



**POL017**

**Accounting Technicians Ireland**

**Assessment Malpractice & Maladministration Policy**

## Assessment Malpractice & Maladministration Policy

### Policy Aim

This policy is aimed at all parties, including learners, who are involved in the delivery, development, registration and awarding of qualifications. It is also for the use of ATI staff to ensure they deal with all malpractice and maladministration in a consistent manner.

It sets out the steps to be followed when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice/maladministration and ATI's responsibility in dealing with such cases. It also sets out the procedural steps ATI will follow when reviewing such cases.

### Supporting Documents

There are two forms that could be used to report suspected malpractice or maladministration.

- The MRF1 should be used to report any suspected learner malpractice that take place during examinations or assessments.
- The MRF2 may be used for any other instances, for example relating to an assessment venue, examiner, external examiner or other staff

Both forms can be found at the end of this document.

### Definition

3.1 ATI defines maladministration as any activity or practice that results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration (e.g. within an examination centre, inappropriate learner records)

### 3.2 Examples of Maladministration

The categories listed below are examples of maladministration. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are only intended as guidance on ATI's definition of maladministration.

- Persistent failure to adhere to ATI's learner registration and certification procedures.
- Persistent failure to adhere to ATI's centre recognition and/or qualification requirements and/or associated actions assigned to a centre.
- Inaccurate claims for certificates.

- Failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, e.g. Certification claims and/or forgery of evidence.
- Withholding of information, by deliberate act of omission, which is required to assure ATI of the centre's and associated third parties' ability to deliver qualifications appropriately.
- Failure to adhere to, or to circumnavigate, the requirements of ATI's Reasonable Accommodation/Adjustment policy.

3.3 ATI defines malpractice as an act of neglect, default or other practice that results in a breach of compliance with the regulatory criteria and which threatens the integrity of the ATI qualification.

3.3.1 Malpractice can arise for a number of reasons, including:

- Any action undertaken before, during or after an assessment that is intentional and that provides (or is intended to provide) a learner (or learners) with an unfair advantage;
- Any action that arises due to ignorance or carelessness in the application of the regulatory criteria.

### 3.3.2 Examples of Malpractice

The categories listed below are examples of malpractice. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are only intended as guidance on ATI's definition of malpractice.

- Persistent instances of maladministration within the centre following notification or warning, or reasonably to have known about it and continued with it.
- Collusion or permitting collusion in exams/assessments.
- A loss, theft of, or a breach of confidentiality in, any assessment materials.
- Plagiarism by learner/staff.
- Copying from another learner during an examination/assessment.
- Unauthorised amendment, copying or distributing of exam/assessment papers/materials.
- Providing improper assistance to learner e.g. assisting or prompting learners with answers during the examination, providing learner with excessive amounts of support or providing learners with evidence to present as their own.
- Deliberate submission of false information to gain a qualification or to obtain credit.
- Permitting unauthorised material to be brought into the examination room.
- Failing to keep the examination room secure before and during the examination process.
- Failing to keep examination scripts secure before and after the examination.

- Failing to ensure secure despatch to examiners, external examiners or other persons authorized to receive examination materials.
- Amending examination materials without authorisation.
- Failing to ensure the examination venue conforms to the requirements laid down by ATI, causing or allowing work to be assessed that is not the learners own work.
- Defacing or misusing examination materials.
- Bringing unauthorised equipment into the examination room (e.g. mobile phones).
- Failing to follow an invigilators instruction during the examination.
- Bringing unauthorised and unacceptable evidence into the examination room.
- Copying the work of another learner.
- Colluding with others during an examination or assessment in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage.
- Disruptive behaviour during the examination.
- Impersonating a learner for the purposes of examination or assessment.
- Offensive or insulting behaviour towards staff, including examination invigilators.
- Breaches of security relating to the confidentiality of examination material. E.g. Failing to keep examination papers in a secure location prior to the examination taking place; failing to keep completed examination scripts in a secure location during the correction process; transmitting examination papers or examination results via e-mail in breach of policy.
- Deliberately hindering a learner, by marking their script harshly compared to the norm (or contrary to the approved marking scheme), or by losing (or causing to be lost through negligence) a learner script (or part thereof).

#### **4. Assessment Venue Responsibility**

- 4.1. ATI assessment venues must comply with this policy and must also comply with the requirements of the investigating team.
- 4.2. In the case of suspected malpractice/maladministration, assessment venue staff must immediately secure the examinations material from being removed from the venue. They must also ensure that disruption to learner continuing to sit their examinations is kept to an absolute minimum.
- 4.3. The ATI Assessment Officer is the authorised contact between the assessment venue and ATI.
- 4.4 If ATI discovers that an assessment venue has failed to report suspected malpractice/maladministration in a timely manner or that the assessment venue has failed to cooperate to the fullest extent, ATI may restrict that assessment venue from acting on behalf of ATI in the future.

## **5. Reporting cases of learner malpractice (MRF1)**

- 5.1 All instances of suspected or actual cases of malpractice/maladministration must be reported in writing using the relevant malpractice/maladministration report form (MRF1). This completed form should be e-mailed to [exams@accountingtechniciansireland.ie](mailto:exams@accountingtechniciansireland.ie).
- 5.2 ATI will then undertake an investigation into the alleged incident.
- 5.3 If a Senior Invigilator feels a learner's continuing presence within the examination venue will cause disruption to other learners, they have the authority to expel the learner(s) from the examination venue. This action must be clearly stated on the report form (MRF1) and include the name of witnesses to the suspected malpractice.
- 5.4 If a learner is expelled from the examination venue, their script should be returned to ATI with the completed report form (MRF1).
- 5.5 If ATI feel any of its rules of conduct for the examination have been broken, it may declare the examination void.

