



# Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

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<b>Document Revision History</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>11/12/2025</b>	Update in Section 4 Definition of Malpractice
<b>5.0</b>	<b>30/09/2025</b>	Update of 2025
<b>4.0</b>	<b>02/10/2024</b>	2024 Rebranding
<b>3.1</b>	<b>11/06/2024</b>	Minor updates
<b>3.0</b>	<b>11/01/2024</b>	Major content review for process improvement
<b>-</b>	<b>2020-2023</b>	Revised annually- no changes found necessary
<b>2.3</b>	<b>21/10/2019</b>	Update of 2019
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## 1 Introduction

This policy applies to LANGUAGECERT®'s customers including centres and candidates who may be involved in suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration.

It sets out the steps centres, candidates and other stakeholders should follow when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice/maladministration and our responsibilities in dealing with such cases. It also sets out the steps we will follow when reviewing the cases.

## 2 The Centre's Responsibility

A centre's compliance with this policy is mandatory, and its competence in the handling of malpractice and maladministration will be reviewed by LANGUAGECERT® periodically through our ongoing monitoring arrangements.

If we require a centre to carry out an internal investigation, the centre manager must cooperate with us to ensure that the investigation is carried out in an effective, prompt and thorough manner.

## 3 Review arrangements

We will review this policy annually and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer and/or operational feedback, changes in our practices, actions from regulatory authorities or external agencies, changes in legislation or trends identified from previous allegations.

## 4 Definition of Malpractice

Malpractice is anything which compromises or could compromise:

- The assessment process
- The integrity of a regulated qualification
- The validity of a result or certificate
- The qualification or the wider qualifications community
- The reputation and credibility of LANGUAGECERT®.

There are numerous potential examples of candidate and/or centre malpractice. Malpractice may involve some form of plagiarism, collusion, inappropriate assistance, tampering, falsification, breach of confidentiality or impersonation. Malpractice involves cheating (or facilitating cheating) in an assessment or attempting to manipulate a result so that it does not reflect the individual's actual performance in an exam.

The categories listed below are examples of centre and candidate malpractice. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are only intended as guidance on our definition of malpractice:

- Deliberate failure to consistently adhere to LANGUAGECERT®'s centre recognition and/or qualification approval requirements or actions assigned to a centre
- Intentional withholding of information from LANGUAGECERT®, which is critical to maintaining the quality standards of their qualifications
- A loss or theft of, or a breach of confidentiality in, any assessment materials
- Insecure storage of exam materials
- Unauthorised amendment, copying or distributing of exam papers/materials

- Inappropriate assistance/support to candidates by centre staff (e.g. unfairly helping them to pass a unit or qualification)
- Plagiarism by candidates/staff
- Copying from another candidate
- Cheating by candidates/staff
- Use of artificial intelligence
- Personation - assuming the identity of another candidate or having someone assume their identity during an assessment
- Collusion or permitting collusion in exams
- Deliberate contravention by candidates of the assessment arrangements LANGUAGECERT® specifies for its qualifications
- Fraudulent claim for certificates and/or deliberate submission of false information to gain a qualification or unit.
- Deliberate misuse of LANGUAGECERT®'s logo, brand, name and trademarks or misrepresentation of a relationship with LANGUAGECERT®

This policy covers our approach towards compliance with Ofqual's General Condition [A8](#) which also provides further guidance on malpractice and maladministration.

## 5 Definition of Maladministration

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration (e.g. inappropriate or inconsistent candidate records, failure to return examination scripts in accordance with LANGUAGECERT® requirements).

The categories listed below are examples of centre and candidate maladministration. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are only intended as guidance on our definition of maladministration:

- Persistent and/or deliberate failure to adhere to LANGUAGECERT® candidate registration and certification procedures
- Persistent failure to adhere to LANGUAGECERT® centre recognition and/or qualification requirements and/or associated actions assigned to a centre
- Late candidate registrations (both infrequent and persistent)
- Unreasonable delays in responding to requests and/or communications from LANGUAGECERT®
- Failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence
- Withholding or delaying information, by deliberate act or omission, which is required to assure LANGUAGECERT® of a centre's ability to deliver qualifications appropriately
- Misuse of LANGUAGECERT®'s logo and trademarks or misrepresentation of a centre's relationship with LANGUAGECERT® and/or its recognition and approval status with LANGUAGECERT®
- Poor administrative arrangements and/or records.

