

# POL23 – Candidate Malpractice Policy

This policy applies to all qualifications and standards.

It is issued with reference to the Exam Rules and Regulations including APM Rules and Regulations for Remote Invigilated Exams, published on the APM website and supersedes any previous versions.

## 1. Definition

APM defines malpractice as an established breach of the published Exam Rules and Regulations.

Examples of malpractice include:

- Cheating – failing to comply with the Rules and Regulations or any instructions given by APM in order to gain an unfair advantage in the examination / assessment,
- Colluding – collaborating or communicating with another person to gain advantage by any means, including facilitating or receiving such assistance.
- Personating – appearing or producing work on behalf of another candidate / applicant in order to mislead the examiners.
- Plagiarising – including in your work that which has been created by another person
- Using unauthorised material during an online assessment.
- Dishonest and/or unethical practice: this covers any form of practice which attempted to deceive others, but which is not specifically identified in the above and referred by the Investigation Panel.
- Inappropriate supervision of the exam breaching the terms and conditions for Self-Invigilation.

## 2. Measures to prevent and identify malpractice in APM examinations

APM's examinations are conducted under strict examination conditions.

In the instance of face-to-face examinations an invigilator approved by APM will oversee the examination event. The invigilator is responsible for checking photographic identification of each candidate, for the safe and secure delivery of the examination paper and answer book/mark sheets to the examination venue, and for the collection and return to APM of all the examination material at the end of the examination event.

In the instance of remotely delivered examinations, ProctorExam has delegated authority to monitor and record all webpages used via screenshare and the external environment via webcam.

Candidates are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the candidate guidance in operation at the time and abide by the Exam Rules and Regulations.

The invigilator is empowered to ask a candidate to leave the examination room at any time, if the invigilator suspects a breach to the Exam Rules and Regulations or for matters pertaining to the Health and Safety of the candidate, other candidates or exam personnel.

The invigilator will take necessary action to prevent further malpractice, without disadvantaging other candidates taking the examination. Any such action, and the reason for it, must be recorded in writing and the invigilator's report returned to APM with the examination materials and within the agreed timeframes as set out by APM's Service Level Requirements for Examinations.

In the instance of online examinations, supervised through ProctorExam, ProctorExam will flag exam recordings for review by the internal APM Qualifications Team where there is the suspicion of inappropriate conduct or malpractice.

The investigation panel nominated to investigate suspected inappropriate behaviour, may refer cases to be reviewed under the malpractice policy.

Potential malpractice may also be suspected by the APM examiner marking scripts after the examination or identified as part of the optical scanning and quality assurance of multiple-choice papers which takes place in APM's offices.

### **3. APM action on suspicion of malpractice**

In the event of suspected malpractice the APM Service Innovation team will contact the candidate / applicant to inform them that an investigation is pending with specific reference to the Rules and Regulations which are considered to have been breached. The candidate/applicant will have the opportunity to formally note their views on the alleged breach, including any mitigation they feel is relevant.

All evidence, including that supplied by the candidate / applicant is brought to the attention, in the first instance, to the Senior Qualifications Manager and Senior Accreditation and Assessment Manager of Professional Standards. This forms the preliminary investigation as to the conduct of the examination event in question. This will include, where relevant;

- review with the invigilator to confirm whether any suspicious or inappropriate conduct was observed during the examination event itself.
- review with the script marker of the grounds for their suspicion.
- review of recordings from ProctorExam.
- and/or review internally where the examination in question is optically scanned.
- evidence supplied by the candidate / applicant.

Following the preliminary investigation if malpractice remains to be suspected, the matter, with written reports and supporting evidence, will be reported to the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, who will determine the intended action to be taken in consultation with the Malpractice Panel. Another member of the Leadership Team has delegated authority in the absence of the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning. The Malpractice Panel shall consist of;

- Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
- Qualifications Chair of Examiners
- Two members of the Professional Standards team at Senior Manager or Head level.

Meetings of the Malpractice Panel shall be documented by a Professional Standards Co-Ordinator who will take the role of Panel Secretary.

The action recommended, and the reasons for it, will be communicated to the candidate and their Accredited Provider (if applicable). Actions may include (but not limited to);

- Candidate / applicant will have their assessment mark confirmed and a finding of no misconduct confirmed.
- Candidate will receive a zero mark for that assessment and offered a complimentary re-sit.
- Candidate will be disqualified from their attempt.
- Candidate will be disqualified from their attempt and prevented from sitting further qualifications for a reasonable, defined period\*

\*The defined period will be determined based on the seriousness and impact of the malpractice. In the event of a repeat presentation to the Malpractice Panel a permanent disqualification from the APM qualifications may be enforced.

The candidate / applicant has the right to appeal the decision made by the Malpractice Panel and must do so in writing within ten working days of the decision being communicated.

Malpractice Appeals should be directed to [pscoordinators@apm.org.uk](mailto:pscoordinators@apm.org.uk). Appeals will be heard by a subcommittee of the Professional Standards and Knowledge Committee, who have delegated authority to make a final decision on the matter.

The malpractice panel must retain records of points of procedural governance, for example consideration of conflicts of interest and for the purpose of appeal, audit and regulatory oversight. The retention of data must be consistent with data protection obligations.

The matter, its investigation and conclusion will be reported to APM's Professional Standards and Knowledge Committee.

If the candidate in question is a member of APM, the matter will also be reported to the Chief Executive, for potential investigation as a breach of the APM's Code of Professional Conduct for members.

APM will inform any relevant Regulatory Body in accordance with their prevailing rules and regulations.

## Version control

Author	Reason for revision	Version number	Date
LW	Reviewed and approved for inclusion on BMS	1.0	10/5/12
JP	Amended to show that PoPM qualifications are excluded from this policy	1.1	29/5/13
	Reviewed and approved via PP	2.0	29/5/13
GH	Amended after annual review, see CR#975	3.0	3/6/16
Tracey Unwin	Amended after annual review	4	17/04/2019
Kéo-Mony Mith	Policy reference number and APM logo updated	5	26/11/2019
Emily Long	Amended after annual review	6	18/05/2020
Emily Long	Updated after Exam Rules and Regs Review	6.1	11/01/2021
Jan Lonnen	Amended after annual review	7.0	19/5/2022
Emily Long	Updated panel composition and sanction options following Feb 23 PS&K approval	8.0	16/05/2023