

## QUALITY MANUAL

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### POLICY, PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

#### Exemplar Quality Manual

This exemplary Quality Manual is provided to Focus Awards Centres to offer guidance on the requisite policies and procedures necessary for achieving approval as a recognised Centre.

Centres have the liberty to adopt and/or adapt this exemplary Quality Manual as the foundation for their own arrangements, if they so choose. However, it is duly acknowledged that in undertaking such adoption or adaptation, Focus Awards bears no responsibility for the implementation of this manual or the compliance of your organisation with the subject matter and associated legislation/regulatory requirements. You are free to use these policies as a template and adapt them to your own Centre, this is often recommended so your Centre-specific procedures are included.

You must ensure that beyond the scope of your internal policies are Focus Awards policies and procedures which must be read and disseminated to all staff, and your Centre Agreement which contains your regulatory requirements.

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## Quality Manual

### Purpose:

The purpose of this Quality Manual is to provide comprehensive information on the policies, processes, and procedures of [insert company name]. The internal policies, processes, and procedures of [insert company name] are designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Establish and maintain exceptional quality standards for client provision.
- Promote and uphold best practices.
- Standardise activities to ensure consistency and efficiency.
- Generate public confidence in the quality of provision.
- Meet regulatory requirements.

This manual is accessible to all key stakeholders involved in [insert company name]. As part of our commitment to continuous quality management and improvement, periodic reviews of policies and procedures will be conducted, and the manual will be updated annually. The responsibility for updates lies with the [insert role] – [insert name].

### Roles and Responsibilities within [insert company name]:

- **Centre Contact – [insert name]:** Responsible for [describe responsibilities].
- **Administration – [insert name]:** Tasked with [describe responsibilities].
- **Finance – [insert name]:** Manages [describe financial responsibilities].
- **Tutor/Assessors – [insert name(s)]:** Engaged in [describe teaching and assessment responsibilities].
- **Internal Quality Assurer(s) – [insert name(s)]:** Responsible for [describe IQA responsibilities].

This delineation of roles ensures clarity and accountability within [insert company name], fostering a structured and organised environment in line with our commitment to quality provision.

## **Quality Assurance Overview for [Insert Company Name]**

At [Insert Company Name], our commitment to quality assurance is encapsulated by the following principles:

**Transparency:** We prioritise transparency by ensuring that information provided to all stakeholders is relevant, accurate, and easily understandable. Leveraging [Insert Company Name] technology fosters a culture of openness, allowing convenient access for stakeholders to monitor and review internal policies and procedures.

**Accountability:** Clear lines of accountability are maintained to uphold the integrity of our service provision. This commitment is evidenced through rigorous quality checks and internal audits, the details of which are made available to all key stakeholders for review.

**Responsibility:** [Insert Company Name] takes responsibility for quality assurance and continuously enhancing service provision. [Insert Company Name] has an open-door policy which encourages constructive feedback and collaborative development solutions. Dedicated forums are provided to give all key stakeholders a voice, ensuring continuous improvements and maintaining our commitment to professional, effective service provision.

**Process:** Quality assurance is a continuous process involving reflection, evaluation, reporting, and feedback. [Insert Company Name] values all feedback, using it to refine processes and procedures to meet the requirements of our key stakeholders.

### **Process**

**Policies and Procedures:** This manual outlines key policies and procedures. For details on any policy not included in this manual, please refer to the [Insert Role]. We aim to ensure that the service provision remains professional, effective, and aligned with our regulatory bodies including Focus Awards, Ofqual and Ofsted (if appropriate)

## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

## 1. Policy

[insert company name] is dedicated to encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination. We align with the principles and objectives of various legislations, regulations, and codes of practice that collectively prohibit discrimination in selection, recruitment, induction, programme delivery, and assessment.

[insert company name] is committed to ensuring that learners represent all sections of society, fostering an environment where every learner feels respected and can contribute their best.

[insert company name] endeavours to ensure equal treatment for all and aims to:

- a. Prevent discrimination or less favourable treatment based on a protected characteristic.
- b. Raise awareness about diversity issues.
- c. Address and rectify any reported incidents of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation promptly and sensitively through an appropriate procedure.

## 2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, [insert company name] adopts the following definitions:

- a. **Diversity:** Recognising, valuing, and considering people's different backgrounds, knowledge, skills, and experiences to enhance creativity, efficiency, and innovation.
- b. **Direct Discrimination:** Treating a person less favourably due to a protected characteristic.
- c. **Indirect Discrimination:** Applying a requirement or condition that, though equal for everyone, disproportionately affects a specific group without justification.
- d. **Harassment:** Violating a learner's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment related to a protected characteristic.
- e. **Victimisation:** Treating someone poorly because they have made a complaint or assisted someone else in making a complaint.

[insert company name] will address identified inequalities or barriers and challenge discrimination related to the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex

- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy
- Marriage/Civil partnership

### **3. Roles & Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of every individual to eliminate discrimination and ensure the practical application of this policy.

[insert company name] has a responsibility to:

- Adhere to the Equality Act (2010).
- Avoid discrimination, harassment, or victimisation in relation to qualification withdrawal.
- Foster an environment valuing individual differences and contributions.
- Ensure a learning environment promoting dignity, respect, and intolerance for intimidation, bullying, or harassment.
- Review and amend practices and procedures for fairness.
- Promote equality in the learning environment.
- Address policy breaches appropriately.
- Provide advice to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Regularly review policies for equality promotion.
- Consult with relevant learners to identify and remove barriers to entry.
- Oversee the fair application of this policy.
- Monitor and evaluate policy effectiveness and take corrective action.

### **Reasonable Adjustments**

[insert company name] has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for all protected characteristics, including:

- Avoiding substantial disadvantages related to a provision, criteria, or practice.
- Avoiding substantial disadvantages related to a physical feature.
- Providing auxiliary aids to avoid substantial disadvantages.

### **Learners**

Learners must accept personal responsibility for applying [insert company name] equality and diversity policy. They should report any discrimination instances to teaching or any other [insert company name] staff member.

### **Staff**

Staff must apply good practice in equality of opportunity within their control and ensure learners are aware of [insert company name] policy.

### **4. Procedure**

- a. Learners who are aware of discrimination of any kind, or consider that they are being discriminated against, should in the first instance consider whether it may be

appropriate to raise the issue informally with the alleged discriminator, who may not be aware that their behaviour is causing offence.

- b. Where it is not appropriate for an approach to be made to the alleged discriminator, or the learner is unwilling to do this, they should consider to whom they should highlight their issue. In most cases it is envisaged this would be their tutor/assessor. Where their tutor/assessor is implicated in their concerns, they should approach the Internal Quality Assurer
- c. The member of staff with whom the matter is raised should either investigate the concerns raised or refer the matter, wherever possible with the agreement of the employee concerned, to a more appropriate manager. Whenever allegations of discrimination are made the member of staff must inform the [insert role].
- d. Once the matter has been investigated the learner who has alleged discrimination should be informed of the action taken and, where appropriate, the outcome. It may not be appropriate to give details of any disciplinary sanctions applied.
- e. Where learners are not happy about the action taken, they can appeal within seven working days to the Internal Quality Assurer of [insert company name], to review their concerns.

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## **5. Related Documentation**

This policy may be used in conjunction with other policies and procedures.

## **Appeals Policy**

### **1. Duty of the Centre**

It is the responsibility of [insert company name], an approved Centre of Focus Awards, to ensure that all learners are aware of the appeals process and have access to a responsive appeals procedure.

The [insert role] is designated to manage the Appeals Policy for [insert company name], and the Centre will communicate this role to all learners.

The assessment of evidence against specified Assessment Criteria involves assessors providing constructive feedback during assessments. If a learner disagrees with an assessment or proposed assessment plan, they should explain the basis of the disagreement to the assessor during the feedback session. The assessor must clearly highlight why the criterion has not been met or the reasons for the proposed assessment plan. Such negotiation does not constitute a formal appeal. If the disagreement persists after the feedback session, the learner should follow the Appeals Procedure outlined below. Considering appeals contributes to the internal quality process, enabling the Centre's Internal Quality Assurer to monitor and improve the assessment process as needed. Records of all formal appeals will be documented in the Appeals Log, accessible to representatives of Focus Awards and/or the Regulatory Body.

