



ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE: POLICY AND PROCEDURE - STUDENTS

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| Process Area | Quality Assurance |
| Reference Number | QAS/006 |
| Directorate | Curriculum |

| Issue No | Date | Details | Author | Approved | Next Review |
|-----------------|-------------|---|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 001 | Feb 2008 | First Issue | JH/IB | BD | May 2009 |
| 002 | May 2009 | Amendments in line with change to lecturers contract, IV process and disciplinary policy. | JE | BD | June 2012 |
| 003 | June 2012 | To align with changes to the Disciplinary Policy | BD | SMT | Dec 2013 |
| 004 | Dec 2013 | Policy Reviewed- Change in section 4.5 | GD | BD | Dec 2014 |
| 005 | Dec 2014 | Change to job titles | GD | BD | Jan 2018 |
| 006 | Jan 2018 | Amendment to include sections: 1.5 Ghosting; 3 Update to definition of Collusion and 5 Distribution | KK | BD | Oct 2019 |
| 007 | Oct 2019 | Reviewed one change under plagiarism. | KK | Governing Body | Oct 2023 |
| 008 | Oct 2023 | 4.2. Cheating – change to CAM 4.2. minor change remove CEO Flowchart 7 HoS to CAM | LS | Governing Body | Oct 2026 |

If requested, the College will make the policy available in alternative formats to accommodate visual impairments. The policy can also be downloaded from the College website and made available in alternative languages upon request.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Assessment Malpractice

The Southern Regional College is committed to the provision of high quality education and training. This policy states how the College will process instances of Assessment Malpractice by students. All offences in connection with examinations and other forms of assessment e.g. Plagiarism, Collusion, Cheating, will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and will be processed in accordance with the Student Disciplinary procedure.

The College will adhere to the regulations specified in the relevant Code of Practice and Awarding Body Publications. Regulations of the Awarding Body may take precedence and the matter may be investigated and referred to the Awarding Body for a decision.

1.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking or copying someone else's work, including another student's, and presenting it as if it were the student's own. Plagiarism includes the use of ideas, texts, theories, images, material from internet sites, data, created artistic artefacts or other material without acknowledgement so that the person assessing this work is given the impression that what they have before them is the student's own original work when it is not. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and is dishonest.

The framework allows scope for academic judgement. Where students are considered simply to have referenced their work poorly, this is not deemed to be plagiarism and the work is marked in accordance with the assessment criteria

The College will assume that any use of outside sources without proper acknowledgement is with the intent to deceive. The College will also assume that individuals who allow their work to be plagiarised do so with the intent to deceive.

Individual awarding bodies may have some variance in plagiarism requirements and the college undertakes to adhere to any of these stated regulations.

1.3 Collusion

Some items of assessed work are intended to be collaborative, where students are instructed by their tutor to work as a group to complete the assessed task. This is an important aspect of developing teamwork skills. However, group collaboration on an assessment is only acceptable when students have been instructed to do the work with others and this is clearly stated in the assessment instructions.

If work which was produced by a group of students is submitted by a student as his/her own work they are guilty of collusion.

1.4 Cheating in Examinations and Assessments

The work submitted at the end of an examination or assessment must be entirely the student's own work and must be produced in accordance with the instructions and rules for that assessment or examination. If a student seeks to gain an unfair advantage by

conduct that would obtain a better result than would otherwise have been achieved this is cheating.

Examples of cheating in examinations include:

- Copying from the examination script or other materials produced by another candidate
- Bringing material or devices into the examination that have not been allowed by the rules of the examination
- Fabrication of results
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else or arranging for another to take one's place

1.5 Ghosting

Ghosting exists where:

- A student submits as their own work which has been produced in whole or part by another person on their behalf e.g. the use of a ghost writing service i.e. buying assignments off the internet;
- A student seeks to make financial gain or other material gain by using work, which they have written or produced, available to another student.

This list is not exhaustive and further examples can be found in Awarding Body publications and Codes of Practice.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to students on all accredited courses within the College.

3. DEFINITIONS

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|-------------|---|
| Cheating: | Conduct or activity which would enable a student to gain an unfair advantage and better result. |
| Collusion: | Collaborates with another student/s in the completion of work which is intended to be submitted as that other student's own unaided work. |
| Plagiarism: | In the absence of any acknowledgement of the original authorship, the copying, use and representation of someone else's work as a student's own is defined as plagiarism. |

4. PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Guidance on Assessment Malpractice

It is important that a holistic approach to the problem of Assessment Malpractice is taken, striking an appropriate balance between formative and punitive measures. Students will receive guidance and the definitions and examples will be included in the course handbook or other induction materials as part of the advice given on proper academic practice.

All offences in connection with examinations and other forms of assessment will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be processed in accordance with the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

4.2 Cheating

A written report will be made by the person who suspects or discovers the cheating activity, describing the circumstances and evidence. This will be used as evidence during any subsequent disciplinary hearing. The report must be forwarded to the Curriculum Area Manager who will determine how the matter will be addressed under the Disciplinary Policy.

4.3 Plagiarism and Collusion

Where an assessor, moderator or examiner suspects that a piece of coursework shows evidence of plagiarism or collusion, he/she should bring this to the attention of the Programme Coordinator or (if different from the Programme Coordinator) the Lead Programme Verifier.

The student will be asked to attend an interview with the Programme Coordinator to discuss the piece of work. The student may be examined on the content of the work. A record of the meeting will be kept and may be used as evidence in any subsequent disciplinary process.

Note: As per 1.2 above.

4.4 External Examination Body Investigation

In certain circumstances, external awarding bodies may ask the College to investigate suspected malpractice, plagiarism or collusion. The investigating authority for these investigations will be appointed by the Director of Curriculum. The investigating authority will report to the Director of Curriculum the outcome of the investigation and recommendations of action. The Director of Curriculum will review the recommendations of action and impose sanctions in line with the Table of Penalties for Assessment Malpractice.

The Head of Quality & Pedagogy will report the outcomes of the investigation and action taken to the external body.

4.5 Penalties for Malpractice

If assessment malpractice in any form is proven, the student will be penalised in accordance with the following table. In addition, all other pieces of a student's assessed work may be recalled for scrutiny.

Table of Penalties for Assessment Malpractice.

| 1 st OFFENCE | 2 nd OFFENCE | 3 rd OFFENCE |
|--|--|---|
| Reduction in marks based on exclusion of the work. | Reduction in marks based on exclusion of the work. | Reduction in marks based on exclusion of the work. |
| Written warning in accordance with Student Disciplinary procedure Stage 1. | Final Written warning in accordance with Student Disciplinary procedure Stage 2. | Stage 4 sanction - Possible exclusion from the course of study. |
| | A time limited exclusion from the College may also be imposed in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy | Case referred to Chief Executive & Director of Curriculum |

NB: Further stringent penalties may be issued by the relevant Awarding Body

4.6 The student has the right of appeal as provided for in the Student Disciplinary Policy.

4.7 Any information regarding Assessment Malpractice offences by learners who have completed one course of study will be held on the student's file until the end of that course and may be supplied as part of a reference to inform the admission decision for another course at this college.

5. DISTRIBUTION

The Assessment Malpractice Policy will be explained to all students at induction and will be referred to within individual course handbooks. Guidance documents for students will also be published on the VLE

Students

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Assessment and Internal Verification Policy
- Assessment Appeals Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Guidance for Candidates issued by Examinations Office Awarding organisation plagiarism and malpractice policies

7. FLOWCHART

