



QUALIFICATIONS

Malpractice Statement

Overview

The BCS is responsible for managing a variety of qualifications across a variety of sectors. All reports of malpractice in relation to BCS qualifications are dealt with by the BCS and reported to the regulatory authorities. Any reports of malpractice by candidates or Centres are fully investigated. If malpractice is proved, the BCS will take action against the party involved and report the matter to the regulatory authorities.

Receipt of Reports

- 1) Reports of suspected malpractice may be made by markers, invigilators, assessors, internal verifiers, Centre Managers, candidates and members of the public generally. If malpractice is discovered by a Centre, full details of the case must be sent immediately to the BCS.
- 2) Reports received by the BCS about malpractice in relation to all qualifications are logged electronically and the person who has made the report is sent an acknowledgement.
- 3) If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the integrity of the assessment process has been affected, the BCS will begin an investigation. Reports of malpractice from anonymous sources will be investigated.
- 4) In significant cases, the BCS will advise the regulatory authorities that an investigation has begun and provide an estimated timescale for its completion.

Investigation

Candidates

- 1) If the suspected malpractice concerns the activities of a candidate, the Centre Manager will be requested to carry out a thorough investigation.
- 2) Any breach of any examination or assessment regulations as detailed in the operational guidance material provided may be considered as malpractice by the BCS.
- 3) Candidates accused of malpractice should be made fully aware in writing of the nature of the alleged malpractice and be given the opportunity to respond (preferably in writing) to allegations made. Candidates accused of malpractice should be made aware of how to appeal, should a judgment be made against him or her.

Centre Staff

- 4) If the suspected malpractice concerns the activities of a member of Centre staff, a visit by a BCS representative will be arranged to investigate. The Senior EV will arrange for an EV or a senior member of BCS staff to conduct the visit.
- 5) Any breach of the regulations for invigilating and/or marking assessments as detailed in the operational guidance material provided may be considered as malpractice by the BCS.
- 6) Any member of staff accused of malpractice must be made fully aware in writing of the nature of the alleged malpractice and must have the opportunity to respond in writing to allegations made. A member of staff accused of malpractice must be made aware of how to appeal should a judgement go against him or her.
- 7) While the suspected malpractice is being investigated, the Approved Centre's accreditation may be suspended in the severest circumstances. Depending on the nature of the malpractice, the BCS may instead exercise the right to suspend further candidate registrations, assessments or certifications at the Centre.

Reporting Mechanisms

- 1) When the Centre Manager has conducted an investigation regarding alleged candidate malpractice, he or she is required to submit a full written report of the case to the BCS with supporting documentation.
- 2) Following the visit by the BCS representative to investigate alleged malpractice by Centre staff, he or she will submit a formal report of his or her findings at the Centre to the BCS.
- 3) Once the report has been received by the BCS, a meeting of the Quality Team will be convened. The panel will consider the report and decide whether malpractice has taken place. If so, appropriate penalties will be imposed and reported to the regulatory authorities.
- 4) All decisions are communicated in writing to the Centre Manager. The Centre Manager is responsible for advising candidates and members of staff of the decision.
- 5) The person who reported the malpractice will be advised of the outcome of the investigation.

Penalties

- 1) If a candidate is found to have breached examination or assessment regulations, he or she will automatically fail the assessment concerned and be required to re-sit another test paper, or resubmit assessment evidence as appropriate.

- 2) If a member of staff is found to have breached any assessment regulations, the BCS may revoke their status as registered member of Centre personnel.
- 3) If there is serious malpractice at a Centre, the Centre may have its approved status withdrawn.

Appeals

- 1) If a candidate or Centre wishes to appeal against the decision made on a malpractice case, they must appeal to the Director Qualification Products in writing within 30 days of the date of the decision letter. Appeals will only be considered on the grounds of new information or evidence of procedural irregularity in the conduct of the investigation.