## **2. Formal Appeals Procedure**

If, after the informal discussion with the assessor, the learner wishes to make a formal appeal, the learner must request this in writing to the Internal Quality Assurer. This must be done within [insert timescale] working days of receiving the original assessment feedback. Once the appeal has been received by the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) they will record this in the Appeals Log.

Learners can appeal against the following;

- The assessment plan – the learner can appeal if they do not agree with the suggested methods, location, time, and criteria.
- The assessment – the learner has the right to appeal if they feel that the assessment differed from what was agreed on the assessment plan, or they feel that they did not receive a fair assessment.
- The assessment decision – the learner can appeal if they feel the assessor's judgment was unfair.

The Internal Quality Assurer on receipt of the formal appeal from the learner will:

- Investigate the learners appeal in full and try to seek a solution negotiated between the relevant assessor and learner.

The outcome of the appeal may be as follows;

- Confirmation of the original decision
- A re-assessment by an independent assessor
- A judgment that adequate evidence meeting the assessment criteria has been shown.
- An opportunity to re-submit for assessment within a revised agreed timescale.

The written decision of the Internal Quality Assurer will be issued to the learner within ten working days of confirming receipt of the appeal. This decision will be recorded in the Appeals Log.

The Appeals Log will be available to any representative of Focus Awards and/or a representative of the Regulatory Body.

If the learner is still not satisfied with the decision at this stage and this procedure has been exhausted, then the learner can contact Focus Awards.

Focus Awards should only be contacted when this procedure is FULLY exhausted.

## **APPEALS FORM**

### **Section A – Your personal details**

Full Name	
Registration Number	

Address	
E Mail	
Contact telephone number	

**Section B – Your programme details**

Place of work	
Qualification your appeal refers to	
Start date	
Name of Tutor / Assessor	

**Section C – What do your concerns relate to?**

**Tick all boxes that apply**

Coursework / portfolio of evidence completed	
You were required to withdraw from your programme	
You are unhappy with work stated as plagiarised	
Correct assessment procedure not followed that undermined the validity of the result	
The information we gave you about your assessment was inadequate or inaccurate	
The teaching provided was inadequate	
Prejudice or appearance of prejudice on the part of the Tutor / Assessor	
Your performance was affected by circumstances that were not taken into account or considered	
Significant changes to your programme that weren't communicated to you	
The learning support was inadequate	
The Tutor / Assessor has not used the standards to make their decision	
You disagree with their decision	
Any other aspect of your programme	

**On what date were you informed about the decision against which you are appealing?**

How were you informed?

Who informed you?

What is your appeal?  
(please explain why you are unhappy with the decision)

**Section D - Declaration**

I confirm that the information given on this form and any supporting documentation is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Print Name	
Signature	
Date	

**Access to Fair Assessment Policy**

**Introduction**

[insert company name] is dedicated to offering access to assessment for all learners, free from discrimination of any kind, as detailed in our Equality and Diversity Policy. In some circumstances we understand that some learners may need to request reasonable adjustments for those with particular requirements or make special considerations in light of unforeseen circumstances.

Reasonable adjustments can be requested prior to assessment for learners with particular requirements.

Special consideration is given when unforeseen circumstances prevent the learner from attending or completing their assessment, such as temporary illness, bereavement or disruption to assessment.

In most cases, a request for reasonable adjustments can be handled by the management at [insert company name]. In the unlikely event we need assistance from Focus Awards, then we will seek assistance from them.

## **Reasonable Adjustments**

If reasonable adjustments are made [insert company name] will ensure that the adjustments must:

- Not affect the integrity of the qualification;
- Reflect the current needs of the individual learner;
- Not give the learner an unfair advantage over other learners;
- Ensure that assessment continues to be valid, reliable and comparable against stated assessment criteria.

## **Guidance for Learners**

The following reasonable adjustments are acceptable and can be permitted by [insert company name] (this list is not exhaustive – please contact us if you require more information).

Learners with visual impairments:

- Large print or Braille course material and assessment papers
- Coloured paper or overlays;
- Audio assessment;
- Extra time allocated for training and assessment.

Learners with a hearing impairment:

- Use of hearing aids/hearing induction loops;
- Interpreter/signer (it may be cost prohibitive for the customer to pay for an interpreter/signer, although the learner may have access to funding);
- Extra time allocated for training and assessment.

Learners with reading, writing or learning difficulties:

- Support assistance;
- Reader and/or scribe;
- Audio assessment;
- Extra time allocated for training and assessment.

Please note: Learners requesting reasonable adjustments must provide [insert company name] with evidence of their medical condition or learning needs.

## **Special Considerations**

Special consideration is given to events or circumstances, beyond the learner's control, that lead to a learner being unable to complete their course or attend/complete their assessment. Examples of events that attract special consideration would be:

- Temporary illness;
- Injury;
- Bereavement;
- Fire or similar emergency during the assessment;
- Building work/loud noise at the venue during an assessment;
- Failure of equipment during the assessment;
- Failure of [insert company name] to implement requested reasonable adjustments, or the reasonable adjustments put in place prove to be unworkable or incorrect.

In most circumstances relating to noise disturbance or evacuation of a building, alternative rooms or premises may be arranged and the assessment can continue with extra time allowed for the disruption.

If it is not possible for learner(s) to complete their course or attend/complete their assessment, new dates will be agreed with the learner(s) to do this. The special consideration arrangements should allow the learner(s) to demonstrate the achievement they are capable of for the unit(s) in question.

Regardless of the circumstances surrounding the arrangements for new training and/or assessment dates, the learner must meet the minimum requirements for the unit, qualification or award.

## **Recording Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations**

In all cases where a reasonable adjustment or special consideration has been made, [insert company name] will record this with the appropriate awarding body for which the qualification relates to.

This records the reason for the reasonable adjustment or special consideration, the details of the learner(s) and qualification affected and the action taken by [insert company name].

## **Internal Quality Assurers (IQA's)**

[insert company name] IQA's will monitor requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations as part of their verification sampling. In particular, they will be

required to check that the assessment met the required standards and that the learner(s) were not advantaged or disadvantaged by the adjustment or event.

## **Feedback and Monitoring**

All learners will be provided with a learner survey covering training and assessment. This will provide a route for learners to feedback directly to [insert company name] should they so choose. All information supplied will be monitored by [insert company name] and acted upon where necessary.

Accurate records of all reasonable adjustments and special considerations will be held by [insert company name] and made available to Focus Awards and/or the regulatory authorities on request.

## **Reasonable Adjustments**

If reasonable adjustments are implemented, [insert company name] will ensure that these adjustments must:

- Not compromise the integrity of the qualification.
- Align with the current needs of the individual learner.
- Not provide an unfair advantage over other learners.
- Ensure that assessment remains valid, reliable, and comparable against stated assessment criteria.

## **Guidance for Learners**

The following reasonable adjustments are acceptable and can be permitted by [insert company name]. This list is not exhaustive; learners are encouraged to contact us for more information.

### *Learners with visual impairments:*

- Large print or Braille course materials and assessment papers.
- Coloured paper or overlays.
- Audio assessment.
- Extra time allocated for training and assessment.

### *Learners with a hearing impairment:*

- Use of hearing aids/hearing induction loops.
- Interpreter/signer (subject to funding availability).
- Extra time allocated for training and assessment.

### *Learners with reading, writing, or learning difficulties:*

- Support assistance.
- Reader and/or scribe.
- Audio assessment.
- Extra time allocated for training and assessment.

Please note: Learners requesting reasonable adjustments must provide [insert company name] with evidence of their medical condition or learning needs.

## **Special Considerations**

Special consideration is given to events or circumstances beyond the learner's control that hinder course completion or assessment attendance. Examples include:

- Temporary illness.
- Injury.
- Bereavement.
- Emergency situations like fire during assessment.
- Disruption due to building work or loud noise.
- Equipment failure during assessment.
- Failure of [insert company name] to implement requested reasonable adjustments.

