

Icon Accreditation

Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

Policy number	07.13 Other documents
Summary	This Policy details the Institute of Conservation's (Icon) approach towards managing suspected malpractice in the delivery of Icon Accreditation and the responsibility of stakeholders involved.
Who this policy applies to	The Policy applies to Assessors, Specialist Advisors, Accreditation Moderation Committee members and Icon Staff involved in the delivery of Icon Accreditation.
Author/policy contact	Patrick White, Policy and Programmes Director
Approved by / approval level	Professional Standards & Development Committee
Date effective	09.05.2023
Last reviewed or updated	19.11.2024
Frequency of review	Every three years

1.	Introduction
	The Institute of Conservation (Icon) recognises the vital importance of ensuring that all assessments it undertakes as part of the delivery of Icon Accreditation are valid, fair, objective and independent. This policy details Icon's approach towards identifying and dealing with cases of malpractice and maladministration.
2.	Definitions
	Malpractice: Any act, default or practice which is a breach of the regulations or which gives rise to prejudice to candidates; and/or compromises public confidence in qualifications; and/or compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate; and/or damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre. Examples of malpractice include, but are not limited to: • Candidates intentionally providing inaccurate or misleading submissions of declaration forms and/or other evidence during the assessment process. • Any staff or candidates undertaking the assessment on behalf of someone else. • Submitting or plagiarising work that is not the candidates' own original work (such as using a project writing service to buy work and submit it as their own). • A candidate or an assessor submitting work produced by generative artificial intelligence (AI) and presenting it as their own work. (Note, generative AI as a tool is not necessarily prohibited provided its use forms part of an assignment and its provenance is clearly referenced). • Deliberate destruction or tampering with work or assessment records. • Giving a false declaration of authenticity of assessment evidence.

	• Deliberately giving false assessment evidence, records, results and other documents relating to the assessment. • Intentionally accessing or trying to access and share confidential assessment material. • Candidates offering a bribe at any time to the assessor, employer or provider staff. • Use of unauthorised material or devices during the assessment. Maladministration: is a form of malpractice and includes any actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the assessment or quality assurance process, including the integrity of the assessment, the validity of any results or certificates, or the reputation and credibility of Icon. Examples of maladministration include, but are not limited to: • Failing to maintain and keep accurate records about a candidate's assessment. • Failing to provide accurate records about candidates when requested.
3.	Responsibilities
	The management of this policy rests with Accreditation Manager who will oversee and manage the process. If the malpractice or maladministration concern relates to Icon's Accreditation Manager, Icon's Chief Executive will nominate an independent staff member to lead the process. All staff involved in the delivery of Icon Accreditation have a responsibility to understand the policy and ensure that it is implemented.
4.	Making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration.
	Any party who identifies, or is made aware of, a potential case of malpractice or maladministration must notify the Accreditation Manager immediately. If the allegation relates to a member of Icon staff, the Chief Executive should be notified via email, including 'Icon Accreditation Malpractice or Maladministration Allegation' as the subject of the email. Allegations should include: • Candidates' name (where appropriate). • Icon staff member's name and job role if they are involved in the case. • Details of the aspect of the assessment affected and the nature of the service affected. • Nature of the suspected or actual malpractice and associated dates, details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by anybody involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances. Notification of alleged malpractice or maladministration will be acknowledged within 7 days of receipt of the notice.

5.	Investigation
	The alleged case of malpractice or maladministration will be investigated by the Accreditation Manager. The investigation will be conducted in order to: • To establish the facts relating to allegations to determine whether any malpractice or maladministration has taken place. • To identify the cause of any malpractice or maladministration and identify those involved. • To establish the scale of any malpractice or maladministration and whether other assessments have been affected. • To determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current candidates and to preserve the integrity of the assessment services. • To ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued. • To obtain clear evidence to support any sanctions to be applied to the candidate. • To identify any adverse patterns or trends. Icon will endeavour to keep the name of the individual that has made the allegation confidential. However, it may become apparent during the conduct of the investigation depending on the nature of the allegation. In conducting the investigation, it may be necessary to request further information from relevant parties. In any meeting with the individual or organisation who is the subject of the investigation they can choose to be accompanied by another individual; however, they will only participate at the behest of the individual concerned. All material collected as part of an investigation is kept secure. All records and original documentation concerning a completed investigation that ultimately leads to sanctions against a provider will be retained for a period of no less than seven years.
6.	Outcomes and reporting
	The subject of the malpractice / maladministration allegation will be notified within 20 days of acknowledgement of receipt of the allegation with the outcome of the investigation. This shall be documented in a formal report which will include: • Identify the nature of the alleged malpractice / maladministration. • Confirm the details of the allegation, providing an indication as to whether the claims have been substantiated and, if so, how. • Confirm the appropriate level of sanctions to be taken. There are two possible outcomes from the investigation: • Maladministration / malpractice allegation is accepted. The investigation has found that there is clear evidence for the allegation and has made clear sanctions as required.

	Maladministration / malpractice allegation is rejected. The Accreditation Manager will confirm that all appropriate procedures and policies have been followed fairly and accurately.
7.	Sanctions
	Where an allegation of malpractice or maladministration is proven we will consider whether the integrity of our end point assessments might be at risk if the individual in question were to be involved in future assessments and so we will act to protect the integrity of our assessment services. The exact sanctions will be decided on a case by case basis, and the level of sanction applied will depend on the severity of the malpractice or maladministration. Examples of sanctions which could be applied include: - Grading the assessment method(s) in question as fail. - Refusing to issue assessment results. - Debarring an employer or provider staff member from involvement in the delivery of our assessments for several years/life. - Disqualifying a candidate from taking any component of the assessment. - Formal complaint being followed through Icon's Complaints Procedure, an outcome of which may be losing their Icon Membership. A list of possible sanctions has been included in Appendix 1.
8.	Appeals
	If, after investigation, the individual who is the subject of the malpractice / maladministration allegation is dissatisfied with the outcome they should refer to the 'Appeals and Complaints Policy'.
9.	Managing implementation and review
	This Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is reflective of current regulations and guidance and is responsive to local, national and international events.

Appendix 1: Example sanctions

The list below provides an example of the scale of sanctions that could be applied in different situations. This is not an exhaustive list, exact sanctions applied will be decided on a case by case basis.

Examples	Possible sanction	Impact to integrity of Assessment
Plagiarism evident portfolio	• Formal written notice. • Fail assessment method, required to resit and pay according resit fees. If second offence, disqualification from all aspects of the assessment.	Low
Falsification of portfolio evidence	• Formal written notice. • Fail assessment method, required to resit and pay according resit fees. If second offence, disqualification from all aspects of the assessment.	Low
Impersonation of Candidate	• Fail assessment method. • Disqualification from all aspects of the assessment.	High
Threatening behaviour towards an assessor during the assessment	• Formal written notice. • The assessment evidence will be disallowed, and assessment moved to fail if resultant lack of sufficient assessment evidence. If second offence, disqualification from all aspects of the assessment. • Formal complaint raised through Icon Complaints Procedure with possible outcome of losing Icon membership.	Medium
Assessor shown to be involved in the falsification of assessment grades	• Full review of all assessments by the AMC. • Termination of contract with Icon.	High