

## Assessment and Fair Practice Policy

This policy includes the following sub-policies:

- Assessment Strategy
- Fair Assessment Practices
- Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism
- Conflicts of Interest
- Ethical use of Generative AI
- Exam Invigilation
- Appeals Procedure

## Assessment Strategy

## 1. Policy Statement

Assessment is the process of monitoring learners' progress against awarding organisation criteria to ensure work meets national standards. The Portland Training Company is committed to:

- Fair, accurate, and consistent assessment for all learners.
- Meeting and exceeding awarding organisation requirements and the student charter.
- Ensuring valid assessment decisions and compliance with external standards.
- Supporting academic staff through internal quality monitoring, moderation and constructive feedback.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all forms of assessment that validate learner work, including:

- Written assignments / Workbooks
- Observations / Session Visits
- Practical tasks, Simulations and Presentations
- Quizzes and Evaluations
- Any other evidence presented by learners

It covers all curriculum staff involved in assessment, verification, moderation, or thematic review. This includes tutors who perform assessment activity.

### 3. Responsibilities

All curriculum staff must:

- Maintain secure records of assessment.
- Ensure assessments are conducted fairly and consistently.
- Provide informative feedback to learners.
- Participate in internal quality assurance processes.
- Maintain occupational and educational currency through CPD

## 4. Quality Assurance

Assessment of coursework is a key component of The Portland Training Company's quality assurance system. It ensures:

- Accurate assessment decisions

- Fair and informative feedback
- Compliance with awarding body standards
- Internal process compliance

## 5. Review and Accessibility

The policy is reviewed every three years and is available in alternative formats upon request.

### Fair Assessment Practices

#### 1. Policy Overview

This policy ensures equality of opportunity, diversity, and reasonable adjustments for learners with special access or assessment needs. It aims to maintain valid, reliable, and consistent judgments of achievement.

#### 2. Scope

- **Equality and Fairness:** Assessments must be fair, non-discriminatory, and aligned with awarding organisation standards.
- **Access Arrangements:** These include tools like readers, scribes, or other aids, tailored to learners with disabilities or temporary injuries.
- **Learner Expectations:**
  - Fair assessment practices.
  - Clear communication of learning outcomes and criteria.
  - Timely feedback and appropriate assessment opportunities.
  - Pursuit of exemptions or equivalents where applicable.

#### 3. Access Arrangements Considerations

Portland staff must evaluate:

- Suitability of arrangements for the qualification.
- Learner's normal working methods.
- Implementation details and required evidence.
- Health and safety implications, with risk assessments if needed.

### Evidence Requirements

- Centres must retain evidence for access arrangements.
- Learners must be consulted before arrangements are made or submitted.
- Diagnostic assessments and documentation must be kept on file.

### Special Consideration

Granted post-assessment for learners affected by illness or adverse conditions. Not applicable where full competence or licensing is required.

### Procedures & Staff Responsibilities

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- Access arrangements must be in place before assessments.
- Must reflect the learner's usual working method.
- Records must be kept for quality assurance.

## Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism

## 1. Introduction

As an approved training provider (UKPRN 10046979), Portland Training is responsible for the effective design, delivery, assessment, and monitoring of all Adult Skills programmes we provide. This policy defines and provides examples of malpractice and maladministration, outlines preventative measures, and details the process for investigating and responding to any suspected or alleged incidents.

All concerns regarding malpractice or maladministration should be reported directly to the Operations Director in the first instance.

## 2. Definitions

## Malpractice (by Centres)

Any activity or practice that deliberately contravenes regulations or procedures.

### Examples include:

- Breach of examination or assessment regulations
- Falsification of learner or programme documentation

## Malpractice (by Learners)

Any deliberate action by a learner that violates assessment or programme regulations.

### Examples include:

- Plagiarism or cheating
- Breach of examination or assessment rules
- Repeated maladministration (typically three consecutive incidents)

## Maladministration

Non-compliance with regulations due to genuine error or oversight, rather than intentional misconduct. Examples include:

- Late registration of learners with respective awarding organisations or the Department for Education (DfE)
- Incorrect certification claims

Repeated maladministration may escalate to malpractice.

### 3. Preventative Measures

Portland Training ensures that staff and learners take all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice and maladministration throughout the development, delivery, and assessment of qualifications and programmes.

#### 4. Reporting and Investigation Process

All suspected cases must be reported immediately to the relevant awarding organisation and subsequently, where directed, to the Department for Education (DfE).