In cases of noise disturbance or building evacuation, alternative arrangements may be made, and assessment can continue with additional time allowed for disruption.

If learners cannot complete their course or attend/complete their assessment, new dates will be agreed upon, ensuring the learner(s) can demonstrate their capabilities for the unit(s) in question. Regardless of the circumstances, learners must meet minimum requirements for the unit, qualification, or award.

## **Recording Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations**

In all cases of reasonable adjustments or reasonable adjustments [insert company name] will record the details with the appropriate awarding body relevant to the qualification.

This record includes the reason for the reasonable adjustment or special consideration, learner details, affected qualification, and the actions taken by [insert company name].

## **Internal Quality Assurers (IQA's)**

[insert company name] IQA's will monitor requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations as part of their verification sampling. Their responsibilities include ensuring that assessments meet required standards and that learners are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by the adjustment or event.

## **Feedback and Monitoring**

All learners will receive a survey covering training and assessment, offering a direct feedback route to [insert company name]. Information gathered will be monitored and acted upon as necessary. [insert company name] maintains accurate records of all reasonable adjustments and special considerations, which are available to Focus Awards and/or regulatory authorities upon request.

This policy underscores [insert company name]'s commitment to fair assessment practices, promoting an inclusive learning environment and supporting learners in diverse circumstances. By adhering to this policy, [insert company name] aims to continuously enhance the quality and accessibility of its assessment procedures.

*End of Access to Fair Assessment Policy*

## **Data Protection Policy**

[insert company name] is required to keep certain information about its learners in order to allow it to record learner achievements, effectively manage customer correspondence, monitor the effectiveness of its qualifications and comply with awarding body guidelines. To comply with the law, information must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully.

To do this, [insert company name] must comply with the Data Protection Principles which are set out in the General Data Protection Act.

In summary [insert company name] will:

**[Detail how company continue to comply with GDPR]**

[insert company name] will adhere to the Act through the following measures:

- fully observing conditions regarding the fair collection and use of information;

- meeting its legal obligations to specify the purposes for which information is used;
- collecting and processing appropriate information only to the extent that it is needed to fulfil our operational needs or to comply with any legal requirements;
- ensuring the quality of information used;
- ensuring that the information is held for no longer than is necessary;
- ensuring that the rights of people about whom information is held can be fully exercised under the Act (i.e. the right to be informed that processing is being undertaken, to access one's personal information; to prevent processing in certain circumstances, and to correct, rectify, block or erase information that is regarded as wrong information);
- taking appropriate technical and organisational security measures to safeguard personal information;
- ensuring that personal information is not transferred abroad without suitable safeguards.

## **Data Security**

[insert company name] staff is responsible for ensuring that:

- any personal data that they hold is kept securely;
- personal information is not disclosed orally, in writing, via Web pages or by any other means, accidentally or otherwise, to any unauthorised third party.

## **Learner information**

Details of learners' personal details, registrations, assessment results and qualification or unit achievements are retained by [insert company name] for a minimum of 1 year and Focus Awards for a minimum of 6 years unless authorised by a learner, this information will not be shared with other parties other than [insert company name] and Focus Awards.

Learners wishing to access personal details in relation to Focus Awards qualifications will be subject to an identity check before any information is disclosed.

In accordance with Condition D4.2 of the Ofqual Conditions of Recognition Focus Awards is not obliged to disclose information, if to do so would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

## **Security Procedures**

[Insert Centre security Procedures here]

## **Malpractice / Maladministration Policy**

### **Introduction**

[insert company name] will investigate instances of alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration and will take appropriate action where required to maintain the integrity of units and qualifications.

Malpractice is defined as any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process, and/or the validity of certificates.

Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of units and qualifications.

Should an alleged malpractice/maladministration arise on the part of the learners, centre staff, or others involved in providing a Focus Awards qualification, [insert company name] will:

1. Report immediately to Focus Awards, any suspected case of malpractice/maladministration arising after learners have been registered.
2. Investigate the facts relating to allegation/complaints in order to determine whether any irregularities have occurred
3. Investigate and record full details of the nature of the suspected malpractice/maladministration issue, including personnel involved and any action taken.

Conclusions will be based on established evidence. A course of proposed actions will be identified, agreed, implemented and monitored in association with Focus Awards. All relevant evidence will be considered without bias.

**Examples of learner misconduct could include:**

- Non-compliance in observing the mandatory rules of conduct during an assessment
- Replication of another learner's work in either the practical, theoretical or portfolio aspect of assessment.

**Misconduct procedure (learners)**

Where an issue of misconduct occurs and is discovered or reported the following action will be taken:

- The Tutor/assessor is empowered to expel a learner from the assessment room
- The expelled learner's assessment paperwork will be securely retained, and a report filed to the [insert role]
- The report and assessment record will be available for submission to Focus Awards and the regulatory authority (Ofqual) upon request.

**Examples of centre malpractice/maladministration could include:**

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

- Denial of access to premises, records, information, learners and staff to any authorised Focus Awards representative and/or the regulatory authorities
- Failure to carry out internal assessment, internal moderation or internal verification in accordance with Focus Awards requirements
- Deliberate failure to adhere to Focus Awards learner registration and certification procedures.
- Deliberate failure to continually adhere to Focus Awards centre recognition and/or qualification approval requirements or actions assigned to [insert company name]
- Deliberate failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence
- Fraudulent claim(s) for certificates
- Intentional withholding of information from us which is critical to maintaining the rigour of quality assurance and standards of qualifications
- Deliberate misuse of Focus Awards logo and trademarks or misrepresentation of [insert company name] relationship with Focus Awards and/or its recognition and approval status with Focus Awards
- Collusion or permitting collusion in exams/assessments
- Learners still working towards qualification after certification claims have been made
- Persistent instances of maladministration within the centre

- Deliberate contravention by [insert company name] and/or its learners of the assessment arrangements specified by Focus Awards for their qualifications
- A loss, theft of, or a breach of confidentiality in, any assessment materials
- Plagiarism by learners/staff
- Copying from another learner (including using ICT to do so).
- Personation - assuming the identity of another learner or having someone assume your identity during an assessment.
- Unauthorised amendment, copying or distributing of exam/assessment papers/materials
- Inappropriate assistance to learners by centre staff (e.g. unfairly helping them to pass a unit or qualification)
- Deliberate submission of false information to gain a qualification or unit
- Deliberate failure to adhere to, or to circumnavigate, the requirements of Focus Awards Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.

### **Malpractice sanctions**

Following an investigation, if a case of malpractice is upheld, [insert company name] may impose sanctions or other penalties on the individual(s) concerned. Where relevant we will report the matter to Focus Awards, and Focus Awards may impose one or more sanctions upon the individual(s) concerned. Any sanctions imposed will reflect the seriousness of the malpractice that has occurred.

Listed below are examples of sanctions that may be applied to a learner, or to a member of staff who has had a case of malpractice upheld against them. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and other sanctions may be applied on a case-by-case basis.

#### **Possible [insert company name] sanctions that may be applied to learners:**

- A written warning about future conduct.
- Notification to an employer, regulator or the police.
- Removal from the course.

#### **Possible sanctions that may be applied to staff members of [insert company name]:**

- A written warning about future conduct.
- Imposition of special conditions for the future involvement of the individual(s) in the conduct, teaching, supervision or administration of learners and/or assessment.
- Informing any other organisation known to employ the individual in relation to Focus Awards qualifications of the outcome of the case.
- [insert company name] may carry out unannounced monitoring of the working practices of the individual(s) concerned.
- Dismissal.

### **Reporting a suspected case of malpractice**

This process applies to centre staff and to any reporting of malpractice by a third

party or individual who wishes to remain anonymous.

