

Malpractice: Policy and Procedure

1. Principles and Overview

Establishing and maintaining the integrity of SSS assessments is critical for all stakeholders. To ensure fairness and consistency of assessment administration, there must be no suspicion of any malpractice, maladministration, or collusion during the assessment delivery. This document provides a guide to the process that SSS will follow in order to manage any cases of suspected malpractice during the administration of its assessments.

2. Malpractice

2.1 Examples

There are many ways in which malpractice can occur, the list below includes the most common examples:

- Introducing unauthorized materials into the assessment room(s)
- Collusion or attempted collusion between trainees during the assessment
- Copying from another trainee
- Trainer or other staff assistance to trainees during the CBT
- Obtaining unauthorized access to confidential assessment material
- Non-compliance with SSS guidelines and procedures

2.2 Identification of malpractice

Cases of malpractice can be identified by various people:

- SSS invigilators
- Training provider invigilators, supervisors, assessors or other staff
- Trainees
- SSS External Verifiers

Additionally, the data used to mark the CBT may indicate cases of suspected malpractice.

3. Reporting and recording suspected Malpractice

A designated SSS officer will record all cases of suspected malpractice. Reports from staff at a training provider should be submitted through the main assessment e-mail address: assessment@sss.org

4. Procedure

4.1 Communication with training providers

SSS will communicate the receipt of reports of malpractice to the Principal of the training provider in question. It is the responsibility of the Principal to carry out an investigation and submit written report to SSS with any supporting evidence.

The final outcome of the investigation will be sent in writing to the Principal as soon as possible after decisions are made (no later than 3 working days after all evidence and supporting documentation has been received).

4.2 Supporting evidence/documents

The training provider and trainees must be given the opportunity to respond to any claim of malpractice. SSS will only review a case after the Principal and trainees have confirmed that they have been given the opportunity to submit written statements:

- An account of the circumstances surrounding the suspected malpractice activity
- Written statements from invigilators and other staff who may have been involved in the assessment administration
- Written statements from the trainees concerned, or a statement that they have been given the opportunity to make a statement
- Attendance registers/seating plans

SSS will also gather evidence from any of its staff present during the assessment administration, and, for CBTs, will refer to the results data for a particular test.

4.3 SSS Procedure

The results of the trainees concerned will be withheld pending the outcome of the investigation.

Documents requested from the Principal must be supplied to SSS within 3 working days from the date of the request.

On the basis of the information received, a SSS Committee will consider whether malpractice has occurred.

4.4 Outcomes

Where action is considered necessary by the SSS Committee, the following penalties may be imposed:

- A warning to the training provider as to its future conduct and administration of SSS assessments
- Marks may be deducted (CBT) or grades lowered (Capstone and/or e-portfolio)
- Trainees may be disqualified in full from a CBT
- Other penalties may be imposed at the discretion of SSS Director of Assessment & Certification

4.5 Appeals

If a center wishes to appeal against any action taken under 4.4, the Principal must submit this within 3 working days of notification of outcome by SSS. Any new evidence must be included with the appeal submission.

SSS Appeals Committee will consider the case within a further 5 working days, and inform the Principal of the outcome. No further appeal will be allowed.

5. Malpractice Committees

5.1 Malpractice Committee

In considering the suspected malpractice, SSS will convene a committee chaired by the Director of Assessment & Certification, and comprising a senior SSS Assessment Team member, and one expert consultant.

5.2 Malpractice Appeals Committee

This will comprise the SSS Chief Executive Officer (or nominated Deputy), the Director of Institutional Review, a senior manager from the COE organization, and an independent assessment expert from Qiyas.