



Bristol Primary Teaching School Alliance

National Professional Qualifications
Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

Purpose

Incidents of malpractice/maladministration can potentially lead to learners being disadvantaged, can require the conducting of costly and time-consuming investigations and may cause reputational damage to the Teaching School Alliance and the DfE. It is, therefore, desirable to prevent malpractice or maladministration from occurring, whenever possible. Where it is not possible to prevent this, cases of suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration should be dealt with quickly, thoroughly and effectively.

Scope

This policy applies to the NPQ written assignments Part A and Part B. It is the responsibility of all Teaching School Alliance staff involved in the NPQs to be vigilant with regard to any events which may lead to malpractice / maladministration occurring, and report promptly to the NPQ Programme Leader where they suspect malpractice / maladministration has and /or may occur so that appropriate action can be taken to address this with immediate effect. The Programme Leader is responsible for notifying the DfE's Quality Assurer, Tribal.

Objectives

- to identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners;
- to identify and minimise the risk of maladministration by staff;
- to respond to any incident promptly and objectively;
- to standardise and record any investigation to ensure openness and fairness;
- to protect the integrity of the Teaching School Alliance, the DfE and the NPQs;
- To work closely with the DfE's Quality Assurer, Tribal

In order to do this, the Teaching School Alliance will:

- seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and later face to face sessions to inform learners of the 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;
- ensure that any cases are investigated appropriately with the cooperation of the DfE Quality Assurer, Tribal

Examples of Malpractice/Maladministration by Learners

- 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 to aid copying, such as attempts to source other's assignments through social media and online forums);
- deliberate destruction of another's work;
- fabrication of results or evidence;
- false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of the written assignment, including the sponsor comments;
- impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another;

Examples of Malpractice/Maladministration by Teaching School Alliance Staff

- improper assistance to participants;
- inventing or changing marks for written assignments where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made;
- failure to keep participant coursework/portfolios of evidence secure;
- assisting participants 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 TSA staff producing work for the participant;
- producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the participant has not generated;
- allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the participant's own, to be included in the written assignment;
- facilitating and allowing impersonation;
- Failure to report malpractice or maladministration to the Head of the Teaching School or to The DfE's Quality Assurer, Tribal.

Process for making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration

Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time must immediately notify the NPQ Programme Lead in writing, enclosing appropriate supporting evidence. All allegations must include (where possible):

- Participant's name
- Staff member's name and job role (If applicable)
- Details of the NPQ course or the nature of the programme/assessment affected
- Nature of the suspected or actual malpractice and associated details, including outcomes of any initial investigation carried out by any associated bodies involved in the case.
- Any mitigating circumstances where relevant or appropriate. The NPQ Programme Lead will conduct an initial investigation, ensuring that all personnel possess the necessary competence and have no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. In all cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration, The Bristol Primary Teaching School Alliance will protect the identity of the 'informant' in accordance with their duty to maintain confidentiality.

Investigation timelines and summary process

The Bristol Primary Teaching School Alliance will aim to action and resolve all stages of the investigation within 30 working days of receipt of the allegation. The fundamental principle of any investigation will be to conduct it in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias. In doing so investigations will be based around the following broad objectives:

- To establish the facts relating to allegations/complaints in order to determine whether any irregularities have occurred
- To identify the cause and scale of the irregularities
- To establish the names of those involved
- To identify any adverse patterns or trends
- To evaluate any action already taken
- To determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered participants and to preserve the integrity of The Bristol Primary Teaching School Alliance and the qualification.

The investigation may involve a request for further information from relevant parties and/or interviews with personnel involved in the investigation. In such cases, the NPQ programme Lead will ensure that:

- All material collected as part of an investigation are kept secure
- If an investigation leads to invalidation of certificates, or criminal or civil prosecution, all records and original documentation relating to the case will be retained until the case and any appeals have been heard and for five years thereafter.

All parties, either directly or indirectly involved in the investigation, will be expected to cooperate fully with the NPQ Programme Lead at the Bristol Primary Teaching School and our partners.

The Bristol Primary Teaching School Alliance, as a DfE accredited provider of the National Professional Qualifications (NPQ), either at notification of a suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration and/or at any time during the investigation, reserve the right to withhold a participant's, and/or cohort's, results. Where a member of staff, facilitator, administrator, course participant or member of staff at a partner or associate organisation is under investigation, the NPQ Programme Lead may decide to suspend them from the NPQ programme until the investigation is complete. Throughout the investigation the NPQ Programme Lead will be responsible for overseeing the work of the investigation team to ensure that due process is being followed, appropriate evidence has been gathered and reviewed and for liaising with and keeping relevant external parties (DfE) informed.

Investigation outcomes

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place the NPQ Programme Lead will consider what action to take in order to:

- Minimise the risk to the integrity of certification now and in the future
- Maintain public confidence in the delivery and awarding of qualifications
- Discourage others from carrying out similar instances of malpractice or maladministration
- Ensure there has been no gain from compromising our standards.

Consequences

Being accused of malpractice or maladministration is a serious offence and has the potential to result in a number of penalties. In the most serious cases, an individual NPQ assessment submission may be terminated or the individual may be subject to further disciplinary proceedings.

Monitoring and Review

The Bristol Primary Teaching School Alliance will keep or dispose of all correspondence relating to case of malpractice and maladministration in accordance with their data protection management policies. A report on cases of malpractice and maladministration and their outcomes will be produced annually and submitted to the Strategic Board of the relevant NPQ licence holder for consideration. A summary report will be considered by the Strategic Board through the Annual Quality Assurance Report. This process will ensure appropriate monitoring of all academic misconduct cases and related outcomes.

Date: October 2018

Version: 1.0

Review Date: October 2019