1. Any case of suspected malpractice should be reported in the first instance to the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) of [insert company name].
2. A written report should then be sent to the IQA, clearly identifying the factual information, including statements from other individuals involved and / or affected, any evidence obtained, and the actions that have been taken in relation to the incident.
3. Suspected malpractice must be reported as soon as possible to the IQA, and at the latest within two working days from its discovery. Where the suspected malpractice has taken place in an examination or assessment, the incident must be reported urgently, and the appropriate steps taken as specified by Focus Awards.
4. Wherever possible, and provided other learners are not disrupted by doing so, a learner suspected of malpractice should be warned immediately that their actions may constitute malpractice, and that a report will be made to the centre.
5. In cases of suspected malpractice by centre staff and any reporting of malpractice by a third party or individual who wishes to remain anonymous, the report made to the IQA and should include as much information as possible, including the following:
  - a) the date time and place the alleged malpractice took place, if known.
  - b) the name of the centre staff or other person(s) involved
  - c) a description of the suspected malpractice; and
  - d) any available supporting evidence.
6. In cases of suspected malpractice reported by a third party, or an individual who wishes to remain anonymous, [insert company name] will take all reasonable steps to authenticate the reported information and to investigate the alleged malpractice.

### **Administering suspected cases of malpractice**

[insert company name] will investigate each case of suspected or reported malpractice relating to Focus Awards qualifications, to ascertain whether malpractice has occurred. The investigation will aim to establish the full facts and circumstances. We will promptly take all reasonable steps to prevent any adverse effect that may arise as a result of the malpractice, or to mitigate any adverse effect, as far as possible, and to correct it to make sure that any action necessary to maintain the integrity of Focus Awards qualifications and reputation is taken.

[insert company name] will acknowledge all reports of suspected malpractice within [insert timescale] working days. All the parties involved in the case will then be contacted within [insert timescale] working days of receipt of the report detailing the suspected malpractice. We may also contact other individuals who may be able to provide evidence relevant to the case.

The individual(s) concerned will be informed of the following:

- a) that an investigation is going to take place, and the grounds for that investigation;
- b) details of all the relevant timescales, and dates, where known;

- c) that they have a right to respond by providing a personal written response relating to the suspected malpractice (within 15 working days of the date of that letter);
- d) that, if malpractice is considered proven, sanctions may be imposed either by [insert company name] or by Focus Awards, reflecting the seriousness of the case;
- e) that, if they are found guilty, they have the right to appeal.
- f) that [insert company name] has a duty to inform Focus Awards and other relevant authorities / regulators, but only after time for the appeal has passed or the appeal process has been completed. This may also include informing the police if the law has been broken and to comply with any other appropriate legislation.

Where more than one individual is contacted regarding a case of suspected malpractice, for example in a case involving suspected collusion, we will contact each individual separately, and will not reveal personal data to any third party unless necessary for the purpose of the investigation.

The individual has a right to appeal against a malpractice outcome if they believe that the policy or procedure has not been followed properly or has been implemented to their detriment.

Records of all malpractice cases and their outcomes are maintained by [insert company name] for a period of at least 3 years.

## **Quality Improvement Policy**

### **Introduction**

- a. [insert company name] aims to offer high quality education and training to its learners
- b. [insert company name] will aim for continuous improvement in the quality of all aspects of its work as part of its determination to be responsive to the needs of its client groups and to help learners achieve the highest possible standards.
- c. The purpose of this policy is to enable continuous improvement through a process of self-evaluation and action planning.

### **Scope of Policy**

- a. This policy and associated procedures will involve all employees and collaborative partners. The management of the process will be through the existing organisational structure.
- b. It will be founded on a process of regular self-evaluation by teams and individual employees who are responsible for delivering courses and other services.
- c. It will seek the views and perceptions of learners and other stakeholders for whom the services of the Centre exist.
- d. It will support the processes of peer review both internally and with external partners in the sector including Awarding Organisations

### **Responsibility for implementation**

- a. All employees (managers, teachers, tutors, support staff, trainers, and assessors) are responsible for the implementation of this policy.
- b. It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure annual review of the policy. It is the responsibility of all to engage positively in that review and ensure implementation.

## **Policy Statements**

### **A. Teaching and Learning**

- I. To encourage continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning programmes and through this increasing learner achievement and satisfaction statistics.
- II. To develop and sustain a range of programmes which provide opportunities for progression, and which provide learners with experiences and, wherever appropriate, qualifications suited to their learning aims.
- III. To ensure rigorous and consistent assessment procedures, which meet the standards of external awarding organisations.

### **B. Support Services**

- I. To monitor and evaluate the procedure for advising, interviewing, supporting and counselling learners at entry and throughout their learning at the Centre
- II. To establish standards and monitor procedures for providing a supportive and accessible range of resources and services to learners.

### **C. Staff**

- I. To continually improve the quality of service offered by all staff
- II. To review regularly the performance, training and developmental needs of all employees through the operation of the Centre scheme for employee review and appraisal.
- III. Through the Centre to train, support and develop individuals upon appointment and throughout their employment.
- IV. To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of such training and development against the Centre's objectives.

### **D. Methodology**

- a. The process of quality control and quality improvement requires staff to meet and report on a regular basis by reviewing their work, set standards and monitor user learner perceptions and achievements.
- b. Statistical analysis will be carried out against agreed criteria which will incorporate performance indicators.
- c. Review will be supported by analysis of learner and external stakeholder views and perception gathered via questionnaires, surveys and other methods at review meetings.
- d. The outcome of these processes will provide information:

- I. To inform the process of self-assessment
- II. To set targets and action plans for improvement across the Centre
- III. To highlight issues that need consideration by the Centre
- IV. That supports the Centre's activity to achieve the agreed targets of external agencies

  

- e. Feedback on actions resulting from the review process will be communicated to Centre's employees through meetings.
- f. The outcomes and action plans which result from the process will form the basis of the annual Centre's Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan.
- g. The Head of Centre will be aware of the procedures undertaken, including key performance indicators and targets, and will receive regular reports which summarise the results and indicate action plans for improvement. Resources required to meet quality improvement targets will be considered as part of the planning cycle.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning Policy**

### **1. Definition**

A method of assessment (leading to the award of credit) that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

### **2. Introduction**

[insert company name] seeks to enable learners to avoid the duplication of learning and assessment. There are two ways in which this will be achieved.

- The opportunity to transfer credits, i.e. to recognise previously accredited achievement from within or outside the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) to count towards other qualifications.
- For individuals with learning or achievements that have not been certificated / accredited it may be possible to assess and validate these through a RPL process. These achievements may then count towards a qualification.

### **3. Policy**

[insert company name] policy is that each learner must produce valid and reliable evidence of learning to support any claims based on experience. A learner may claim RPL against a whole unit or several units. It is not possible to award part units, but where the RPL evidence does not fully meet the needs of a complete unit, the missing information may be provided via the same assessment processes as other learners.

[insert company name] will have, prior to sampling or claiming for certification, sought approval and agreement by Focus Awards for the RPL claim. Evidence of the RPL will be uploaded to Qualitas as part of the sampling or claim process.

In order to achieve recognition of achievement there are two options open to the learner:

- Undertake the same assessments that lead to the relevant unit or qualification. These assessments may be undertaken without further learning.
- Submit a portfolio of evidence based on previous learning, skills and / or competence cross referenced to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the unit or units for which RPL is being sought.

Learners wishing to claim this method of accreditation must agree the procedure with either the Head of Centre or the Internal Quality Assurer.

The learner must play an active role in the process and must produce evidence and map it to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of all units they wish to claim. The individual wishing to make the claim may also require the support of their employer or others in order to be able to confirm achievement of assessment criteria for which there is no tangible evidence, e.g. practical tasks.

## **Principles of RPL**

### **Principle 1**

RPL is a valid method of enabling individuals to claim credit for units, irrespective of how their learning took place. There is no difference between the achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit through prior learning or through a formal programme of study.

### **Principle 2**

RPL policies, processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible to individuals and stakeholders to ensure that users can be confident of the decisions and outcomes of RPL.

### **Principle 3**

RPL is learner-centred, voluntary process. The individual should be offered advice on the nature and range of evidence considered appropriate, to support a claim for credit through RPL, and be given guidance and support to make a claim.

### **Principle 4**

The process of assessment for RPL is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment. The award of credit through RPL will not be distinguished from any other credits awarded.

