

Malpractice and Maladministration Policy (including Plagiarism and Inappropriate use of AI Tools)

Academic Year 2025–2026

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Purpose of the Policy and Procedure

London School of Management and Media ('LSMM') regards plagiarism and all forms of assessment malpractice and maladministration as serious offenses. The purpose of the **Malpractice and Maladministration (including Plagiarism and Inappropriate Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools) Policy and Procedure** is to outline the definitions of malpractice and maladministration and to explain how such instances will be addressed.

The main objectives of this policy are:

- to identify and minimise the risk of malpractice or maladministration by staff and learners.
- to set out clear guidelines to enable a prompt and impartial response to any alleged incidents of malpractice or maladministration.
- to standardise the recording and reporting of malpractice or maladministration investigations to the awarding bodies, universities and regulatory authorities.
- to specify penalties or sanctions on staff or learners when incidents, or attempted incidents, of malpractice or maladministration are proven.
- to protect the integrity of London School of Management and Media and the qualifications it offers.

Scope

This policy applies to all courses delivered at London School of Management and Media at all its centres and affiliate centres worldwide.

Actions to Implement this Policy

All staff at LSMM have a responsibility to give active and full support of this policy by ensuring that it is known and understood by staff and learners, and that it is implemented effectively.

Definitions

Malpractice

Malpractice is defined as 'non-compliance with the regulations pertaining to the assessment process, which may adversely affect the integrity of a qualification, its assessment and the validity of learner certificates'. This includes plagiarism i.e., 'the presentation of work by learners as their own, without appropriate acknowledgment that the source belongs to others.'

Maladministration

Maladministration is defined as 'any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the LSMM not complying with the specified requirements for delivery and assessment of the qualifications as set out in the relevant regulatory and awarding body requirements.'

Examples

Centre Malpractice

Centre malpractice refers to any improper, illegal or unethical conduct by LSMM or its staff that undermines the integrity of assessments or the assessment process.

Examples include:

Fabrication or Falsification of Records:

- Creating fake learner records, attendance registers or qualification certificates.
- Manipulating or altering assessment outcomes to favour certain learners.

Improper Assistance to Learners:

- Providing learners with information about assessment questions before the assessment takes place.
- Offering undue help during an examination or assessment, such as giving answers or guiding learners on how to respond.

Failure to Maintain Security of Assessments:

- Failing to keep assessment materials, such as exam papers or coursework, secure before the assessment.
- Allowing unauthorised personnel access to confidential assessment materials.

Inappropriate Recruitment and Admission Practices:

- Admitting learners who do not meet the entry requirements by falsifying qualifications.
- Allowing learners to enrol in programmes without proper verification of previous qualifications.

Conflict of Interest:

- Staff members marking the work of close relatives or friends without declaring a conflict of interest.
- Allowing decisions on assessment outcomes to be influenced by personal relationships.

Centre Maladministration

Centre maladministration refers to the mishandling or poor administration of processes, leading to errors or mismanagement.

Examples include:

Incorrect or Incomplete Submission of Data:

- Submitting incorrect information to Awarding bodies, such as learner details or assessment results.
- Failing to register learners for assessments or qualifications in a timely manner.

Failure to Follow Procedures:

- Not adhering to the guidelines set by Awarding/regulatory bodies for conducting assessments or submitting coursework.

Poor Record-Keeping:

- Inaccurate or incomplete maintenance of learner records, attendance registers or assessment documentation.
- Losing or misplacing important documents, such as examination scripts or certification records.

Inadequate Communication:

- Failing to inform learners or staff about assessment schedules, changes to procedures or important deadlines.
- Not providing clear guidelines or support for learners or staff on assessment requirements.

Mismanagement of Assessment Resources:

- Inadequate provision or maintenance of assessment facilities, such as exam halls or equipment.
- Overlooking the necessary accommodations for learners with disabilities during assessments.

Learner Malpractice

Learner malpractice involves any dishonest or unethical behaviour by learners that compromises the integrity of assessments or qualifications. Examples include:

Cheating:

Cheating is the act of deceitfully gaining an unfair advantage during assessments. This can take various forms, including:

- **Using unauthorised materials:** Learners may bring notes, cheat sheets, or electronic devices, such as smartphones or smartwatches, into an examination to access information that is not permitted. This also includes using hidden earpieces or other communication devices to receive answers during the assessment.
- **Copying:** During an exam or assignment, a learner might copy another learner's answers without permission or consent or allow others to copy their own work. This can happen

through visual means, such as looking at another student's paper, or through covert communication.