If malpractice is confirmed, Portland Training may take one or more of the following actions depending on severity:

- Disqualification of learner assessment evidence or marks
- Withholding or withdrawal of certificates
- Suspension of learner registrations
- Reporting to regulatory bodies, awarding organisations, and potentially law enforcement
- Withdrawal of tutor

## 5. Cheating and Plagiarism

## Centre's Responsibility

It is important that our staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications, and our learners, are fully aware of the contents of the policy and that our centre has arrangements in place to prevent and investigate instances of plagiarism and cheating. A failure to report suspected or actual plagiarism/cheating cases or has in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may lead to sanctions being imposed on our centre.

## What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which applies to all assessment. Portland Training takes plagiarism very seriously and cheating in general is not tolerated. There are many definitions of plagiarism in essence it means that someone's work, their 'intellectual effort' has been taken or stolen by someone else who presents it as their own. Published work includes books, magazines and the internet. Unpublished works may be something previously submitted for assessment by another learner or about to be submitted for assessment. Learners sometimes need to work together to prepare written work such as assignments/workbooks, but the written work a learner submits for assessment must be entirely their own, original, output. Reading and researching is good, in fact assessors/tutors will actively encourage learners to find influential, important and relevant academic material however the authors must be clearly acknowledged.

## Examples of Plagiarism:

- Examples from another person's work, published or unpublished, without using quotation marks and/or an acknowledgment of the source.

- Summarising the work of another or using their ideas without an acknowledgement of the source.
- Copying or using the work of another learner (past or present) with or without that person's knowledge or agreement.
- Purchasing essays or downloading from the internet to submit as a learners own work.

### **Cheating:**

Portland training implores all learners to never be tempted by anyone to cheat in a test, an assessment or an exam or in providing evidence within workbooks.

#### Examples:

- anyone from Portland Training or Awarding Organisations allows them access to information about an examination on how to pass by offering a copy of a test-paper in advance or reading the actual questions to the learner
- a tutor, line manager or a colleague offers to write your assignments on behalf of the learner
- a tutor or other Portland Training employee or a colleague offer to take a test for a learner
- use of textbooks, notes or other materials in assessments when not 'open book'
- learners talking during an examination
- learners allowing others to copy their work, or tries to copy work without permission
- allowing a learner to 'pass' for any kind of bribe, financial or otherwise
- making a change to an assignment/workbook or examination answers after they have been 'signed-off', logged or marked/assessed

Learners must not offer to help anyone cheat by allowing them to copy original work or steal work from other learners (this is called Collusion)

### **Bullying, Plagiarism and Cheating**

Portland Training has a rigid zero-tolerance policy and if a learner is bullied in anyway by someone who puts pressure on them to collude, they must notify their tutor immediately. The tutor will act according to the Portland Training Bullying and Harassment Policy.

### **Continuous Improvement**

Portland Training is committed to continuous improvement and will use feedback and investigation outcomes to enhance our processes and learner experience.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

#### **1. Statement of Intent**

All Portland Training staff are required to declare any real or perceived conflict prior to deployment on training and assessment duties. Where staff have been allocated training or

assessment duties and a real or perceived conflict of interest exists, or there is a potential conflict of interest, staff must inform the Operations Director immediately. A conflict of interest arises where a member of staff, or their household members or close friends have a private interest which might influence, or be reasonably perceived to influence, their judgement in carrying out their duties, including making assessment judgements and allocating achievements.

## Ethical Use of Generative AI

### 1. Scope

Guidance on the use of AI in education is gained from these two main sources:

- [Generative artificial intelligence \(AI\) in education - GOV.UK](#)
- [AI-Use-in-Assessments\\_Feb24\\_v6.pdf](#)

### 2. Position

As a trusted training provider, we are committed to guiding learners in the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) within vocational education. AI has the power to enhance learning, improve productivity, and prepare learners for evolving industries, but its use must be grounded in integrity, fairness, and accountability.

We believe AI should be used to support human learning and decision-making, not to undermine it. Our approach promotes:

- **Transparency:** Learners must understand how AI tools work, what data they use, and how decisions are made.
- **Fairness:** AI must not reinforce bias or discrimination.
- **Privacy and Data Protection:** Learners must respect the confidentiality of personal and institutional data when using AI tools.
- **Human Oversight:** AI should complement, not replace, human judgment, creativity, and interpersonal skills in vocational contexts.

### 3. Unacceptable AI Practices

To uphold ethical standards, we do not tolerate the following uses of AI in education:

- **Plagiarism or academic dishonesty:** Using AI to generate assignments, assessments, or certifications without proper attribution or personal engagement.
- **Data misuse:** Accessing, sharing, or processing personal or sensitive data without consent or legal basis.
- **Bias amplification:** Deploying AI tools that reinforce stereotypes, discrimination, or unfair treatment of individuals or groups.
- **Deceptive use:** Presenting AI-generated content as human-created without disclosure, especially in assessments or professional portfolios.
- **Automation of unethical tasks:** Using AI to bypass learning processes, simulate qualifications, or misrepresent skills and competencies.

