

**Malpractice and Maladministration Policy**

and

**Investigation Procedure****Policy Statement**

Western Maritime Training (WMT) is committed to upholding the integrity of its training. It is also committed to ensuring all candidates taking exams at this Registered Exam Centre do so under similar conditions and therefore have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities fairly.

Accordingly, WMT will not tolerate any act or omission, or any attempted act or omission, that is or results in cheating, unfair practice or a breach of its rules and regulations. Candidates found to have committed any of the above will, at WMT's discretion, be disqualified from the exam.

**Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all candidates taking exams and to all Instructors registered with Awarding bodies to provide examinations and all Staff.

**Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to: define malpractice and maladministration; set out the rights and responsibilities of WMT and candidates in relation to such matters; and describe the procedures to be followed in cases where there is reason to suspect malpractice or maladministration.

**Definitions of Malpractice and Maladministration**

Malpractice means any actor omission, or attempted act or omission, which:

- Breaches WMT's rules and regulations for its exams;
- Compromises the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate; and/or prejudices or otherwise damages the authority, reputation or credibility of WMT as an examining centre or damages the authority, reputation or credibility of the centre or its staff (including any contractor, consultant or other person acting on the centre's behalf).

Malpractice can arise from a variety of reasons. It can be intentional, done with the aim of giving a candidate an unfair advantage in an exam or assessment. It can be unintentional or

negligent, arising through ignorance, carelessness or forgetfulness about WMT's rules and regulations. It can also arise through circumstances beyond the control of those involved, such as where disruption is caused to an exam by an external event or unplanned incident.

Maladministration is a type of malpractice committed by a centre relating to the administration of exams and is usually unintentional and arises from mistake, ignorance, carelessness or forgetfulness about WMT's rules and regulations for its exams.

Irrespective of the underlying causes of the malpractice or maladministration, or the people involved, all allegations of malpractice or maladministration in relation to WMT exams and assessments need to be investigated by WMT in order to protect the integrity of its qualifications and to be fair to all candidates and centres.

### **Candidate Malpractice**

'Candidate Malpractice' means malpractice by a candidate in the course of any exam or assessment, including in the compilation of portfolios, the writing of any exam paper, and in oral and practical exams.

Examples of candidate behaviour which would be the subject of an investigation into malpractice are set out below.

This is not an exhaustive list and as such does not limit the scope of the definitions set out in this policy.

Moreover, as WMT's requirements vary depending on the subject and type of exam, not all of the examples may be applicable. WMT reserves the right to define instances of malpractice at its discretion.

- Behaving in such a way that enables the candidate to gain an unfair advantage.
- Altering official documentation such as exam report forms, individual mark sheets and certificates.
- Impersonating a candidate.
- Providing a false form of identification.
- Plagiarising texts from another source including the internet.
- Cheating or attempting to cheat by copying another's work or allowing another candidate to copy his/her work.
- Colluding or attempting to collude with other candidates.
- Talking to, giving anything to or distracting another candidate during the exam
- Being in possession of and/or using unauthorised aids such as notes or electronic devices in the exam room.
- Obtaining or attempting to obtain confidential exam material (prior to and/or during the exam).
- Disseminating confidential exam material to others. Making an audio or video recording of an exam (e.g. on a mobile phone).

- Attempting to influence the examiner's assessment by offering incentives of any kind or by using threatening behaviour before, during or after the exam session.
- Attempting to influence the invigilator or other centre staff by offering incentives of any kind or by using threatening behaviour before, during or after the exam session.
- In written exams, starting the exam before being told to do so, or failing to stop writing at the end of the exam when told to do so, by the Invigilator.
- Removing any materials other than the candidate's personal possessions from the exam room. Using unauthorised photocopies (e.g. Charts or chartwork) in an exam.

### **Centre Malpractice**

'Centre malpractice' means malpractice committed by a member of staff (including any contractor, consultant or other person acting on the centre's behalf) at a centre. Examples of centre behaviour which would be the subject of an investigation into malpractice are set out below.

This is not an exhaustive list and as such does not limit the scope of the definitions set out in this policy. Moreover, as WMT's requirements vary depending on the subject and type of exam, not all of the examples may be applicable.

WMT reserves the right to define instances of malpractice at its discretion.