- **Pre-knowledge of exam content:** Obtaining or attempting to obtain assessment questions or answers before the exam is administered. This includes hacking into secure systems, soliciting information from others, or purchasing exam papers.
- **Using a proxy:** Hiring or persuading someone to take an exam or complete an assignment on the learner's behalf, with the intent of submitting the work as their own.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's work or ideas as one's own, without proper acknowledgment. It is a serious violation of academic integrity and can include:

- **Direct Copying:** Reproducing text or ideas from another student's work, books, journals, websites, or other sources without citation. This could be verbatim copying or slight modification of the original text.
- **Submitting Purchased Work:** Buying essays, assignments, or projects from online services or third parties and submitting them as if they were personally completed. This practice not only violates academic honesty but also undermines the learning process.
- **Paraphrasing Without Acknowledgment:** Rewriting someone else's ideas or arguments in different words without giving credit to the original source. Even if the wording is changed, the underlying idea must be credited to its original author.

Inappropriate Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools:

Inappropriate use of AI refers to inappropriate use of artificial intelligence tools, e.g., text generators, code generators, translation software and other technologies, to create content in a manner that breaches either the guidelines of an assignment or originality in a learner's work. AI misuse includes, but is not limited to:

- **submitting AI-generated content without modification or disclosure**
- **using AI tools to complete assignments intended to assess personal understanding or individual skills**
- **representing AI-assisted work as completely one's own without attribution.**

(Please refer to Section "Appropriate Use of AI" on page-6 of this document for more information on appropriate use of AI.)

Collusion:

- **Unpermitted collaboration:** When learners work together on an assignment that is meant to be completed individually, leading to similar or identical work being submitted by multiple learners.
- **Answer sharing during exams:** Communicating with peers during an examination or assessment to share answers or solutions, either verbally, through written notes, or using electronic devices.
- **Group assignments:** In a group project, one or more learners may contribute significantly less than others but still receive the same credit, sometimes facilitated by dishonest reporting of individual contributions.

Impersonation:

Impersonation involves one person taking on the identity of another for academic purposes, usually with the intent of deceiving the educational institution. This can happen in various ways:

- **Exam impersonation:** Arranging for another person to sit an exam on the learner's behalf, using fake identification or other means to mislead the examination officials.
- **Assignment impersonation:** Having another person complete coursework, online quizzes or assignments, and submitting the work under the learner's name.
- **Digital impersonation:** In online assessments, using another person's login credentials to take an exam or complete assignments, or hiring someone to do so.

Disruptive Behaviour:

- Engaging in behaviour during an assessment that disrupts other learners, such as talking, using a mobile phone, or causing disturbances.
- Tampering with assessment materials, such as removing pages from answer booklets or altering answers after submission.

Learner Maladministration

Learner maladministration refers to the mishandling or poor administration of one's own academic responsibilities, leading to errors or non-compliance with procedures.

Examples include:

Failure to Submit Work on Time:

- Consistently missing deadlines for submitting assignments or coursework without valid reasons.
- Not following submission guidelines, such as failing to upload work to the correct platform or format.

Inaccurate Information Provision:

- Providing incorrect personal details or academic information during registration or assessment processes.
- Misreporting extenuating circumstances to gain unfair advantages, such as extra time for assessments.

Neglecting Communication Requirements:

- Ignoring official communications from LSMM, such as assessment notices, feedback, or policy updates.
- Failing to respond to requests for information or clarification related to assessments or academic standing.

Non-compliance with Academic Procedures:

- Ignoring the requirements for reassessment or resubmission of work after feedback.
- Failing to adhere to the [insert name of Centre]'s policies on group work, peer assessment or academic conduct.

Appropriate Use of AI

LSMM has developed guidelines for academic staff and learners that identify conditions under which the use of AI may be permissible:

Research Assistance: Learners may use AI tools to aid preliminary research, brainstorm ideas or gather general information. To that end, all findings derived through AI tools must be verified with reputable sources. Learners should properly cite any content or ideas inspired by AI-assisted research.

Drafting and Outlining: AI can be used for organising, outlining ideas or generating potential content structures or writing prompts. The final content should be that of the learner, although any AI contributions must be appropriately attributed if the submission is significantly influenced by it.

Language and Grammar Checks: Generally, use of AI for refinement in language, grammar or spelling check is acceptable as such changes do not impact or alter the substantive content and meaning of the work. Any use of AI that significantly paraphrases or rewords learners' work should be disclosed with the learner taking responsibility to ensure that the meaning and ideas from the original work are preserved.