### **Principle 5**

Assessment methods of RPL must be of equal rigour to the assessment methods, be fit for purpose and relate to the evidence of learning. Credit may be claimed for any unit through RPL unless the assessment requirements of the unit do not allow this, based on a rationale consistent with the aims and regulations of the framework.

RPL is also of value to learners transferring across various learning programmes that have relevant learning but do not have relevant credits or certificates. This may include learners transferring from NQF to QCF specifications. [insert company name] advocates the five stage procedure for RPL as set above. The result of the assessment will be logged on the learners Records and all records of RPL claims for credit will be kept for three years by the Centre.

## **Complaints Policy**

### **Our Responsibilities**

[insert company name] is committed to providing high-quality services for our learners, clients, and the community. We aim to handle legitimate complaints in a fair, prompt, and objective manner. Complaints will be addressed without recrimination, ensuring learners are not disadvantaged for raising concerns. Fair treatment will be afforded to all complainants, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, or disability. The Head of Centre will manage the Complaints Policy, and learners will be informed of their identity.

### **Scope of Complaints Procedure**

This procedure addresses complaints arising from:

- Delivery (or lack of delivery) of educational and training services, including teaching, course content, tutoring, assessment, feedback, and learner support.
- Incorrect or misleading information about services provided by the Centre.
- Delivery (or lack of delivery) of support services, including administration of fees, enrolment processes, Centre accommodation, health and safety, and learner resource services.
- Unacceptable actions or behaviour by Centre staff and/or other learners.

### **How to Complain**

Complaints must be made in writing to the [insert role]. Support is available for all parties involved, including representation by a parent, guardian, friend, or supporter, as well as assistance with completing the written complaint. Further details about this process will be provided during induction.

## **Informal Resolution of Complaints**

Most complaints should be resolvable through discussion between the complainant and the appropriate staff member. The initial complaint can be made orally or in writing, with the staff member responding within [insert timescale] working days. Staff are expected to handle complaints tactfully and courteously. If dissatisfied with the response, the complainant can proceed to the formal procedure.

## **Formal Procedure**

A formal complaint should be made in writing within [insert timescale] working days of the incident or action or from the date when the complainant received a response to an informal complaint. In exceptional circumstances, a longer period will be considered. The complaint should be sent to the [insert role], and its receipt acknowledged within [insert timescale] working days.

The [insert role] will conduct an investigation, interviewing relevant parties, and record the outcome. The outcome will be communicated within [insert timescale] working days of the complaint, either through a meeting or in writing to all involved.

If the complaint involves a learner, they will be offered support at the meeting, and all learners are encouraged to bring a supporter. Vulnerable Adults and those under 16 must have the support of their care worker or an advocate, with the [insert role] informed. If the complaint involves the [insert role], the Internal Quality Assurer will be appointed to manage the process.

The formal complaint should be resolved within [insert timescale] working days. If a decision cannot be reached within this period, those involved will be notified of the extension.

The decision made will be final, but this does not affect an individual's legal rights.

## **Review of the Complaints Policy and Practice**

Annually, the [insert role] will review the Complaints Policy and Practice, including:

- Number of complaints of each type
- Time taken to process complaints
- List of outstanding complaints
- Outcomes of complaints
- Results of appeals
- Analysis of complaints and outcomes by age, gender, and ethnicity of complainant.

If changes are required, the Complaints Policy will be rewritten, and all staff and learners will be informed. A record of all complaints for three years will be available for audit purposes.

# **Whistleblowing Policy**

## **Introduction**

[insert company name] is dedicated to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, accountability, and ethical conduct in all aspects of our operations. We recognise the importance of providing a safe and confidential mechanism for employees, learners, and other stakeholders to raise concerns about potential wrongdoing within the organisation. This Whistleblowing Policy outlines the procedures for reporting and addressing such concerns.

## **Objective**

The primary objective of this policy is to encourage individuals to report any suspected wrongdoing, malpractice, or unethical behaviour within [insert company name] promptly and without fear of reprisal.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, learners, contractors, suppliers, and any other individuals associated with [insert company name].

## **Regulatory Reporting to Focus Awards**

If an individual has reasonable grounds to believe that there is wrongdoing within [insert company name], they should report their concerns as follows:

### **1. Internal Reporting:**

Concerns should, in the first instance, be reported internally. Individuals can contact [insert role or designated person] directly, who will ensure that the matter is appropriately addressed. The individual can choose to remain anonymous if they wish. An investigation will be instigated by [name of role]

unless they are identified as part of the whistleblowing complaint, in such cases some else who is independent from the issue must investigate.

## **2. External Reporting (Focus Awards):**

If, for any reason, the individual is uncomfortable reporting internally or believes their concerns have not been adequately addressed, they have the right to report the matter externally to Focus Awards, the designated regulatory body for [insert company name]. The contact details for Focus Awards are [insert contact information].

### **Protection for Whistleblowers**

[insert company name] is committed to protecting whistleblowers from any form of retaliation. Whistleblowers who make reports in good faith will not face any disciplinary or detrimental action. Any form of victimisation, harassment, or retaliation against a whistleblower will be treated as a serious violation of this policy and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract.

### **Confidentiality**

All reports will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis, and every effort will be made to protect the identity of the whistleblower. However, in certain circumstances, it may be necessary to disclose information to Focus Awards or other authorities to conduct a thorough investigation or comply with legal requirements, safeguarding or health and safety legislation.

### **Investigation**

All reports will be thoroughly investigated. The [insert role or designated person] will lead the investigation, and findings will be reported internally and to Focus Awards. The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome, where possible, without compromising the investigation or the rights of others.

### **Review of the Whistleblowing Policy**

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed regularly by [insert role]. Any necessary revisions or updates will be made to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

### **Availability of the Policy**

This Whistleblowing Policy will be made available to all employees, learners, and relevant stakeholders. Training on the policy will be provided to ensure awareness and understanding of the reporting procedures.

### **Contact Information**

For internal reporting, please contact [insert role or designated person]. For external reporting to Focus Awards, individuals may use the following contact information:

Focus Awards [Insert Address] [Insert Contact Information]

[insert company name] encourages a culture of openness, accountability, and ethical conduct. This policy reflects our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and addressing any concerns promptly and effectively.

## **Internal Quality Assurance Policy**

### **SCOPE**

This policy is applicable to all [insert centre name] staff engaged in delivering programmes subject to internal and external quality assurance.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the consistent adherence to national standards across all programmes, guaranteeing that candidates have equitable access to fair and reliable assessment of a uniform quality. This objective will be accomplished through the implementation of a robust internal quality assurance system outlined as follows:

#### **1. Appointment of Internal Quality Assurer (IQA):**

Each course will designate at least one IQA responsible for upholding the quality of assessment within that programme. Course IQA's may be supported by a Lead Internal Quality Assurance for each curriculum area.

#### **2. Role of Designated IQA Staff:**

All designated IQA staff members will fulfil the roles and responsibilities outlined in the organisation's Internal Quality Assurance policy and procedure.

#### **3. Head of Centre Responsibilities:**

The Head of Centre will assume specific responsibilities for inducting, supporting, developing, and monitoring the performance of all the organisation's IQA's.

#### **4. Development of Internal Quality Assurance Strategy:**

Each programme will formulate a written internal quality assurance strategy aligning with the criteria and requirements specified in [insert company name] Internal Quality Assurance procedures and that of Focus Awards.

## **5. Ongoing Internal Quality Assurance:**

Internal quality assurance activities will be continuous throughout the course, incorporating formative, interim, and summative sampling of assessments. This ongoing assessment will be outlined in the internal quality assurance strategy for each programme.

## **6. Record-Keeping:**

Records of all internal quality assurance activities will be maintained in the qualification IQA file, including detailed feedback, which is supportive, developmental and fair, to assessors. Sampling of assessment decisions, and observation of assessment practices. Focus Awards or [insert company name] organisation documents for recording internal quality assurance outcomes will be stored within the organisation's quality assurance file.

## **7. Qualifications of IQAs:**

IQAs for all programmes must possess a relevant IQA qualification. Staff members working towards their IQA qualifications will have their work countersigned by a qualified IQA member of staff.

