



Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure (including the COVID – 19 Addendum)

March 2021



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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the policy

This policy provides definitions of malpractice and maladministration and sets out information about the procedures which all centres approved to offer VTCT and ITEC qualifications, must follow for reporting and dealing with any suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration.

VTCT publishes this policy, procedures and process flowchart on its website and in centre handbooks, to support all parties involved in the handling of suspected or actual instances of malpractice or maladministration, by providing a framework for investigating and dealing with such instances in an effective and consistent manner.

This document sets out the process for investigating suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration. It should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures:

- Centre Agreement;
- Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Policy;
- External Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure;
- Sanctions Policy;
- Adverse Effects and Investigations;
- Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures;
- Enquiries and Appeals Policy;
- Withdrawal of Approval Policy;

1.2. Scope of the policy

The Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedures apply to all VTCT and ITEC qualifications. This policy is provided for the use of VTCT and ITEC customers, being learners who are taking or have taken VTCT and ITEC assessments, and personnel with responsibilities for managing, delivering, assessing and quality assuring qualifications in VTCT and ITEC approved centres, who suspect or become aware that malpractice or maladministration has occurred. It is also provided for awarding organisation personnel who suspect or become aware that malpractice or maladministration has occurred.

1.3. Regulatory authorities

This policy addresses the requirements of the relevant regulatory authorities' criteria.

1.3.1. Adverse effects

Attention is drawn to VTCT's obligations to consider risks caused by adverse effects, defined as an act, omission, event, incident or circumstance that gives rise to prejudice to learners or potential learners or adversely affects:

- the ability of the awarding organisation to undertake the development, delivery or award of qualifications in accordance with regulatory requirements.



- the standards of qualifications which the awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available, or public confidence in qualifications.

1.3.2. Malpractice

Malpractice is the term used for any action, activity, neglect, default or other practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process, the validity of results and/or certificates or the reputation and credibility of VTCT or the wider qualification community.

Malpractice has serious implications for the centre and learners and is always treated very seriously by VTCT.

Malpractice may include a range of issues, from the deliberate failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records. In this policy, this term also covers misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain groups of learners.

1.3.3. Maladministration

Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in non-compliance with VTCT's requirements or any other applicable requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration within a centre. All approved centres are expected to maintain adequate systems and procedures and ensure that staff understand them and adhere to them always. Recurrent maladministration constitutes malpractice and will be treated as such.

A list of examples of malpractice and maladministration is included as appendix 1. It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive.

1.4. Responsibilities

1.4.1. VTCT

VTCT is responsible for ensuring that all related investigations are conducted by individuals who:

- have no personal interest in the issue;
- have appropriate competence

VTCT personnel are required to follow the related procedures to deal with cases of suspected and/or actual malpractice and maladministration as effectively as possible.

VTCT will be responsible for ensuring that investigations are carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy. VTCT will allocate a suitable member of staff (e.g. a member of VTCT's Quality Assurance Team) to lead the investigation of a case, establish if malpractice or maladministration has occurred, and review any supporting evidence received or gathered by VTCT.

It is essential for VTCT to meet its obligations relating to notification of adverse effects to the regulators, including suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration. It may be required to include this in the Annual Statement of Compliance. (See 1.3.1).

Where the allegation may affect another awarding organisation and their provision, VTCT will inform that awarding body in accordance with regulatory requirements, and/or seek to undertake a joint investigation with the awarding



body if appropriate. If VTCT does not know the details of organisations that might be affected, the regulators will be asked to help identify relevant parties that should be informed.

Where an associated investigation leads to the discovery of a failure in its assessment process, VTCT takes all reasonable steps to:

- identify any other learner who has been affected by the failure;
- correct or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure;
- ensure that the failure does not recur in the future.

1.4.2. Centres

The centre agreement sets out the specific duty not to put the awarding organisation in breach of its ability to fulfil its obligations under the General Conditions of Recognition. It is therefore important that adverse effects (see 1.3.1), maladministration and/or malpractice are notified to VTCT immediately and dealt with in line with the policy and procedures.

It is also important that staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of VTCT and ITEC qualifications, and learners, are fully aware of the contents of the policy and that the centre has arrangements in place to prevent and investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration.

The centre's compliance with this policy and how it takes reasonable steps to prevent and/or investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration is reviewed periodically through the-centre monitoring arrangements.

When an investigation is conducted by the centre, the head of centre must:

- ensure the investigation is carried out by competent investigators who have no personal involvement in the incident or interest in the outcome;
- ensure the investigation is carried out in an effective, prompt and thorough manner;
- ensure staff co-operate fully with the investigation, providing speedy and full responses to requests for information.

1.5. Review arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually as part of VTCT's self-evaluation activity, which considers customer and regulatory feedback and good practice guidance, changes in VTCT's practices, actions from the regulators, changes in legislation, or trends identified from previous cases.