- Altering official documentation such as exam report forms, individual mark sheets and certificates
- Attempting to influence the examiner's assessment by offering incentives of any kind or by using threatening behaviour before, during or after the exam session.
- Attempting to influence others involved in the delivery of the exams.
- Removing confidential exam material or retaining copies of such.
- Disseminating confidential exam material.
- Failing to keep exam papers secure before an exam session.
- Tampering with candidates' papers or allowing candidates to tamper with papers before or after the exam.
- Providing unauthorised assistance to candidates, for example in their MCA Oral examinations or in their preparation time for drama exams.
- Assisting candidates during exams by interpreting questions or providing answers.
- Enabling candidates to have access to forbidden material in the exam room.
- Enabling candidates to communicate during exam sessions.
- Making an audio or video recording of an exam.
- Allowing the impersonation of a candidate.
- Providing false supporting documentation, e.g. a false course attendance letter.

## Centre Maladministration

Examples of behaviour that constitute maladministration are set out below. The list is divided into examples of minor and serious maladministration. However, it should be noted that minor maladministration may constitute serious maladministration if it is persistent or intentional.

This is not an exhaustive list and as such does not limit the scope of definitions set out in this policy. Moreover, as WMT's requirements vary depending on the subject and type of exam, not all of the examples may be applicable.

WMT reserves the right to define instances of maladministration at its discretion.

### Examples of minor maladministration:-

- Not issuing full instructions to candidates as specified in the 'Instructions for Invigilators' before the start of the exam.
- Failing to provide the candidates with sufficient information to complete the details on the question paper or answer sheet.
- Failing to start the exam on time. Not announcing and/or displaying the start and finish time for each exam.
- Failing to display the 'Notice to Candidates' where it can be seen easily by candidates. Having no working clock visible in the exam room or having a clock at the back of the room behind students (not visible without turning around).
- Allowing candidates to leave the room within the last 15 minutes of the exam.
- Not checking that candidates have completed their details.
- Failing to remind candidates of the time remaining in the exam.

### Examples of serious maladministration: -

- Not carrying out ID checks as required by WMT and MCA or the Awarding/Examining Body.
- Opening the security bag prior to entering the exam room or opening it in an incorrect manner (e.g. by pulling the bag apart in a way that suggests it has been tampered with).
- Failing to allocate the correct time for an exam or conducting the exam at a time different from the authorised time.
- Seating candidates too closely together or so that they are facing each other.
- Candidates being left unsupervised during the exam or the invigilator(s) not giving full attention to invigilating.
- Allowing candidates to leave the room unsupervised during an exam or between consecutive exams.
- Allowing persons other than the Invigilator or candidates into the exam room during the exam.

- Not completing the exam documentation accurately, and Invigilators report.
- Reporting Suspected Malpractice and Maladministration.
- Cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration may be reported by a number of sources, such as:
  - By the centre, e.g. in a report from the supervisor.
  - By the candidate, e.g. in a letter to WMT or its representatives.
  - By an examiner marker or Invigilator, e.g. in the examiner's report.

Investigation Procedure for Suspected Malpractice and Maladministration Information Collection WMT has various ways of collecting information regarding the conduct of an exam session, for example:

- Centre report forms completed by Auditors.
- Examiners are required to report any incidence of suspected malpractice.
- Appeals documentation.
- Reports from written paper markers.
- Suspected malpractice by a candidate.

In the case of suspected malpractice by a candidate, the Malpractice Investigations Panel (the 'Panel') will look at the available evidence (e.g. written papers, Invigilators report etc) and decide whether there is a case to answer. If the Panel feels that there is no case to answer, it will recommend that the candidate's results are released for assessment/markings. If it feels that there is a case to answer, it will recommend that the candidate's results are withheld until Awarding body notification and consultation has taken place.

Further evidence may be sought by the Panel from the WMT Examiner, marker or, if applicable, Instructor about the session or the candidate's work or behaviour.

The Panel will then reconsider all the evidence, taking into account any additional information including any statement by the candidate and forward it to the Awarding body.

The procedure is designed to ensure that all decisions are fair, consistent and based on the fullest information available. We usually aim to complete the investigation of malpractice cases within 30 working days of WMT having all the information necessary to conduct its investigation.

There is an appeals procedure for candidates who wish to appeal against a malpractice decision.