## **8. Induction and Staff Development:**

Induction and ongoing staff development activities will be provided to support both new and existing internal quality assurance staff.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The [insert role] is responsible for ensuring that;

- The quality requirements of Focus Awards and partners are met in the delivery and assessment of qualifications.
- IQA policies and procedures are sufficient, regularly reviewed and understood and implemented by all staff.
- All employees involved in the processes of delivery of educational services are appropriately trained and qualified through provision of rigorous recruitment processes, induction training and continual development.
- All employees involved in IQA processes are appropriately trained and qualified through provision of rigorous recruitment processes, induction training and continual development.

## **MONITORING**

The [insert role], is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness and adherence to this policy. Regular reviews and assessments will be conducted to ensure the continued relevance and efficacy of the Internal Quality Assurance Policy.

## Internal Quality Assurance Responsibilities

Internal Quality Assurers will be responsible for ensuring that all Internal Quality Assurance staff within the curriculum area are working to national standards within the Organisations framework and implementing the Organisations Internal Quality Assurance policy Specific responsibilities for IQAs are to ensure that:

### 1. It is the responsibility of the IQA to ensure:

- All Focus Award communication is disseminated to the delivery team and managers.
- All external quality assurance visits, confirmation sampling, quality review and development activities are organised, reviewed and sanctioned by the [insert role].
- Each IQA oversees effective internal quality assurance systems within each principal curriculum area.
- All assessment staff are trained in the requirements for current internal quality assurance procedures, this will be evidence through minutes of meetings and standardisation events.
- Before starting the delivery and assessment, the IQA should check schemes of work, assessment methods and pre-requisites for the course.
- Internal verification is promoted as a supportive and developmental process between staff.
- Standardised internal verification documentation is provided and used across all qualifications.
- An internal verification strategy produced to reflect the assessor experience and feedback for EQA reports and sampling.
- Records of all internal verification activity are maintained for three years the outcome of internal verification is used to enhance future assessment practice and all assessments are subject to internal verification sampling.
- Each verified sample will be appropriately structured to include assessor work from all units/programmes, processes, assessment methods, sites and teams.
- All the appropriate assignment briefs/tasks or assessment tools used in every unit are internally verified.
- An appropriate sample of assessment decisions made for every unit are internally verified.
- A sample of assessment decisions from every assessor is internally verified.
- A sample of assessment decisions from every site is internally verified.

### 2. Policy Implementation – Procedures

- The IQA policy must be applied to every qualification which includes work that is internally assessed and which contributes to the final assessment outcome of a learner.
- Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers will be given sufficient time, resources and authority to perform their roles and responsibilities

effectively. Dependant on the range of qualifications being delivered, the needs of the individual learners and fluctuating business needs assessors working full time can expect a maximum of 50 learners allocated to them, with their part time colleagues working a pro-rata of this average.

### **Qualifications**

Only appropriately qualified and experienced IQA's are able to undertake IQA duties for [insert company name] must possess a minimum one of the following qualification alongside their subject-specific knowledge:

- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment – for assessing occupational competence in the workplace
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement – for assessing vocational skills and knowledge outside the workplace, for example in classrooms or workshops
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement – for assessing both occupational competence in the workplace, and skills, knowledge and understanding outside the workplace.
- A1/A2

Where trainee internal quality assurers undertake IQA, this must be verified by a qualified IQA and countersigned.

### **3. Sampling**

All IQAs must follow the sampling plan they have developed, although a sampling plan is a working document and must be updated as required.

Sampling must be across all assessors, sites and units.

Frequency of assessment will be decided following a risk assessment of the assessor (identified in the IQA strategy), taking in to account the experience and competence, but to meet the requirements of Focus Awards.

### **Sample Size**

Assessment staff should be RAG rated and the following percentages applied.

High Risk-(Red) 100% sample

Medium Risk (Amber) 50% sample

Low Risk (Green) 25% sample

## **Registration and Certification policy**

### **[Insert Company Name] Registration and Certification Policy**

#### **1. Aims and Objectives of the Policy**

- [Insert Company Name] is committed to ensuring that standards of registration and certification are consistent, transparent, and in line with the requirements of Focus Awards.
- To ensure all learner registrations and certification claims are accurate and undertaken in a timely manner.

#### **2. Range and Scope of the Policy**

- This policy covers all courses offered by [Insert Company Name].

#### **3. Registering Learners with Awarding Body**

- All learners undertaking qualifications with [Insert Company Name] must be registered with Focus Awards. Ideally, this occurs upon course registration; however, learners must be registered on the relevant qualification and/or unit(s) no later than 25% through the course duration. Late registrations will be subject to a late registration fee by Focus Awards.

### **Registration Process:**

#### **a) Class List Forwarding:**

- Course tutors/assessors must forward confirmed student class lists to the Quality Assurer.
- The class list must include:
  - Full title of the qualification to be studied.
  - Full name of student(s) to be registered. Student identification, including an in-date passport or driving licence, must be checked to confirm the full name of the student. The ID must include a photo. Any name changes due to marriage or deed poll should be accompanied by a marriage certificate or deed poll documentation. ID is to be checked and scanned into the student's online folder.

#### **b) Learner Registration:**

- [Name of Role] is responsible for registering the learners on the Focus Awards Qualitas system.

#### **c) Confirmation and Notification:**

- [Name of Role] must obtain confirmation of registration from Focus Awards.

- Once registration is confirmed, class lists, including the names of the students and the courses they are registered for, should be returned to the Course Tutors/Assessors.

#### **4. Certification Claims**

- Certification claims for learners who have completed their qualifications will be processed promptly.
- [Insert Company Name] ensures that certification claims are accurate and reflect the learner's true achievement.
- All certification claims will be processed in accordance with Focus Awards guidelines and timelines.

#### **5. Record Keeping and Data Protection**

- Accurate records of learner registrations and certifications will be maintained.
- All learner information will be handled in compliance with data protection laws and [Insert Company Name]'s privacy policy.

#### **6. Compliance and Monitoring**

- [Insert Company Name] will regularly review and monitor compliance with this policy to ensure adherence to Focus Awards' requirements.
- Regular audits of the registration and certification processes will be conducted to maintain high standards of accuracy and integrity.

#### **7. Policy Review**

- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains current and effective in meeting the standards set by Focus Awards and the needs of our learners.

By adhering to this policy, [Insert Company Name] ensures that the registration and certification of learners are conducted with the highest level of professionalism and integrity, maintaining the credibility and value of the qualifications offered.

## **Safeguarding policy**

### **1. Safeguarding Statement**

[Name of Company] is committed to safeguarding all children, young people and vulnerable adults that we engage with. [Name of Company] believe that all children, young people, and vulnerable adults have an equal right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, race, religion, ability, gender, language, background, or sexual identity and consider the welfare of the child/ young person / vulnerable adult is paramount.

[Insert name of Company] will take every reasonable step to ensure that children, young people, and vulnerable adults are protected where our staff and associates are involved in the delivery of our work. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

[Insert name of Company] enable all our staff and those who work with us to make confident decisions regarding safeguarding. We expect everyone (staff, board, associates, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of the Company) to have read, understood and adhere to this policy and related procedures.

### **2. Aims of the Safeguarding policy**

The Company will take every reasonable step to ensure that children, young people, and vulnerable adults are protected where:

- Our own staff are directly involved in a engagement in any way with children or vulnerable adults.
- We contract an associate/organisation to work within a school/ young people / community setting.
- We work in partnership with another organisation or agency.

We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults by:

- Valuing them, listening to, and respecting them.
- Adopting this policy and adhering to our associated procedures and code of conduct for staff.
- Recruiting all staff, volunteers and associates safely by ensuring that all the necessary checks are made prior to employment.
- Sharing information about safeguarding and child protection with children, parents, staff, community workers, associates, and staff.
- Sharing concerns regarding children and vulnerable adults with agencies who need to know including school staff, community workers, [insert name of Company] staff and parents as required.
- Providing effective management and training of staff and associates through supervision, support, and regular safeguarding CPD.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The designated safeguarding person within [Insert company name] responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection is the [Insert name]. In the absence of [insert name] then [insert name or role] will undertake the role.

