



## **Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure**

### **1 Scope**

Malpractice and maladministration covers any individuals who are involved with the development, delivery or assessment of accreditations or certifications awarded by the Society of Forensic Interviewers (SoFI) and the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards). This includes employees of SoFI and its contractors, Accredited Trainers and Learners, who are involved with suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

Where SoFI has cause to believe that an occurrence of malpractice or maladministration, or any connected occurrence may affect an Accredited Trainer, it will inform that Accredited Trainer and it will inform the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards).

### **2 Definitions**

Learner - a member of SoFI who has enrolled on a SoFI course accredited by the OfQual Awarding Body (SFJ Awards), or by SoFI.

Accredited Trainer - a member of SoFI who has met the Accredited Trainer Approval Criteria to provide online and/or practical tuition for a SoFI course accredited by the OfQual Awarding Body (SFJ Awards), or by SoFI.

### **3 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to advise Accredited Trainers and Learners on:

- what constitutes malpractice or maladministration
- the implications of malpractice or maladministration
- the sanctions that will be applied
- how to manage malpractice or maladministration
- identify any occurrences that may have a wider effect on course delivery e.g. on other Learners, Accredited Trainers or the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards).

## 4 Definition

Maladministration can be defined as lack of care, judgment or honesty in the management of something.

Malpractice is essentially negligence or misconduct in carrying out an activity or a practice.

Malpractice or maladministration compromises the integrity of the course development process, the delivery and assessment process and/or the validity of certificates. This includes misconduct and failure to follow the regulations and procedures set out by the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards) and/or SoFI.

The list below gives examples of malpractice or maladministration. This is not a definitive list; the intention is to provide examples for guidance.

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### 4.1 Accredited Trainers malpractice or maladministration:

- contravention of our Accredited Trainers Approval conditions
- failure to satisfactorily implement conditions of approval within stated timescales
- Accredited Trainers postponement of visits by a member of the SoFI Accreditation and Certifications Committee or Members Council for more than six months
- denial of access to resources (premises, records, information, Learners and staff) by any authorised SoFI representative and/or the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards)

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- actions required by the SoFI Accreditation and Certifications Committee or Members Council not being met within agreed timescales
- failure to carry out delivery, internal assessment or internal quality assurance in accordance with our requirements
- failure to adhere to our Learner registration and certification procedures
- failure to continually adhere to our Accredited Trainers Approval Criteria
- failure to maintain auditable records e.g. certification claims
- fraudulent claim for certificates
- intentional withholding of information from us which is critical to maintaining the rigour of quality assurance
- deliberate misuse of our logo
- failure to follow set procedures for course development.

#### 4.2 Learner malpractice or maladministration:

- forgery of evidence
- plagiarism of any nature
- submission of false information to gain a proxy or accreditation or certification
- failure to adhere to the requirements of our Equal Opportunities Policy.

### **5 Responsibilities**

Failure to report malpractice or maladministration can lead to Awards not being made, certificates not being issued and future entries and/or registrations not being accepted.

SoFI will conduct a full investigation of instances of alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration and will take action with respect to Accredited Trainers and Learners concerned as necessary to maintain the integrity of the accreditations and certifications.

SoFI will report cases of malpractice or maladministration to the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards) whenever it finds evidence that results or certificates may be invalid.

Where it is proven that an incident of malpractice or maladministration has occurred, SoFI will promptly take all reasonable steps to prevent the malpractice or maladministration recurring and will take appropriate action against those responsible proportionate to the gravity and scope of the occurrence or seek the cooperation of third parties in taking such action.

Where SoFI has cause to believe that an occurrence of malpractice or maladministration, or any connected occurrence, may affect an Accredited Trainer it will inform that Accredited Trainer and if it may affect the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards) it will inform that organisation.

### **6 Review**

The malpractice or maladministration policy will be reviewed annually.

## **7 Procedure for Managing Malpractice or Maladministration**

### **7.1 Reporting Malpractice or Maladministration**

All incidents of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration should be reported to SoFI immediately. Any individual or organisation can report suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration to SoFI, by sending a letter to:

Managing Director

Society of Forensic Interviewers

42 Anglesea Road

Ipswich

Suffolk IP1 3PP

Or by email to [jeffshiplee@so-fi.org](mailto:jeffshiplee@so-fi.org)

Emails and letters should state:

- the Accredited Trainer's name and address
- the name(s) of those involved in the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration and, if appropriate, their job role
- title of the course or programme affected by the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration
- date(s) the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration occurred
- the full nature of the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

7.1.1 Informants will be sent an acknowledgement of receipt within three working days and will be updated of the actions being taken and the timescales involved. They will also be notified of the outcome of the investigations.

## **7.2 Investigating Alleged Malpractice or Maladministration**

7.2.1 Accredited Trainers are required to adhere to the SoFI malpractice and maladministration policy.

If the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration has been reported to the Accredited Trainer and the Accredited Trainer has carried out their own investigation, before submitting a report to SoFI it should:

- ensure staff carrying out the investigation are independent of the staff/Learners/function being investigated
- inform those who are suspected of malpractice or maladministration that they are entitled to know the necessary details of the case and possible outcomes
- submit the findings of the investigation to SoFI along with the report.

7.2.2 Reports should include:

- name, address and telephone number
- Learner's name and registration number
- Accredited Trainer's personal details (name, job role), who are involved in the investigation of the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration
- title of the course/programme affected
- date(s) suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration occurred
- full nature of the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration
- contents and outcome of any investigation carried out by the Accredited Trainer or anybody else involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances
- written statements from those involved in the case, e.g. witness statements
- date of the report and the informant's name, position and signature.

7.2.3 Accredited Trainers are obliged to report all cases of malpractice or maladministration to SoFI who will conduct a thorough investigation. Accredited Trainers are expected to cooperate in full.

7.2.4 SoFI will fully cooperate with the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards), informing them at the earliest opportunity and agreeing any appropriate remedial action.

SoFI will promptly take all reasonable steps to prevent the malpractice or maladministration recurring and will take appropriate action against those responsible, proportionate to the gravity and scope of the occurrence, or seek the cooperation of third parties in taking such action.

Where SoFI has any cause to believe that an occurrence of malpractice or maladministration, or any connected occurrence, may affect an Accredited Trainer or another Approved Centre undertaking any part of the delivery of a course, SoFI will inform that Accredited Trainer or Approved Centre and the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards).

## **8 Appeals**

Appeals against a decision on malpractice or maladministration and the sanctions imposed can be made through the Enquiries and Appeals Policy which is available on [www.sofi.org](http://www.sofi.org).