Appendix 14 – Vocational Plagiarism and Assessment Malpractice Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Purpose/Scope

- That centres have policies and procedures in place to deal with malpractice
- To ensure that issues are dealt with in an open, fair and effective manner
- That centres provide appropriate deterrents and sanctions to minimise the risk of malpractice

Definitions/Terminology

Learner Malpractice: Any action by the learner which has the potential to undermine the integrity and validity of the assessment of the learner's work. (Plagiarism, collusion, heating, etc.)

Assessor Malpractice: Any deliberate action by an assessor which has the potential to undermine the integrity of BTEC and Vocational qualifications.

Plagiarism: Taking and using another's thoughts, writings, inventions, etc. as one's own.

AI (Artificial Intelligence): Using online AI tools to write an assignment or part of an assignment and submitting it as own work.

Minor Acts of Learner Malpractice: Handled by the assessor by, for example, refusal to accept for marking and learner being made aware of malpractice policy. Learner resubmits work in question.

Major Acts of Learner Malpractice: Extensive copying/plagiarism, 2nd or subsequent offence, inappropriate for assessor to deal with.

AI Misuse:

According to JCQ (2025) some examples of AI misuse include:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work is no longer the student's own.
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the student's own work, analysis, evaluation, or calculations.
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information.
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools.
- submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references orbibliographies

Responsibilities

Centre: Should seek proactive ways to promote a positive culture that encourages learners to take individual responsibility for their learning and respect the work of others.

Assessor: Responsible for designing assessment opportunities which limit the opportunity for malpractice and for checking the validity of the learner's work.

Internal Verifier: Responsible for malpractice checks when internally verifying work.

Quality Nominee: Required to inform Edexcel of any acts of malpractice.

Heads of Centre or their nominees: Responsible for any investigation into allegations of malpractice.

Procedures

Addressing learner malpractice:

- Promote positive and honest study practices
- Learners should declare that work is their own: check the validity of their work
- Use learner induction and handbook to inform about malpractice and outcomes
- Ensure learners use appropriate citations and referencing for research sources
- Assessment procedures should help reduce and identify malpractice.
- Use of free online plagiarism checkers when assessing work for example https://smallseotools.com/plagiarism-checker/

How to identify Plagiarism and Malpractice in learner work

The expertise of individual Assessors is the best safeguard against plagiarism,supported by appropriate technology where available.

Check learner work for:

- The use of unfamiliar words
- Grammar and syntax of a standard far higher than that demonstratedpreviously.
- A discontinuous rise in the quality and accuracy of the learner's work
- The use of texts familiar to the Assessor, but without appropriatereferencing
- The use of American spellings and unfamiliar product names.

Assessors should:

- Build a spoken element into the assessment process, wherever appropriate,to check on understanding (e.g., viva voce, presentation with questions)
- Ask learners to elaborate on suspect passages within their work
- Type a few selected phrases into a search engine such as Google
- Employ a plagiarism and/or AI detector to check learner work
    - https://contentatscale.ai/ai-content-detector/
    - https://www.zerogpt.com/
    - https://crossplag.com/ai-content-detector/
    - https://plagiarismdetector.net/
    - https://www.grammarly.com/plagiarism-checker
- Familiarise yourself with the more widely used 'essay banks/ghost writing services' to be found on the internet
- Pay particular attention to those learners who perform well in courseworkbut much less well in examinations and tests
- Share concerns with colleagues. If everyone has the same suspicions about aparticular learner, it will seem appropriate to apply rigorous checks to all their work

Dealing with malpractice:

- Inform the individual of the issues and of the possible consequences
- Inform the individual of the process and appeals rights
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond
- Investigate in a fair and equitable manner
- Inform Pearson of any malpractice or attempted acts of malpractice, which have compromised assessment. Pearson will advise on further action required
- Penalties should be appropriate to the nature of the malpractice under review
- Gross misconduct should refer to learner and staff disciplinary procedures.

Assessment Malpractice Policy inc. AI

Aim:

- To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners.
- To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
- To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
- To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
- To protect the integrity of this centre and BTEC qualifications.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of the centre's 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.
- Ask 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 malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the ***Head Teacher, governors and teachers*** and all personnel linked to the allegation.

It will proceed through the following stages:

- Discussion between assessor and learner
- Reported to tutor and discussion held between tutor and learner
- Reported to department heads with a follow up discussion on severity of case.
- Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.
- Document all stages of any investigation.

Where malpractice is proven, this centre will apply the following penalties / sanctions:

1. The learner's assessment will be voided.
2. The learner's parents will be contacted and head of departments will be made aware. Appropriate sanction will be put in place.
3. If assessment allows, learner will be required to repeat the assessment.
4. All evidence will be retained on the learner's record.

Definition of Malpractice by Learners

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre 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 and AI 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 Centre Staff

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- 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.
- Fraudulent claims for certificates.
- 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.

Reference: SCHA Staff Code of Conduct – All concerns pertaining to staff should be reported directly to the Co-Principals heads@hattonacademy.org.uk

Quality Nominee – P Atkinson	atkinsonp@hattonacademy.org.uk	11/2026
LIV Business – M Tarlton	tarltonm@hattonacademy.org.uk	11/2026
LIV Health & Social Care – L Hughes	hughesl@hattonacademy.org.uk	11/2026
LIV Information Technology – T Abedin	abedint@hattoncademy.org.uk	11/2026
LIV Sport Level 2 – C Bevan	bevanc@hattonacademy.org.uk	11/2026
Lead IV Sport Level 3 – C Bevan	bevanc@hattonacademy.org.uk	11/2026
LIV Art and Design & Food – A Gray	graya@hattonacademy.org.uk	11/2026
LIV Textiles – L Cross	crossl@hattonacademy.org.uk	11/2026
LIV Applied Science	legassicks@hattonacademy.org.uk	11/2026