In addition, this policy may be updated following consideration of operational feedback to ensure VTCT's arrangements for dealing with suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration remain effective.

1.5.1. Situations brought to our attention by the regulators

Where the regulators notify us of failures that have been discovered in the assessment process of another awarding organisation, we will review if a similar failure could affect our own assessment processes and arrangements.

2. Malpractice and Maladministration - Process

2.1. Introduction

Centres are obliged to inform VTCT promptly of any suspected or alleged cases of malpractice or maladministration. Examples of malpractice and maladministration are included in appendix 1. It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive.

Where malpractice or maladministration is suspected or has occurred in a centre, including any assessment site or a partner organisation involved in the administration or assessment of the qualification, VTCT may suspend the centre from processing any further registrations and/or certification claims, and/or impose other sanctions immediately, pending the outcome of the investigation.

2.1.1. Identifying possible or actual malpractice or maladministration

Any person may identify a matter that they think could constitute malpractice or maladministration. This will normally be a centre employee, a learner, an awarding organisation employee, a contractor (e.g. a moderator), or an external agency (e.g. the Education and Skills Funding Agency). VTCT may identify cases of malpractice or maladministration through its routine work or in considering other matters, such as an appeal against results.

VTCT will notify the head of centre when an allegation of maladministration or malpractice is received. If the notification implicates the head of centre, the chair of the centre board will be notified.

Failure to report any suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration will result in the immediate suspension of the centre for registrations and/or certifications until a full investigation has been completed. Centres failing to report malpractice or maladministration may not have their approval status reinstated after the investigation is completed.

VTCT is responsible for each of the centres it approves and as such, the responsibility for investigating alleged irregularities normally rests with VTCT unless there are special circumstances which require the regulator(s) to be involved. VTCT must notify the regulator(s) when commencing an investigation and provide an estimated timescale for its completion.

2.1.2. Anonymity and Whistle Blowing

Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. An informant who is concerned that possible adverse consequences may occur if their identity is revealed to another party should notify VTCT.

VTCT will always aim to keep a whistle blower's identity confidential where asked to do so, although it cannot be guaranteed. VTCT may, for example, need to disclose an informant's identity if the matter leads to issues that need to be taken up by other parties such as the police, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies, the courts (regarding any court proceedings) or the regulators.

The investigator(s) assigned to review the allegation will not reveal the whistle blower's identity unless the whistle blower agrees, or doing so is necessary for the purposes of the investigation. The investigator will advise the whistle blower if it becomes necessary to reveal their identity. A whistle blower should also understand that they may be identifiable by others due to the nature or circumstances of the disclosure (e.g. the party against whom the



allegation is made may identify possible sources of disclosure without such details being disclosed to them). Once a concern has been raised, VTCT has a duty to pursue the matter. It will not be possible to prevent the matter being investigated by subsequently withdrawing a notification, as VTCT is obliged by the regulators to follow up and investigate all allegations of malpractice or maladministration.

In all cases the whistle blower will have the opportunity to raise with the investigators any concerns about the way the investigation is being conducted. It should be noted that VTCT will not disclose details of all the investigation activities, and it may not be appropriate to disclose full details of the outcomes of the investigation due to confidentiality or for legal reasons (e.g. action to be taken against the parties concerned). Please see the External Whistle Blowing Policy for further information in relation to whistle blowing arrangements.

2.1.3. Timescale

Where possible VTCT aims to:

- resolve all stages of the investigation within 20 working days of receipt of the allegation;
- produce the draft investigation report within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation, or where this is produced by the centre, receive this within the same timescale;
- confirm factual accuracy of the draft report within 5 working days of its availability;
- publish the final report and actions within 5 working days of confirmation of the draft report.

If it is likely that any stage of the investigation may take longer, VTCT will advise all parties concerned of the anticipated revised timescale.

2.1.4. Investigating a case of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration

The fundamental principle of all investigations is to conduct them in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias. In doing so, investigations will be underpinned by terms of reference based around the following broad objectives:

- to establish the facts relating to allegations to determine whether any irregularities have occurred;
- to identify the cause of the irregularities and those involved;
- to establish the scale of the irregularities and whether other qualifications may be affected;
- to evaluate any action already taken by the centre;
- to determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered learners;
- to preserve the integrity of the qualification;
- to ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued;
- to obtain clear evidence to support any sanctions to be applied to the centre and/or to members of staff, in accordance with VTCT's Sanctions Policy;
- to identify any adverse patterns or trends.

VTCT may carry out the investigation itself or require the centre to carry this out, normally within 10 working days of the notification of the case.



VTCT will expect all parties who are either directly or indirectly involved in the investigation to co-operate fully with the investigation. In carrying out any investigation VTCT will be sensitive to the effect on and the reputation of a centre and/or those members of staff or other individuals who may be subject to investigation. It will strive to ensure that the investigation is carried out as confidentially as possible.