The role of the Designated Person is to:

- Assume overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection for [Insert company name]
- Help the rest of [Insert company name] understand the key issues in relation to safeguarding and the cultural / education sectors.
- Establish contact with the senior member of social services responsible for child protection and safeguarding in the local area.
- Be a point of contact within the organisation for staff, board, partners, and associates in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- Be aware of local statutory safeguarding procedures and networks.
- Make decisions about safeguarding and child protection on behalf of [Insert company name].
- Receive and assess information from staff and associates who have a child protection concern. Report the issue to the Safeguarding Officer/ within the school/ organisation where the events were taking place.
- Make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay.
- Record the concern and action in the child protection log.

It is not the role of the Designated Person or [Insert company name] to decide whether abuse has taken place or not. The responsibility of the Designated Person or [Insert company name] is to ensure that concerns are shared, and appropriate action taken.

### **Safeguarding Concern Reporting Process for [Insert Company Name]**

1. **Identify Concern:** If you are a learner, staff member, or visitor at [Insert Company Name] and you observe or suspect any safeguarding issues (such as abuse, neglect, or any other harm), it is essential to recognise this as a safeguarding concern. This could include, but is not limited to, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, bullying, discriminatory behaviour, or signs of radicalisation.
2. **Immediate Response:** If the situation is an emergency or if someone is in immediate danger, contact the emergency services by dialling 999. Do not delay.
3. **Report to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** For non-emergency concerns, report the matter as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at [Insert Company Name]. The DSL is specifically trained to handle such concerns. If you are unsure who the DSL is, ask a member of the staff or consult the company's safeguarding policy.
4. **Provide Detailed Information:** When reporting the concern, be as detailed and factual as possible. Include information such as the nature of the concern, who is involved, dates, times, and any other relevant details. It's important to report the facts as you know them and avoid speculation or assumptions.

5. **Confidentiality and Support:** Safeguarding concerns are sensitive. Maintain confidentiality and only discuss the concern with the DSL or those directly involved in managing the case. If you're affected by the situation, seek support from the DSL or an appropriate support service offered by [Insert Company Name].
6. **Record Keeping:** The DSL will record the concern in line with [Insert Company Name]'s policies and procedures. Accurate record-keeping is crucial for the effective handling of the concern and for any potential investigations.
7. **Action and Follow-up:** The DSL will assess the concern and take appropriate action. This may involve internal procedures or referral to external agencies such as local authority safeguarding teams, social services, or the police. The DSL should keep you informed about the progress of your concern, respecting confidentiality and data protection laws.
8. **Review and Reflect:** After the concern is addressed, [Insert Company Name] should review the case to ensure that the appropriate action was taken and to identify any lessons learned. This is an important step to continuously improve safeguarding practices.

Remember, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you see something, say something. Your report can make a difference in protecting someone from harm.

# **[Insert Company Name] Plagiarism Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

At [Insert Company Name], we are committed to academic integrity and excellence. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and a form of malpractice that undermines the educational process and the validity of qualifications. This policy sets out our approach to preventing, detecting, and addressing plagiarism.

## **2. Definition of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work, ideas, words, or intellectual property as your own without proper acknowledgment of the original source. This includes, but is not limited to, copying from textbooks, journals, internet sources including AI, or other students' work. Paraphrasing someone else's work without proper citation is also considered plagiarism.

## **3. Definition of Malpractice**

Malpractice, in the context of this policy, refers to any deliberate action, neglect, default, or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process, and/or the validity of certificates and qualifications. Plagiarism falls under the category of malpractice as it involves deceit and a breach of the expected standards of behaviour.

## **4. Responsibilities of Learners**

Learners at [Insert Company Name] are expected to:

- Submit work that is entirely their own.
- Submit a learner declaration with their work to support the authenticity of the work
- Properly acknowledge and reference all sources of information.
- Understand and adhere to the guidelines for referencing and citations as provided by [Insert Company Name].
- Be aware that all submitted work may be subject to checks for originality and authenticity.

## **5. Detection and Monitoring**

[Insert Company Name] uses a range of methods to detect and monitor plagiarism, which may include:

- The use of plagiarism detection software.
- Staff vigilance during the marking process.
- The IQA process
- Submission of sampling to Focus Awards for scrutiny.

## **6. Procedure for Handling Suspected Plagiarism**

In cases of suspected plagiarism:

- The learner will be informed of the suspicion and will have the opportunity to respond.
- The case will be investigated thoroughly, following a fair and transparent process.
- Evidence will be reviewed by an appointed panel or individual within [Insert Company Name].
- [Insert Company Name] will ensure all conflicts of interest are considered when investigating plagiarism.

## **7. Sanctions for Plagiarism**

If plagiarism is confirmed, sanctions will be applied in accordance with the [Insert Company Name] Sanctions Policy. These sanctions may include:

- A formal warning.
- The requirement to resubmit the piece of work.
- Reduction in marks or grading.
- Withdrawal from the module or course.
- Reporting the incident to awarding bodies, which may affect the learner's current and future studies.

## **8. Appeals**

Learners have the right to appeal against a decision made under this policy. Appeals must be made in writing, stating the grounds for appeal, and must be submitted within a specified timeframe after the decision has been communicated to the learner.

## **9. Education and Support**

[Insert Company Name] is committed to educating learners about plagiarism and how to avoid it. We provide:

- Training and resources on academic writing, referencing, and citation.
- Access to support services for any learner needing assistance with academic skills.

## **10. Review of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains up-to-date, effective, and in line with any changes in regulations or best practices.

By enrolling in a course at [Insert Company Name], learners agree to abide by this Plagiarism Policy. Upholding academic integrity is essential to the reputation and standards of both our learners and [Insert Company Name].

## **[Insert Company Name] Learner Induction Policy**

[Insert Company Name] is committed to providing learners with an enriching and fulfilling educational experience, helping you achieve your goals and aspirations. We value the induction process as a critical step in setting the stage for your success with us.

### **Expectations from [Insert Company Name]:**

#### **1. Information Provided Prior to Enrolment**

You can expect [Insert Company Name] to provide information on:

- All [Insert Company Name] programmes and services.
- Entry requirements and final qualifications.
- Fees and any other charges associated with your programme.
- Discuss any additional needs or support required.

#### **2. Induction on Enrolment/First Day of Learning**

You can expect [Insert Company Name] to (add or delete information as appropriate):

- Provide a copy of, and ensure an understanding of, vital centre policies and procedures, including the appeals process, complaints procedure, malpractice and maladministration policy, and plagiarism policy. These are all contained in the Learner Handbook.
- Confirm the unique identity of learners through the collection of photo identification.
- Detail assessment arrangements for your entire course.
- Issue and introduce course resources.
- Provide information on opportunities to discuss your programme and one-to-one support.
- Provide details of how assignments/assessments will be marked and the type of feedback you will receive.
- Give information about what is expected for each unit, the marking criteria, and the extent of formal supervision.
- Discuss learning styles and preferred methods of learning.
- Introduction to your teaching and assessment team

[Insert Company Name] undertakes to provide high-quality academic support and learning resources. However, your success also depends critically on your efforts and engagement.

### **What [Insert Company Name] Expects from You at Induction:**

- Provide correct, truthful, and honest information to the best of your knowledge.

- Participate fully in the induction process.
- Inform [Insert Company Name] if you change your personal details.

#### **Additional Information Provided During Induction:**

- Information about the awarding organisation.
- A clear understanding of how to access and utilise all available resources and support services.

[Insert Company Name] is dedicated to ensuring that every learner receives comprehensive guidance and support right from the start of their educational journey. Your contribution and commitment to engaging with our induction process are crucial for a productive and successful learning experience.

Thank you for choosing [Insert Company Name], and we look forward to supporting you throughout your studies.

[Insert Company Name] recognises the importance of providing a comprehensive and timely induction programme for all new employees. This policy, along with its associated procedures and processes, demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that all staff members, including volunteers and agency staff when applicable, are effectively supported throughout their induction.