All tutors are aware of the Portland Training AI/plagiarism expectations and it is discussed with learners during their course induction. Information relating to Portland Training's AI policy is available for learners within their Google Classroom classwork and they are directed to read the information.

Any work produced that is suspected as, has the appearance of or is recognised as being potentially produced by AI/plagiarism will be checked by the assessor/tutor using one or several of the following online checkers; Quillbot, ZeroGTP, GTPZero, Scribbr or Grammarly. Because there is often a discrepancy between checkers, it is advised that a check using 2 or 3 different applications be employed before a judgement is made.

All assessors/tutors have been advised that if they have any issues or are unsure the check is warranted that they contact other members of the quality department i.e. the IQA or Operations Director, who will investigate their concerns and make a judgement on their behalf.

The IQA is also responsible for checking for AI/plagiarism whilst sampling workbooks as part of the IQA process. Any work found to contain suspect material will be referred back to the assessor/tutor responsible for this learner who will then contact the learner and direct them to carry out a review of the content and rework as necessary.

Through our curriculum and learner support, we aim to adopt a culture of ethical innovation, where learners are empowered to use AI responsibly, reflectively, and with a clear understanding of its impact on people, workplaces, and society.

### **Exam Invigilation**

#### **1. Statement on Internal Exams and Proctoring**

Portland Training does not currently conduct internal examinations, nor do we require any form of invigilation or proctoring—either in person or remotely. However, should our qualifications or learning pathways evolve to include assessments that necessitate such arrangements, we will fully comply with the specific testing and proctoring requirements set out by the relevant awarding organisations.

### **Appeals Process**

#### **1. Objective:**

This appeals procedure aims to provide a fair and transparent process for learners who disagree with tutor assessment decisions. The procedure allows learners to appeal such decisions and seek a review to ensure that assessments are conducted fairly and in accordance with the associated criteria linked to each qualification and programme the learner is studying.

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## 2. Process

The following steps should be followed to ensure a thorough and precise process in relation to the appeal.

### **Informal Discussion:**

If a learner disagrees with a tutor's assessment decision, they should first attempt to resolve the issue through an informal discussion with the tutor. Learners should express their concerns and seek clarification regarding the assessment criteria and the reasons behind the decision. The tutor should listen to the learner's perspective and provide feedback to address any misunderstandings of the decision or misconceptions obtained during the teaching and learning process.

### **Formal Appeal:**

If the issue remains unresolved after the informal discussion or the learner believes that the decision was unfair or inaccurate, they may initiate a formal appeal. The learner must submit a written appeal to Portland Training within 10 working days of receiving the assessment decision.

### **Appeal Submission:**

The written appeal should include the following information:

- Learner's name and contact details
- Course/Programme information and dates attended
- Details of the assessment in question (e.g., assessment type, date, and description)
- Clear and specific reasons for the appeal, along with any supporting evidence or documentation.

### **Review Panel Formation:**

Upon receipt of the written appeal, the Operations Director will form an independent review panel which may consist of the Lead IQA or members of the Senior Management Team.

This panel will consist of individuals who were not involved in the original assessment decision yet be equipped with the expertise and authority to evaluate the appeal objectively.

### **Review Process:**

The review panel led by the Operations Director will conduct a thorough and impartial examination of the appeal. This may involve:

- Reviewing the learner's written appeal and any supporting evidence
- Obtaining statements or additional information from the tutor and any relevant witnesses

- Assessing whether the original assessment decision was made in accordance with the established Awarding Organisation assessment criteria and fair assessment practices.

### Appeal Outcome:

The review panel will communicate its decision in writing to the learner within 15 working days from the receipt of the appeal. The possible outcomes of the appeal could include:

- Upholding the original assessment decision, with an explanation of the reasons
- Overturning the original assessment decision and providing an alternative outcome
- Recommending a re-assessment, to be conducted by a different tutor with support from the Lead IQA.

### Final Decision:

The decision of the review panel is final and will be considered the official resolution of the appeal. There will be no further internal avenues for appeal within the organisation.

## External Escalation:

If the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal process, they may choose to escalate the matter to the relevant Awarding Organisation or regulatory authority, if applicable, details of whom should be obtained from the Operations Director should the learner want to make this information known.

## Confidentiality:

Throughout the appeals process, all parties involved must maintain strict confidentiality and handle sensitive information in compliance with relevant data protection regulations.

## Following the Appeal:

The organisation ensures that learners who exercise their right to appeal will not face any form of discrimination or adverse treatment as a result of their appeal.

The Appeals Procedure Policy must be documented and clearly logged during every stage of the process with concise and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the Operations Director to retain any such documentation in regards to an appeal for review by the Awarding Organisation.