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Policy and Procedures for Malpractice

Malpractice is deemed to be those actions and practices which threaten the integrity of the examinations and certification. It should be noted that this includes any VMA written examination or assessment, as well as performance examinations. The following are examples of malpractice and other instances of malpractice may be considered at VMA Dance's discretion.

- • Creating report sheets or certificates by copying the VMA, ISTD, BTDA or SLQ logos, paperwork, and/or signatures of responsible officers.
- • The alteration of any results document, including certificates
- • Failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an invigilator, supervisor, in relation to the examination rules and regulations.
- • Impersonation - pretending to be someone else, arranging for another to take the place in the examinations.
- • Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be examination related, by means of talking, written papers or notes, during the course of the examination.
- • Copying from another candidate (including the use of ICT to do so).
- • Plagiarism - the failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person's work as if it was the candidate's own.
- • The deliberate falsification of any candidate's personal or examination information.
- • Obtaining or giving unauthorised access to examination material prior to an examination.
- • Failing to keep examination papers secure prior to the examination.
- • Assisting candidates in the production of written assessments, beyond that permitted.

Allegations of malpractice may be reported to VMA Dance or awarding bodies by examiners, assessors, tutors, invigilators, candidates and their parents. VMA Dance are aware that the reporting of malpractice can potentially cause a difficult situation, and will therefore endeavour to protect the identity of the informant. All allegations must be detailed in writing. VMA Dance routinely records and evaluates the detailed results of all written work and examinations to monitor any irregularities and may investigate these to establish if there is any malpractice.

Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre or candidate not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications and includes failing to follow VAM or awarding bodies' instructions on storage of materials and in verifying the learners work, such that the validity of the work can be questioned.

The following is therefore the VMA Dance's procedure for malpractice and maladministration.

1. VMA Dance will undertake an initial evaluation including risk assessment, to establish the scope of the matter. If the malpractice has caused or is likely to cause an adverse effect which may affect the integrity of the qualifications, VMA will inform the Regulatory Authorities and commence a full investigation and provide the name and address of the Centre/teacher, the allegations, and qualifications concerned to the Regulatory Authorities.
2. Where other awarding bodies are involved, VMA will immediately inform those awarding bodies of the incident. The Regulatory Authorities may manage a coordinated approach. In these specific circumstances, VMA undertakes that it will act under their instruction and work in accordance with the Regulatory Authorities' immediate requests and timescales for investigation and conclusion, which may be beyond those given below.
3. Where the allegation of malpractice concerns evidence of fraudulent certificates or report sheets which have been received and inspected by VMA or awarding bodies, and which may therefore be the subject of a criminal investigation, VMA reserves the right to refer the matter directly to an appropriate external body, without contact with the teacher first, normally to a Trading Standards Office, to investigate the matter, advise and take appropriate action.
4. On receiving an allegation or finding evidence of malpractice, the Head of Customer Services and Quality will either delegate responsibility for deciding on a straightforward case, or will require it to be referred immediately to the Awarding Body disciplinary panel.

Depending on the severity of the alleged malpractice and the parties involved, VMA Dance reserves the right to carry out the investigation directly in order to ensure the accuracy of the evidence as far as possible.

The report should include a detailed account of the relevant circumstances and details of any investigations carried out; written statements from all parties concerned; any relevant materials and any mitigating factors. It is required within 10 working days of the request from VMA

ISTD Enquiries and Appeals Policy

Candidates and staff involved in any potential malpractice must be given the opportunity to respond in writing to the allegations, which may be included with the report, or may be supplied separately to the Awarding Body. They must have access to all the evidence against

them in order to provide full responses, and should be entitled to have a suitable witness present at an appropriate stage of the investigation.

6. If the malpractice affects the issuing of results or certificates, or the undertaking of any examinations or assessments, the Awarding Body reserves the right to refuse entry of candidates for examinations and withhold the issue of results while investigations are ongoing, and depending on the outcome, results may be released or permanently withheld.
7. If responsibility has not been delegated, the reports will be submitted within a further 7 working days to the Awarding Bodies disciplinary panel.