implicated in Malpractice  
De-registering the centre, recognising a duty of care to learners.

## **7. Alleged or suspected malpractice by learners**

### **Initial response**

Where a centre discovers any irregularity in internally assessed work, they do not need to report this to the School. Centres will be expected to have robust policies in place and reference the actions they will take should malpractice in learner work be identified for example a refusal to accept learner work for assessment purposes.

The School external verifiers who discover or suspect malpractice in assessments when visiting centres, or when sampling learner evidence record their findings, including supporting evidence in full in their report. The centre is given initial oral feedback on the findings and the contents of the report. The centre is also informed that the report will be sent to the Head of Quality and Assessment at the Institute for final checking and approval. In such cases the Institute will formally write to the Head of Centre and request information so that an investigation into the malpractice and appropriate action can be undertaken.

### **Centre investigation**

The regulatory authority explicitly requires the Institute as the awarding organisation to conduct a full investigation or instigate a centre led investigation of all instances of alleged or suspected malpractice.

The School reserves the right to issue advice to the centre on the conduct of any preliminary investigation, or to require the involvement of the Institute staff in the investigation, or to conduct the investigation itself should the circumstances appear to it to warrant such a course of action, for example, where the alleged malpractice has been brought to its attention by an external verifier, where the suspected or alleged offence is serious, or has potentially wider consequences, (for example, implicates a group or groups of learners).

### **Procedures**

If a centre conducts a preliminary investigation prior to formally notifying the Institute, the centre should ensure that staff involved in the initial investigation are competent and have no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. However, it is important to note that in all instances the centre must immediately notify the Institute if it suspects that learner malpractice has occurred as the Institute has a responsibility to the regulatory authorities to ensure that all investigations are carried out rigorously and effectively.

In conducting any preliminary investigation the centre must follow the procedures stated in their internal policy. This will normally include the following actions:



- Inform the learner in writing at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged or suspected malpractice, of the procedures that will be followed, and the possible penalties if malpractice is proved
  - Undertake an investigation of the allegation or suspicion
  - Provide the learner with an opportunity to contest or refute the allegation or suspicion, either in writing, or at a hearing, or both
  - Allow the learner to be accompanied by a friend at any hearing
  - Make a decision based on the investigation and hearing
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- Ensure that the person or persons conducting the investigation, any hearing, and making any decision are not the same as the person making the allegation or raising the suspicion have sufficient professional standing and authority, and, if necessary, have appropriate subject knowledge.
  - Inform the Institute if it is unable to meet either of the above requirements (for example, if it has a small number of employees), which will advise the centre on how to meet the requirements, if necessary by the involvement of persons external to the centre
  - Inform the learner of the outcome in writing
  - Where malpractice is proved, immediately inform the Institute in writing
  - Keep a full case record (see below) and make available such a record to the Institute on request Ensure that the assessed work is included in any sample of work considered by the Internal Verifier
  - Ensure that the work is included in any sample of work provided to the Institute authorised person (External Verifier) so that he/she can view the evidence and report the findings to the Institute.

## **8 The School Action**

Once the centre has gathered all the information, completed their investigation and forwarded all the documentation to the Institute, the Institute will confirm the outcome and recommend the appropriate penalty. The recommendation will be considered and confirmed by the Institute Director of Operations. Where the nature or gravity of the malpractice appears to warrant it, and the proposed penalty is severe, the case may be referred to Chair of the Quality and Standards Committee as appropriate for independent advice. The outcome of the investigation will be sent to the centre within 10 working days of receipt of all the relevant documentation relating to the investigation.

Penalties: learner malpractice

The following penalties may be imposed, depending on the nature and gravity of the malpractice:

- A written warning
- Loss of credit in the unit concerned
- Disqualification from the qualification concerned
- Learner is barred from registering for qualifications for a set period of time A combination of two or more of the above

Other actions;

- Where the malpractice appears to involve a criminal offence, it may, after advice from the Institute, be appropriate to report the case to the police

### **Case records: learner malpractice**

Case records for learner malpractice should include:

- A statement of facts
- A detailed account of the circumstances
- Names of all persons involved and their roles in the case Copies of any written statements by learners and staff
- Details of the investigation carried out by the centre A record of any hearing
- Copies of learner's work that is the subject of the allegation/suspicion of malpractice A record of the decision
- Copies of the centre's procedures for informing learners of assessment regulations including those relating to malpractice
- A record of the proposed penalty imposed if the allegation or suspicion is upheld (and a record of the confirmed penalty once this is agreed)

### **Appeals**

Where a learner wishes to appeal against the decision, he/she should use the procedures as described in the Institutes Academic Appeals policy and procedures.