## **Scope and Purpose**

The Staff Induction Policy is designed to:

- Provide a flexible but systematic framework in which roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- Familiarise staff with the values, objectives, and culture of [Insert Company Name].
- Facilitate the smooth and swift integration of new staff into the team.
- Create a safe and motivating environment for new staff to be efficient and productive.

In line with these objectives, [Insert Company Name] is committed to:

- Issuing comprehensive guidelines to facilitate the induction process for managers and staff.
- Providing a detailed checklist for managers and staff to utilise during the induction period.
- Promptly addressing any problems that arise, providing support for both employees and managers.
- Regularly reviewing all policies and procedures to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

## **Induction Programme Structure**

All staff will undergo a **two-week** induction programme covering roles, responsibilities, and basic duties, followed by some training on [Insert required training e.g safeguarding, computer systems]

Induction forms part of the ongoing management process, encompassing performance management, training activities, and one-on-one sessions. If the employee is an assessor it is likely that they will be RAG rated at a minimum or amber during their first cohort of learners.

The Employee Handbook, which will be emailed to all new staff on their first day, serves as the foundational guide for all employees.

## **Management of Induction**

The responsibility for managing the induction process lies with the line manager of the new employee, **in liaison with Human Resources (HR)**. They are tasked with ensuring that the induction pack is prepared before the new employee's start date.

The line manager and HR are jointly responsible for implementing and monitoring all induction activities, including the probationary review. In emergency situations, HR will assume the responsibilities of the line manager for any induction-related activities.

## **Induction Implementation**

Using the Induction Plan as a reference, the line manager and HR will develop a robust induction programme tailored to the needs of the individual and the organisation.

**First Day:** New employees will be welcomed by [insert name or role], who will conduct a facility tour and provide essential information and procedures. New employees will complete their New Starter documentation and submit necessary documents to [insert name or role]. HR will also issue equipment, and the new employee will sign a property declaration form.

**Subsequent weeks:** The new employee will engage in induction plan activities, spending time with their line manager to gain a comprehensive understanding of the organisation.

Within the third month of employment, [insert name or role] will conduct an induction review to discuss the employee's position and any concerns. This will be documented and signed by the new employee, their line manager and [insert name or role]. Any additional training identified during this review will be arranged accordingly.

## **Probationary Period**

All new employees will undergo a three-month probationary period, during which mandatory training must be completed, and regular meetings with their line manager will occur. The probationary period may be extended by an additional three months if deemed necessary.

## **Related Documents**

This policy should be read in conjunction with related [Insert Company Name] documents, policies, and procedures.

By adhering to this policy, [Insert Company Name] ensures that all new staff members are well-equipped and confident in their roles, contributing effectively to our organisation's success and upholding our high standards of service and professionalism.

## **Sanctions Policy**

## **1. Policy**

[Insert name of Centre] will provide a wide range of support for learners throughout their qualification with us. If a learner breaches our malpractice and maladministration policy, commits academic misconduct or other behaviour that breaches our policies, then sanctions may be required.

This Sanctions Policy outlines all of the possible sanctions that can be applied to a learner.

## **2. Definitions**

*Plagiarism:* The act of presenting someone else's work, ideas, or intellectual property as one's own without proper acknowledgment or citation.

*Academic Malpractice:* Any dishonest or unethical behaviour intended to gain an unfair advantage in academic assessment, including but not limited to cheating, fabrication of data, and unauthorised collaboration, including AI.

## **3. Investigation:**

[Insert name of centre] will undertake an investigation into the accusation of the potential breach of this policy. This investigation must be conducted and concluded within a week of the alleged misconduct so as not to disadvantage the learners' continuation with the qualification.

An impartial member of staff must undertake the investigation. The investigator must have no conflicts of interest linked to the qualification, assessor, IQA or learner.

## **4. Sanctions**

Learners found to have accidentally or non-intentionally committed an act of learner malpractice will be subject to a written verbal warning and required to read relevant policies and provided further guidance by the assessor or IQA.

Learners found guilty of deliberate plagiarism or academic malpractice will be subject to the following sanctions:

### **1. Warning:**

- A formal written warning will be issued to the learner, clearly outlining the nature of the offence and emphasising the importance of academic integrity.

### **2. Completion of the assignment/task again in a controlled manner:**

- The assignment or examination in question will receive a grade penalty, which may range from a significant reduction in marks to a failing grade for the entire course, depending on the severity of the misconduct.

### **3. Educational Intervention:**

- Learners may be required to complete an educational intervention to support the learner. This will be focused on academic integrity and

proper citation practices. This may include workshops, tutorials, or online modules and may come at a cost to the learner.

**4. Probation:**

- In cases of repeated offences or serious violations, learners may be placed on academic probation, during which any further violation may result in more severe consequences. Learner work will be second marked and a 100% internal verification sample must be undertaken.

**5. Temporary Suspension:**

- In extreme cases, a learner may be temporarily suspended from [insert name of organisation]. During this period, the learner is not allowed to attend classes or engage in any academic activities.

**6. Withdrawal from the qualification (no refund):**

- Expulsion is the most severe consequence and may be applied in cases of repeated or egregious academic misconduct. The learner will be permanently dismissed from [insert name of organisation]

Sanctions can also be applied if a learner is considered to have breached other policies such as Equality and Diversity and Health and Safety. Other behavioural issues such as physical and verbal abuse, discriminatory language, attendance issues, threatening behaviour and inappropriate behaviour.

## **Conflicts of Interest Policy**

## **Our Responsibilities**

A conflict of interest has the potential to undermine the integrity of a qualification. [insert company name] are committed to providing transparent delivery of qualifications and therefore will log and report all current and potential Conflicts of Interests to assure fairness and transparency throughout our organisation.

A conflict of interest is defined as a situation in which the concerns or aims of two different parties are incompatible, such as the conflict of interest between elected officials and corporate lobbyists, or where a person is able to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity. Where such a competing interest exists, it may impair the ability to make fair, objective, and unbiased judgments and decisions. [insert name of responsible officer or role] will be responsible for managing conflicts of interest in within [insert company name]

A conflict of interest may be obvious, and known as a direct conflict of interest. There could also be cases identified as potential conflicts of interest that may not actually occur. All must be considered and recorded once identified. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- When an individual has a position of authority in one organisation which conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation
- When an individual has personal interests that conflict with his/her professional position
- Where someone works for a centre, or carries out work on a centre's behalf, who has friends or relatives taking assessments at that centre.
- A conflict of interest may generally be defined as a conflict between the official responsibilities of a tutor, assessor, and/or internal verifier, and any other interests that individual may have, which could compromise, or appear to compromise, their decisions.

### **Scope of Conflicts of Interest Policy**

The Policy deals with Conflicts of interest throughout [insert name of the organisation], to include:

- Directors
- Managers
- Assessors
- Tutors
- IQA's
- Learners

### **How to log a conflict of interest:**

A conflict of interest must be reported to [insert name of responsible person] as soon as it is identified. [Insert name or role] will report the conflict of interest to Focus Awards by logging it, in a timely manner, on the Focus Awards' Qualitas system.

[Insert name of the organisation] acknowledged that a lack of identification of conflicts of interest could lead to malpractice or maladministration within [insert company name]

**Action to be Taken:**

[Insert name of the organisation] will mitigate all conflicts of interest and produce a written log of the mitigations that have been put in place. Where a conflict of interest impacts a learner registered on a qualification, we will second mark and IQA their work and submit it to Focus Awards for sampling when their qualification is complete.

Conflict e.g. IQA maybe a family member of learner	Action and responsible individual e.g. Another IQA will be appointed to the learner in question

**Review of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**

Annually, the [insert role] will review the Conflicts of Interest Policy to include:

- Number conflicts of interest
- Timeliness of conflict of interest logs
- Mitigations put in place to reduce the risk of malpractice or maladministration.
- Outcomes of certificate claims for identified conflicts of interest

If changes are required, the Conflicts of Interest Policy will be rewritten, and all staff and learners will be informed.

**Contact Details**

For further details about this manual or for all matters relating to [insert company name], please contact [insert role], [insert name] on the following details:

T: [insert telephone number]

E: [insert email address]

A: [insert address]