

First Aid Events - Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Investigation Procedure

Policy Statement

First Aid Events is committed to upholding the integrity of its qualifications. It is also committed to ensuring that all candidates taking First Aid Events exams at Exam Centres do so under similar conditions at each centre and therefore have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.

Accordingly, First Aid Events 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 First Aid Events discretion, be disqualified from the exam. Similarly, centres found to have committed or colluded in any of the above will, at First Aid Events's discretion, be deregistered, and affected candidates will have their marks voided.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all candidates taking First Aid Events exams and to all centres registered with First Aid Events to provide First Aid Events exams.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- define malpractice and maladministration;
- set out the rights and responsibilities of First Aid Events, Registered Exam Centres 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 act or omission, or attempted act or omission, which:

- breaches First Aid Events'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 First Aid Events as an independent training provider or damages the authority, reputation or credibility of a Exam 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 First Aid Events'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 Registered Exam Centre relating to the administration of exams. Maladministration is usually unintentional and arises from mistake, ignorance, carelessness or forgetfulness about First Aid Events'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 First Aid Events exams and assessments need to be investigated by First Aid Events 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 First Aid Events's requirements vary depending on the subject and type of exam, not all of the examples may be applicable. First Aid Events 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 marksheets 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 steward, supervisor, 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 supervisor or invigilator.
- Removing any materials other than the candidate's personal possessions from the exam room.
- Using unauthorised photocopies (e.g. of sheet music) 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 Registered Exam 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 First Aid Events's requirements vary depending on the subject and type of exam, not all of the examples may be applicable. First Aid Events reserves the right to define instances of malpractice at its discretion.

- Altering official documentation such as exam report forms, individual marksheets 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 ISE portfolios 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 centre behaviour which 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 First Aid Events's requirements vary depending on the subject and type of exam, not all of the examples may be applicable. First Aid Events 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 Supervisors and 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 round).
- 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 First Aid Events.

- 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.
- In drama exams, failing to give candidates the correct time for preparation or failing to isolate candidates during the preparation 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 steward, supervisor, invigilator or candidates into the exam room during the exam.
- Not completing the exam documentation accurately, such as the seating plan and supervisor's 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 trainer
- By the candidate, e.g. in a letter to First Aid Events or its representatives.
- By an examiner, marker or inspector, e.g. in the examiner's report.

Investigation Procedure for Suspected Malpractice and Maladministration Information collection

First Aid Events has various ways of collecting information regarding the conduct of an exam session, for example:

- Centre report forms completed by examiners and/or centres for each centre visited.

Examiners are required to report any incidence of suspected malpractice.

- Recordings of speaking and listening, and interview sessions.
- Supervisors' reports of written exam sessions including seating plans.
- Inspection visit reports completed by First Aid Events inspectors.
- Centre reports and candidate statements which are requested at the time of notification of an investigation being conducted.
- Appeals documentation.
- Reports from written paper markers.

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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, supervisor's 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. If it feels that there is a case to answer, it will recommend that the candidate's results are withheld.

If the Panel decides to investigate the case further, the candidate will be informed of its decision either directly or via the centre. In the case of the latter, the centre is asked to inform the candidate and to act as an intermediary between First Aid Events and the candidates during the investigation. The candidate will be informed which results will not be released until the investigation is complete and may be requested to provide a statement concerning the alleged malpractice. The candidate will be given 10 working days from the date of the notification in which to respond.

Further evidence may be sought by the Panel from the centre, the examiner, marker or, if applicable, inspector 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.

If it is decided that the candidate's results can be released, the original results will be issued. If it is decided that the results should be withheld indefinitely, the paper for each component in which malpractice has been confirmed will be voided and zero marks awarded.

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 28 working days of First Aid Events having all the information necessary to conduct its investigation.

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

Information about the appeals procedure can be found on www.First Aid Events.co.uk

Suspected malpractice or maladministration by a centre

In the case of suspected malpractice or maladministration by a centre, the Panel will look at the available evidence (e.g. written papers, seating plan, examiner's 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 relevant results are released. If it feels that there is a case to answer, it will recommend that the results are withheld. The results withheld could be the results of an individual candidate or selected candidates or of the whole exam session at a particular centre.

If the Panel decides to investigate the case further, the centre will be informed that an investigation is being conducted.

The Panel will either notify affected candidates directly or through the centre.

In the case of the latter, the centre is asked to inform the affected candidates and to act as an intermediary between First Aid Events and the candidate in the investigation if appropriate.

The centre will be informed which results will not be released until the investigation is complete and will be requested to provide a report concerning the alleged malpractice or maladministration. If required, specific information may be sought at this point. The centre will be given ten working days from the date of the notification in which to respond.

The centre may also be suspended from enrolling new candidates for First Aid Events exams until the investigation is complete. If this happens, the centre may be required to permit affected candidates to take resits at another centre during the investigation.

Further evidence may be sought from candidates, the examiner, marker or, if applicable, inspector about the session.

The Panel will then reconsider all the evidence, taking into account the centre's report and any additional information.

If it is decided that there is no case to answer, the candidate's original results will be issued. If the suspected malpractice or serious maladministration is confirmed, the following action can be taken:

- All results for the session in question may be voided;
- All the results for the component of the exam for which there is confirmation of malpractice or serious maladministration may be voided;
- First Aid Events may, at its discretion, offer resits to affected candidates and, if so, the centre may be required to hold those resits with a First Aid Events inspector in attendance;
- The centre may have its status downgraded to 'restricted' meaning that it will be restricted in the actions it is permitted to perform in connection with the conduct of First Aid Events exams at the centre; and/or
- The centre may be deregistered.

In the case of a finding of maladministration that is deemed to be minor, the centre will be given guidance as to how to prevent such actions from being repeated in the future.

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 or maladministration cases within 30 working days of First Aid Events having all the information necessary to conduct its investigation.

There is an appeals procedure for centres that wish to appeal against a malpractice or maladministration decision.

Review

This policy is subject to an annual review.

Effective Date

This policy came into effect on September 2013

Last Updated: 19/07/18