## **9 Alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration by centre employees**

### **Initial response**

Where a centre employee is suspected of malpractice, or maladministration or is alleged (whether by another employee of the centre, a learner or a member of the public) to have committed malpractice or maladministration, the centre must immediately inform the Institute in writing. Where a member of staff of a centre is suspected by the Institute of malpractice or maladministration, or the Institute receives an allegation of malpractice or maladministration by an employee of a centre, the Institute Director of Operations will immediately inform the centre (normally the Principal or some other senior member of staff nominated by the centre) in writing.

### **Centre investigation**

Upon receipt of an allegation or suspicion, it is the responsibility of the centre as the employer of the employee concerned:

- to conduct an investigation; to determine the outcome;
- to determine the appropriate penalty;
- to comply with the centre's own employment and disciplinary procedures;
- to comply with appropriate employment legislation.

In conducting the investigation, the centre should seek the advice of the Institute, and should consider any evidence that the Institute may provide. Subject to agreement between the centre and the Institute it may be considered appropriate for a school member of staff to give evidence at any hearing called as part of the investigation.

Where the malpractice or maladministration appears to involve a criminal offence, the centre and the Institute should consult about whether it is appropriate for the centre to report the case to the police. Notwithstanding the outcome of the investigation by the centre into the actions of its employee, the Institute reserves the right to undertake an investigation of the centre, as the employer of the person concerned, in order fully to discharge its responsibilities to the regulatory authorities. This investigation will be undertaken following the procedures in section.

## **10 Alleged or suspected malpractice or Maladministration by Centres**

### **Initial response**

Where a centre is suspected by the Institute of malpractice or maladministration, or the Institute receives an allegation from a learner, an employee or a member of the public of malpractice or maladministration by a centre, or where the investigation by the centre into alleged malpractice or maladministration by one of its employees is not considered sufficient, the Institute will initiate an investigation. All notifications of suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration received by the Institute will be passed to the Programmes Manager who will acknowledge receipt, as appropriate, to external parties within three working days.

### **Responsibility**

The Institute Programme Director will be responsible for ensuring the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy and will allocate a relevant member of staff to lead the investigation and establish whether or not the malpractice or maladministration has occurred, and review any supporting evidence received or gathered by the Institute. Throughout the investigation the Institute Programme Director will be responsible for overseeing the work of the investigation staff to ensure that due process is being followed, appropriate evidence has been gathered and reviewed and for liaising with and keeping informed relevant external parties. At all times the Institute will ensure that personnel assigned to the investigation have the appropriate level of training and competence and they have had no previous involvement or personal interest in the matter.

### **Notification**

In all cases of suspected or actual malpractice, the Institute will notify the centre (normally the Head of the Centre) involved in the allegation that the Institute will be investigating the matter – in doing so it may withhold details of the person making the allegation if to do so would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

Where applicable, the Institute will inform the appropriate regulatory authorities if there is reason to believe that there has been an incident of malpractice or maladministration which could either invalidate the award of a qualification or if it could affect another awarding organisation, and may be required to act on any advice received.

Where the allegation may affect another awarding organisation and their provision the Institute will also inform them in accordance with the regulatory requirements and obligations imposed on the Institute by Ofqual.

### **Investigation timescales and procedures**

The Institute aims normally to complete all stages of the investigation within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation and no more than 20 working days. In some cases the investigation may take longer; for example, if a centre visit is required. In such instances, the Institute will advise all parties concerned of the likely revised timescale.

The fundamental principle of all investigations is to conduct them in a fair, reasonable and lawful manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias. In doing so investigations will be based around the following broad objectives:

- To establish the facts relating to the allegation, suspicion or complaint in order to determine whether any irregularities have occurred
- To identify the cause of the irregularities and those involved. To establish the scale of the irregularities
- To evaluate any action already taken by the centre
- To determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered learners and to preserve the integrity of the qualification
- To ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued
- To obtain clear evidence to support any sanctions to be applied to the centre, and/or to members of staff, in accordance with the Institute Sanctions Policy
- To identify any adverse patterns or trends.