## **6. Reporting malpractice or maladministration (MRF2)**

- 6.1 All other instances of suspected or actual cases of malpractice/maladministration must be reported in writing using the malpractice/maladministration report form (MRF2). This completed form should be e-mailed to [exams@accountingtechnicianireland.ie](mailto:exams@accountingtechnicianireland.ie).
- 6.2 Upon receipt of the MRF2, ATI undertakes an investigation into the alleged malpractice.
- 6.3 Should ATI discover an assessment venue, examiner or external examiner has failed to comply with their duty to report suspected malpractice in a timely manner or have failed to cooperate to the fullest extent, ATI may restrict the assessment venue from acting as a venue in the future or in the case of examiners or external examiners, it will implement the necessary disciplinary procedure.

## **7. Investigation of malpractice/maladministration**

- 7.1 In all cases of malpractice/maladministration, we will acknowledge receipt of the relevant form within 2 working days.
- 7.2 All allegations of malpractice/maladministration will be fully investigated before any outcome is communicated to anyone affected by the allegation.
- 7.3 Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice and maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. It is preferable to reveal the identity and contact details to ATI. If there are concerns about possible adverse consequences a request to ATI can be made not to divulge your identity. ATI are not obliged to disclose your personal information as to do so may be a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

Whilst ATI is prepared to investigate issues that are reported to us anonymously and/or by disclosures, ATI shall always try to confirm an allegation by means of a separate investigation before taking up the matter with those to whom the complaint/allegation relates.

- 7.4 The Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for ensuring that 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 gathered by ATI.
- 7.5 At all times, ATI will ensure that personnel assigned to the investigation have the appropriate level of training and competence and they have no previous involvement or personal interest in the matter.
- 7.6 Investigations will be concluded within 30 days where at all possible. If it is necessary (for any reason) to extend this period, we will communicate this to any affected persons and advise them of the likely completion date.
- 7.7 ATI complies with all current Data Protection legislation and will ensure that all material collected as part of the investigation is kept secure.
- 7.8 ATI reserves the right to withhold a learner's result/feedback at the time of the notification or investigation of suspected malpractice/maladministration.
- 7.9 Learners, as student members, are also bound by ATI's Code of Ethics and may also be subject to formal disciplinary procedures if they are found to have breached the Code.

## **8. Appeals**

- 8.1 If a relevant party wishes to appeal against an ATI decision to impose sanctions then they must do so in writing within 5 working days of receiving the outcome.

## **9. Compliance**

- 9.1 In cases where there is a potential for an Adverse Effect or strong grounds for suspected malpractice and maladministration (e.g. cases with alleged fraud or serious threat to the integrity of ATI qualifications or ATI as an organisation), ATI will take all reasonable steps to prevent that Adverse Effect from occurring or take action to reduce and/or correct that risk. ATI is required to inform CCEA Regulation/QQI immediately after this becomes apparent. ATI, and the ATI Centre if necessary, are required to co-operate in full, providing information and taking any appropriate action.

<b>Learner Malpractice Reporting Form (MRF1)</b>	
<b>This form should be completed when reporting suspected or actual cases of learner malpractice that takes place during an examination.</b>	
<b>Venue Information</b>	
Venue Name	
Venue Number	
<b>Examination Details</b>	
Date of Examination	
Time of Examination	
Unit being examined	
Unit reference number	
<b>Learner Details</b>	
Name of learner(s) involved	
Learner registration numbers	
<b>Venue officers present</b>	
Name of lead venue officer	
Name of lead invigilator	
Name(s) of invigilators present	
<p>Narrative of suspected or actual malpractice (this section is to include as much information surrounding the malpractice, including timings, actions of those suspected of being involved in the alleged malpractice)</p>	

Detail how learners were made aware of the rules and regulation surrounding the examination beforehand (e.g. - notice placed in examination venue, hand-outs were issued before the examination took place)

If the incident involved disruptive behaviour, did it cause disruption to other learners?

Yes

No

If the answer is yes, and you wish to request special consideration for other learners, please refer to ATI procedures – outlined in the Senior Invigilator Handbook.

If the incident involved the introduction of unauthorised material, is the unauthorised material enclosed?

Yes

No

If the answer is no, please give details of the nature of unauthorised material.

<b>Declaration</b>	
Name of person completing this form	
Signature	
Position	
Date	

Please complete this form and email to [exams@accountingtechniciansireland.ie](mailto:exams@accountingtechniciansireland.ie)



<b>Malpractice or Maladministration Reporting Form (MRF2)</b>	
<b>This form should be completed when reporting any other suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration other than suspected learner malpractice during an examination or assessment</b>	
Name of Person(s) involved	
Phone Number	
Email:	
Narrative of suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration (this section is to include as much information surrounding the malpractice/maladministration, including timings, actions of those suspected of being involved in the alleged malpractice/maladministration)	
<b>Declaration</b>	
Name of person completing this form	
Signature	
Position	
Date	

Please complete this form and email to [exams@accountingtechniciansireland.ie](mailto:exams@accountingtechniciansireland.ie)