## 6 How to make an allegation of Malpractice / Maladministration

Anybody who wants to report suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration should immediately notify LANGUAGECERT® by e-mail at [Quality@LanguageCert.org](mailto:Quality@LanguageCert.org) and enclose any supporting evidence.

Where possible, information should include:

- The centre's contact details
- Test centre/LANGUAGECERT® staff member details if involved in the case
- Details of the LANGUAGECERT® certification/s affected
- Details of the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration and the dates
- LANGUAGECERT® candidate registration number(s) if known
- Details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by the centre or anyone else involved in the case.

## 7 Confidentiality and Whistleblowing

A person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may want to remain anonymous, although it is always preferable to reveal your identity and provide us with your contact details. Please refer to our published Whistleblowing Policy if you need to report any malpractice or maladministration concerns in confidence.

## 8 Responsibility for the investigation

Suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration will be considered by LANGUAGECERT® to establish if malpractice or maladministration has occurred.

Our Quality Department will carry out investigations in a prompt, independent and effective manner. Nominated LANGUAGECERT® staff will acknowledge receipt, lead the investigation, review the evidence and establish whether or not any malpractice or maladministration has occurred.

## 9 Notifying relevant parties

We will inform relevant stakeholders that we will investigate the matter, including the person who made the allegation and/or the test centre manager. We will also inform candidates where it is necessary to do so. We may communicate directly with centre staff who have been accused of malpractice if appropriate. We may withhold details of the person making the allegation if to do so would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

If fraud is suspected and/or identified, we may also notify other relevant stakeholders – including our regulators, universities, visa application authorities, other awarding bodies etc.

## 10 Investigation timelines and summary process

We aim to complete the investigation within 10 business days of receipt of an allegation. In some cases, the investigation may take longer; for example, if the investigation is complex. Where relevant, we will advise all parties of the likely revised timescale.

If we request further information, we expect full cooperation from all parties involved in the investigation.

We will conduct investigations in a fair, reasonable and lawful manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias.

We will:

- Establish the facts and identify the cause and scale of any irregularities
- Evaluate any action/s already taken by a centre
- Determine whether any remedial action is required with respect to enrolled candidates and/or certificates already issued.

We reserve the right to impose sanctions on a centre to protect the interests of candidates and the integrity of certifications.

We also reserve the right to withhold, recall and/or adjust a candidate's scores, issue a written warning to a candidate or place a ban to prevent a candidate from taking any further LANGUAGECERT® exams/qualifications.

## 11 Investigation records

We will record all cases of malpractice and/or maladministration and will inform relevant stakeholders as appropriate regarding any follow-up actions taken.

Individual candidates, centres and centre staff accused of malpractice and/or maladministration have the right to appeal against any LANGUAGECERT® decisions and action/s taken.

As part of an investigation we may produce reports for authorities and other recognising organisations. Typically these reports will describe:

- The facts of the case
- An appropriate level of remedial action to be taken
- Reference to any supporting evidence and mitigating factors.

## 12 Investigation outcomes

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place, we will:

- Impose specific and proportionate actions in relation to a centre and/or candidate. There may be timebound directives to address malpractice/maladministration and to prevent it from reoccurring
- Take action against a candidate in relation to proven instances of malpractice, such as some or all of the following:
  - A written warning that if the offence is repeated further action may be taken
  - Loss of partial or all marks for the related exam
  - Disqualification from the certification (e.g. invalidating a result and revoking a certificate)
  - Placing a ban from taking any further exams/qualifications with LANGUAGECERT®

- Inform the centre and/or candidates(s) concerned in cases where certificates are invalid
- Inform relevant third parties of our findings in case they need to take relevant action in relation to the centre and/or candidate
- Carry out additional investigations if we suspect the issue may be more widespread at the centre and/or at other centres or candidates.

To appeal a decision please refer to our Appeals Policy on <https://www.languagecert.org/>



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