Requirements Regarding Transparency

- **Disclosure:** It is expected that students declare in the assignment itself, or in a covering statement attached to it, whether or not they have used any AI tools to create the assignment, including detailing the type of tool used and how it helped in creating the work, and the extent of its influence.
- **Citation:** When the AI-generated content meaningfully contributes to the assignment, the learners are supposed to make proper citation guided by the assignment. For example, the type of specific AI tool used to assist in researching, generating or translating content should be cited.

Consequences of Breach for Failure to Disclose Use of AI Tools

Failure to disclose use of AI tools in assignments is considered malpractice. The following consequences will apply depending on the severity of the offense:

First Breach (Minor):

If the learner submits an assignment with low levels of AI detection that is undisclosed, the learner will be formally warned and may be asked to resubmit the assignment with appropriate disclosure.

Some academic support will be provided to help the learner learn about proper usage, citation, and disclosure of AI.

Repeated or Major Offense:

If the learner submits an assignment with high levels of AI detection that is undisclosed, the learner may be re-assessed through viva voce.

Similarly, if the learner continues to submit assignments with high detection of AI, the assignment is likely to be graded as failure of the unit, and further action will be taken against the learner that might lead to suspension from the course or programme.

Academic Integrity Standards

This section outlines expectations regarding original work, proper citation standards and consequences related to failure to disclose use of an AI tool when submitting assignments.

Adherence to these expectations is considered to be fundamental to the upholding of academic integrity and in support of authentic learner educational development.

Original Work Requirements

Submitted work is expected to reflect the learner's understanding, analysis and creativity. What is meant by 'original work' is that assignments are developed by the individual learner and demonstrate the learner's unique insights, skills and knowledge in the subject area. Assignments and assessments should be free from any uncredited use of another's ideas, words or creation.

Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Citations and Referencing Systems

Proper citation and referencing also serve for the purposes of recognising other people's work and further offer transparency in academic work.

It is expected that all learners will:

- **Use Recognised Referencing Styles:** Learners will apply the appropriate referencing style specified for a particular assignment, for example, APA, MLA, or Harvard. References are to be complete and consistently formatted, so assessors can locate these sources with ease.

At LSMM, information on citing references is provided at Induction, and further guidance can be provided by tutors and other academic staff.

- **Cite All Sources:** Quotes, reworded material, statistics, pictures and other multimedia materials taken from other authors, publications or Internet sources should be acknowledged. This not only refers to traditional sources like books and journal articles but also digital content or AI-created content when applicable.
- **Declare Employment of AI Assistance:** Where the use of an AI tool has been used to assist in the assignment, e.g., through research suggestions, grammar checking or the structuring of ideas, such usage shall be declared immediately in the work. The disclosure shall contain the type of AI tool employed, with a statement on the extent of the assistance given, to provide transparency.

Guidelines to Learners

LSMM has developed “A Guide to Citing and Referencing for Learners” which explains what citing and referencing are, how and when to cite and reference, and how citations and references should be formatted. This is provided and explained to learners at Induction.

Procedures for Dealing with Suspected Malpractice or Maladministration

In all cases, where LSMM suspects or uncovers malpractice or maladministration, it will report the incident to the awarding body/University immediately.

LSMM will follow all requirements set out by awarding bodies and universities regarding investigating, reporting on and acting upon outcomes of the investigation.

Process for Making an Allegation of Malpractice or Maladministration

If a member of staff or a learner suspects malpractice or maladministration, or is told about suspected malpractice or maladministration, they must immediately notify the Head of Centre in writing.

All allegations must include (where possible):

- The names of all learners or staff members involved in the suspected malpractice or maladministration.
- The name of the course/qualification affected by the suspected malpractice or maladministration.
- Details about the nature of the suspected malpractice or maladministration.

Where cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration are reported, LSMM will aim to protect the identity of the 'informant.'

Investigation: Malpractice or Maladministration by a Member of Staff

Where a member of staff is suspected of malpractice, the Head of Centre must be informed immediately. Malpractice may be considered Gross Misconduct, and the Staff Disciplinary Policy must be invoked.

Unless otherwise instructed by concerned Awarding Body or University, the investigation will proceed through the following stages:

Preliminary investigation: This will be conducted by a nominee of Head of Centre to determine whether a full investigation is necessary.

Where a conflict of interest may be seen to arise, this may be delegated to another appropriate senior member of staff.

The nominee of Head of Centre will make the individual(s) aware, in writing, at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice/maladministration and of possible consequences should it be proven.