The investigation may involve a request for further information from relevant parties and/or interviews with personnel involved in the investigation. Therefore, the School will:

- Ensure all material collected as part of an investigation is kept secure. All records and original documentation concerning a completed investigation that ultimately leads to sanctions against a centre will be retained for a period of not less than five years. If an investigation leads to invalidation of certificates, or criminal or civil prosecution, all records and original documentation relating to the case will be retained until the case and any appeals have been heard and for five years thereafter.
- Expect all parties, who are either directly or indirectly involved in the investigation, to fully cooperate with us.
- Either at the time of notification of a suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration and/or at any time during the investigation, the Institute reserves the right to impose sanctions on the centre in accordance with its Sanctions Policy in order to protect the interests of learners and the integrity of the qualifications.
- The Institute also reserves the right to withhold a learner's, and/or cohort of learners' results for all the Institute course/qualifications and/or units they are studying at the time of the notification or investigation of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

- Where the Institute finds that the complexity of a case or a lack of cooperation from a centre means that it is unable to complete an investigation, it will consult the relevant regulatory authority in order to determine how best to progress the matter.

### **Investigation report**

After an investigation, the Institute will produce a draft report for the parties concerned to check the factual accuracy. Any subsequent amendments will be agreed between the parties concerned and the Institute. The Institute will make the final report available to the parties concerned and to the regulatory authorities and other external agencies as required. In cases where the original notification of the suspected or actual case of malpractice came from a person or organisation external to the Institute (or its centres and learners) it will also inform them of the outcome – normally within 10 working days of making the decision - in doing so it may withhold some details if to disclose such information would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty. In cases where the investigation is internal into a member of the Institute staff the report will be agreed by the CEO with the relevant the Institute manager and appropriate internal disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

### **Investigation outcomes**

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place the Institute will:

- impose appropriate actions in relation to the centre with specified deadlines in order to address the instance of malpractice or maladministration and to prevent it from recurring
- impose appropriate sanctions on the centre – if so these will be communicated to the centre in accordance with the Sanctions identified above along with the rationale for the sanction(s) selected.
- in cases where certificates are deemed to be invalid:
- inform the centre concerned and the regulatory authorities of the reasons why they are invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates
- ask the centre to inform the affected learners of the action the Institute is taking and that their original certificates are invalid and ask the centre – where possible – to return the invalid certificates to the Institute
- amend its database so that duplicates of the invalid certificates cannot be issued expect the centre to amend its records to show that the original awards are invalid.
- amend as appropriate aspects of its qualification development, delivery and awarding arrangements and assessment and/or monitoring arrangements and associated guidance to prevent the issue from recurring.
- inform relevant third parties of its findings in case they need to take relevant action in relation to the centre
- inform the appropriate regulatory authority(s)
- In proven cases of malpractice and/or maladministration by a centre the Institute reserves the right to charge the centre for any reissuing of certificates and/or additional external verifier visits. The fees for these will be the Institute prices current for such activities at the time of the investigation.

In addition, to the above the Director of Operations will record any lessons learnt from the investigation and pass these onto relevant colleagues within the Institute to help prevent the same instance of maladministration or malpractice from recurring.

If the relevant party (ies) wish to appeal against the decision to impose sanctions, the Institute Appeals Policy and Procedures should be used.

## **11 Alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration by the Institute employees**

### **The Institute investigation**

Where an employee of the Institute is suspected of malpractice or maladministration, or is alleged (whether by another employee of the Institute, a learner or a member of the public) to have committed malpractice or maladministration, it is the responsibility of the Institute as the employer of the member of staff concerned:

- to conduct an investigation; to determine the outcome;
- to determine the appropriate penalty;
- to comply with the Institute's own employment and disciplinary procedures; to comply with appropriate employment legislation.

In conducting the investigation, the Institute may seek the advice of the Regulatory Authority. Where the malpractice or maladministration appears to involve a criminal offence, it may be appropriate to report the case to the police. During the investigation the employee may be suspended or moved to other duties until the investigation is complete.

### **Investigation outcomes**

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place the Institute will take such actions as are necessary and relevant to the case in order:

- to safeguard the integrity, validity or reliability of any assessment process and/or the validity of any certificates
- to protect the interests of learners
- to maintain public confidence in the Institute
- to maintain the Institute's status as a awarding organisation

These actions may include:

- in cases where certificates issued are deemed to be invalid:
- inform the centre(s) concerned and the regulatory authorities of the reasons why they are invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates
- ask the centre(s) to inform the affected learners of the action the Institute is taking and that their original certificates are invalid and ask the centre – where possible – to return the invalid certificates to the Institute
- amend its database so that duplicates of the invalid certificates cannot be issued

- amend as appropriate aspects of its qualification development, delivery and awarding arrangements, assessment and/or monitoring arrangements and associated guidance, internal operational procedures, staff recruitment and training, to prevent the issue from recurring.
- inform relevant third parties of its findings in case they need to take relevant action inform the relevant regulatory authority(s)

In addition, to the above the Programme Manager will record any lessons learnt from the investigation and pass these onto relevant colleagues within the Institute to help prevent the same instance of maladministration or malpractice from recurring.