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**Malpractice Policy**

**Policy Adopted January 2012**

**Revised August 2016**

**Revised May 2020**

**Revised August 2022**

**Next revision date August 2024**

**Introduction**

This policy is intended for all staff and students of NESWEC.

**The aim of the policy is to:**

* To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or students.
* To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
* To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
* To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on students or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
* To protect the integrity of NESWEC and its qualifications.

**In order to do this, NESWEC will:**

* Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the website policies and procedures page, the induction period and the student handbook to inform students of the centre’s policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
* Show students the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources.
* Ask students to declare that their work is their own by signing (electronically) the Tracking and Feedback Form when work is submitted.
* Ask students to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesized appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used.
* Conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the Course Coordinator and all personnel linked to the allegation. It will proceed through the following stages:

1. Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
2. Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
3. Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.
4. Document all stages of any investigation.

* Where malpractice is proven, NESWEC will apply the following penalties / sanctions:
  + Any assignments or other assessed work where evidence of malpractice by students or staff is shown, will be disallowed as part of the contents of a portfolio.
  + Where there is any other evidence of malpractice by students or staff, the Core Tutor group will consider appropriate penalties or sanctions.

**Definition of Malpractice by Students**

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

* plagiarism of any nature.
* collusion by working collaboratively with other students to produce work that is submitted as individual student work. Never-the-less, we acknowledge that collaborative work is fundamental to good practice as an early childhood practitioner and encourage students to work together in ways that do not conflict with presenting work as their own individual work.
* copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying).
* deliberate destruction of another’s work.
* fabrication of results or evidence.
* false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.
* impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one’s place in an assessment/examination/test.

**Definition of Malpractice by NESWEC Staff**

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

* improper assistance to candidates.
* inventing or changing grades and decisions for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the student’s achievement to justify the assessment decisions made.
* failure to keep student coursework/portfolios of evidence secure.
* fraudulent claims for certificates.
* inappropriate retention of certificates.
* assisting students 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 centre staff producing work for the student. However, students are encouraged to submit drafts of written work for feedback from tutors, and tutors are expected to judge the appropriate level of support to offer or to consult the Course Coordinator or Core Tutor group.
* producing falsified witness statements. For example, for evidence the student has not generated.
* allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student’s own, to be included in a student’s assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
* facilitating and allowing impersonation.
* misusing the conditions for special student requirements. For example, where students are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
* falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
* fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment.

**Any NESWEC student or tutor/assessor who has reason to believe that there is an instance of malpractice or maladministration is asked to consult the detailed Malpractice and Maladministration Policy available of the website of Crossfields Institute (**[**www.Crossfieldsinstitute.com**](http://www.Crossfieldsinstitute.com) **) under the resources tab.**