The preliminary investigation will be completed within 10 working days of receiving the notification.

Full investigation: In cases where the Head of Centre considers that the allegation has substance, all assessments by this member of staff will be re-allocated while a full investigation takes place. The Head of Centre will appoint an Independent Investigating Officer to complete the investigation. During this time, the member of staff may be suspended.

The full investigation is likely to be completed within 30 working days of the notification.

Investigation: Malpractice or Maladministration by a Learner

Where a learner is suspected of malpractice, the Academic Director must be informed immediately. Malpractice may be considered gross misconduct, and the 'Learner Code of Conduct' must be invoked.

Unless otherwise instructed by the concerned Awarding Body or University, the investigation will proceed through the following stages:

Preliminary investigation: This will be conducted by a nominee of Academic Director to determine whether a full investigation is necessary.

Where a conflict of interest may be seen to arise, this may be delegated to another appropriate senior member of staff.

The nominee of Academic Director will make the individual(s) aware, in writing, at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice/maladministration and of possible consequences should it be proven.

The preliminary investigation will be completed within 10 working days of receiving the notification.

Full investigation: In cases where the Academic Director considers that the allegation has substance, they will appoint an Independent Investigating Officer to complete the investigation.

The full investigation is likely to be completed within 30 working days of the notification.

Reporting Requirements

Following the investigation into the alleged malpractice or maladministration, the Independent Investigating Officer will submit a written report to Academic Director /Head of Centre, including the following documentation:

- A statement outlining the facts, along with a detailed description of the circumstances surrounding the alleged malpractice or maladministration.
- Written statements from staff and/or learners who were interviewed during the investigation.
- Any relevant learner work, along with internal assessment or verification records pertinent to the investigation.
- In cases of learner malpractice, details of any corrective actions being taken by [Insert name of Centre] to protect the integrity of ATHE qualifications, as well as any mitigating factors that should be taken into account.
- The report should be submitted within 20 working days of the beginning of the full investigation.

Outcomes and Actions

The report will be reviewed by the Academic Director and the Head of Centre, and a decision will be made on the outcome of the investigation.

If it is found that malpractice or maladministration has taken place, then appropriate penalties may be put into effect.

For learners, this may be a written warning, revision of marks, cancellation of units, disqualification from future entries, revocation of certificates, suspension or exclusion.

For staff, the procedure will follow the Staff Disciplinary Policy and sanctions may include a written warning, suspension or dismissal.

Principles of Investigations

Confidentiality

- Investigations will typically require access to confidential information, about LSMM, its members of staff or learners.
- All information gathered during an investigation must be kept secure in line with Data Protection Policy, and must not be shared with third parties, except with regulators or the police, if necessary.

Rights of individuals

- If a member of staff or a learner is suspected of malpractice or maladministration, they will be informed of the allegations against them, in writing, along with any evidence supporting the claims.
- They will be given the opportunity to review the allegation, respond in writing and seek advice.
- They will also be made aware of the potential consequences if the malpractice or maladministration is proven, as well as the possibility that other parties, such as regulators, police, funding agencies or professional bodies may be notified.
- Information about the appeals process will also be provided.

Proportionality

- Any decision regarding the outcome should be proportional to the weight of the evidence and the severity of the case.
- The learner is not required to admit to malpractice.

Staff Interviews

- Member of staff may request to be accompanied by a friend or colleague during interviews.
- Any friends or colleagues who do attend the interview are present only to support the staff member and cannot contribute to the interview.

Learner Interviews

- When interviewing a learner who is under 18 or a vulnerable adult, LSMM will consider the need for a parent or representative to be present or will obtain parental consent before proceeding with the interview.
- Learners may request to be accompanied by a friend or colleague during interviews.
- Any friends or colleagues who do attend the interview are present only to support the learner and cannot contribute to the interview.

Retention and storage of evidence and records

All relevant documents and evidence will be stored in accordance with the policies and procedures of LSMM and concerned awarding body/university.

Decisions and action plans

- Conclusions and decisions should be evidence-based.
- A proposed course of action will be determined, agreed upon by concerned awarding body/university, implemented, and monitored until completion.
- The actions should also address necessary improvements in the policies and procedures of LSMM, as well as any staff-related or resource-related actions.

Appeals against Decision

If a staff member disagrees with the outcome of the investigation, they may appeal by following the procedure outlined in the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

If a learner disagrees with the investigation's outcome, they may appeal through the Appeals Process outlined in the Appeals Policy.