

## **MALPRACTICE POLICY**

### **Scope**

Malpractice is an act that threatens the quality and integrity of assessments. SHEilds malpractice policy is designed to enable SHEilds and its partnered professional bodies and institutes to work co-operatively to reduce levels of malpractice through the effective detection of irregularities and implementation of appropriate sanctions. SHEilds will not tolerate actions or attempted actions of malpractice by students.

### **Aim of the policy:**

- To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by learners studying programs with SHEilds
- To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice objectively
- To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness
- To impose appropriate penalties/and or sanctions on learners where incidents of malpractice are proven
- To protect the integrity of SHEilds Ltd, their stakeholders and its qualifications.

For the purposes of this policy, malpractice is defined as an act in order to obtain an award unfairly. Malpractice is distinguished from maladministration. The latter is the accidental claiming of certification, incompetence, or human error, while the former is the deliberate act to deceive.

### **Definition of malpractice by learners**

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by SHEilds at its discretion.

- Plagiarism of any nature. Copying or passing off, as the learners own, whole or parts of another person's work including content copied from internet sources.
- working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work
- Deliberate destruction of another's work
- Failing to abide to instructions or advice from an invigilator, or awarding body conditions during examinations.

- Possession/ use of unauthorised materials/objects during supervised, closed book examinations where these are not permitted including mobile phone, electronic devices, content related materials.
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment/examination or in a disruptive manner
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment/exam related by means of talking or written notes during test conditions
- Fabrication of results or evidence
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or assignment
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination

Upon receipt of a case of alleged malpractice the learner will be contacted by SHEilds Management team and given the opportunity to provide a statement. Learners will be advised that the awarding body will be made aware and investigations will be taking place.

### **Investigations**

SHEilds report all alleged malpractice cases to the relevant professional body initially and advise that a full investigation will be carried out. Investigations will be conducted in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring that all relevant information is considered without bias. The main purpose of an investigation is to establish the facts relating to the allegation(s) made in order to determine if any regulations have been breached and to determine whether there is any irregularity. The investigation will also aim to establish the facts, circumstances and scale of the alleged malpractice. The investigation will consider the broader impact the malpractice could have had on the accredited course provider, candidates and qualifications. The investigation of an alleged malpractice will:

- establish the facts, circumstances and scale of alleged malpractice
- identify, and if necessary, take action to minimise the risk to current candidates and requests for certification
- identify evidence to support any action/decision to be applied
- show that discussions have been conducted with individuals/candidates and/or staff involved

### **Reporting malpractice to professional bodies**

Once a thorough investigation has been conducted by SHEilds the full report is issued to the relevant professional body containing:

- a statement of the facts
- detailed account of the circumstances of alleged malpractice

- details of any investigations carried out by the accredited course provider
- written statements from accredited course provider staff and candidate(s) involved
- any work of the candidate(s) and internal assessment records relevant to the investigation
- in the case of candidate(s) malpractice, any remedial action being taken by the accredited course provider to ensure the integrity of certification now and in the future

### **Penalties for learners found guilty of malpractice**

If after a thorough investigation it is clear that malpractice has occurred the learner will be informed of the consequences in writing. Depending on the qualification and the nature and circumstances of the malpractice, penalties differ as to protect the integrity of some high-risk qualifications. In most cases, the penalty will be determined by the professional body however SHEilds do have the authority to heighten penalties and sanctions.

Penalties may be:

- The candidate is issued with a warning that if the offence is repeated within a set period of time, further specified sanctions will be applied
- Marks void for a section of a unit or a whole unit
- Learner asked to re-submit work
- Learner excluded from examinations/submissions for a set period of time
- Termination from the program by written notice

### **Right of Appeal**

The learner has the right to appeal against any decision or sanctions imposed by SHEilds or its professional bodies. An appeal must be made in writing to the UK Operations Manager within 30 working days from receipt of the outcome. Details of the professional bodies appeals procedure will then be relayed to the learner within 5 working days. The learner does have the right of access to all the evidence used by parties to make its decision at this stage.

Professional bodies do have their own Malpractice policies and procedures. The following documents should be read alongside SHEilds Malpractice policy as information may vary.

*NEBOSH Policy and procedures for suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments Version 10 (September 2014)*

*City & Guilds, Our quality assurance requirements. Version 5 (February 2015)*