The organisation/person who is the subject of the allegation will have the opportunity to raise any issues with the investigator(s) at any stage about the proposed approach and conduct of the investigation. The investigation may involve a request for further information from relevant parties and/or interviews with personnel involved in the investigation. Interviews will be recorded, dated and signed by all involved. The person(s) accused of malpractice or maladministration may choose to be accompanied in the interview by a work colleague, trade union representative or other person, and must be advised of this right in time to be able to arrange to be accompanied. Children, young people and vulnerable adults must be accompanied at the interview by an appropriate adult.

VTCT may find that the complexity of a case or a lack of co-operation from a centre means that it is not possible to complete an investigation. In such circumstances the relevant regulatory authority is consulted to determine how best to progress the matter.

2.1.5. Retention of materials

VTCT will:

- ensure all materials collected as part of an investigation are securely kept and require the centre to do likewise;
- retain, for a period of not less than 5 years, all records and original documentation concerning a completed investigation leading to sanctions against a centre;
- retain, until the case and any appeals have been heard and for five years thereafter, all records and original documentation of an investigation leading to the invalidation of certificates, or criminal or civil prosecution.

2.1.6. Use of sanctions during the investigation

Either at notification of a suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration and at any time during the investigation, VTCT reserves the right to impose sanctions on the centre in accordance with VTCT's Sanctions Policy, to protect the interests of learners and the integrity of the qualifications. Any sanctions imposed will be proportionate to the nature of the allegation.

VTCT also reserves the right to withhold or invalidate a learner's and/or cohort's results for all the VTCT and ITEC qualifications and/or units they are studying at the time of the notification or investigation.

Exceptionally, the regulator(s) may need to take over an investigation. In such circumstances the regulator(s) will provide a written instruction to VTCT informing them of this requirement and its reasons for taking such action.

Where a member of VTCT's staff is under investigation VTCT may suspend them, or move them to other duties until the investigation is complete. Throughout the investigation an appropriately appointed responsible manager will retain an overview of the work of the investigation team to ensure that due process is being followed, timescales are being maintained, and appropriate evidence is being gathered and reviewed. The appointed individual will also be responsible for liaising with and keeping relevant parties informed.



2.1.7. Investigation outcomes and actions

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place, VTCT considers what action to take to:

- minimise the risk to the integrity of the qualification(s);
- maintain public confidence in the delivery and awarding of qualifications;
- discourage others from carrying out similar instances of malpractice or maladministration;
- ensure there has been no gain from compromising VTCT's standards.

The actions VTCT may take include:

- undertaking additional/increased visits to a centre to provide a greater level of support and/or monitoring;
- requiring specific centre staff to undergo additional training and/or scrutiny by the centre if there are concerns about their ability to undertake their role effectively in the delivery of VTCT and ITEC qualifications;
- not permitting specific centre staff to be involved in the delivery or assessment of VTCT and ITEC qualifications (e.g. invigilation);
- imposing sanctions on the centre – if so, these will be communicated to the centre in accordance with VTCT's Sanctions Policy together with the rationale for the sanction(s) selected;
- taking appropriate action against a learner(s) in relation to proven instances of cheating, plagiarism or fraud (see the Plagiarism, Cheating and Collusion process document);
- amending aspects of VTCT's qualification development, delivery and awarding arrangements, and if required, assessment and monitoring arrangements and associated guidance to prevent the issue from recurring;
- informing relevant third parties (e.g. funding bodies) of VTCT's findings in case they need to take relevant action in relation to the centre;
- carrying out additional, related investigations if VTCT suspects the issue may be more widespread at the centre and/or exist at other centres.

In proven cases of malpractice and/or maladministration by a centre, VTCT reserves the right to charge the centre for the cost of any resits and reissue of certificates and/or additional quality assurance activities/centre monitoring visits.

VTCT must inform the regulator(s) whenever it finds evidence that a certificate may be invalid and must agree with the regulator(s) any appropriate action that may be required. Any qualification certificates are deemed invalid if any of the following are found to have occurred:

- the evidence assessed is not the learner's own work;
- the learner has not finished the qualification before the certificate has been claimed;
- the certificates have been claimed based on falsified records;
- the awarding organisation has issued certificates contrary to regulatory requirements.



Subsequent actions to be taken will be agreed with the regulator(s) by VTCT and will be proportionate to the gravity of the malpractice or maladministration.

When the decision is taken to invalidate certificates, VTCT must ensure that the centre promptly follows the principle of seeking to protect the interests of learners as far as reasonably possible in the circumstances.

VTCT will:

- inform the centre concerned and the regulatory authorities why the certificates are invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates;
- direct the centre to inform the affected learners of the action VTCT is taking and that their original certificates are invalid;
- direct the centre to return the invalid certificates to VTCT if possible;
- amend its database so that replacement of the invalid certificates cannot be issued;
- direct the centre to amend its records to show that the original awards are invalid.

2.1.8. Right to appeal

An appeal can be made against a decision or action taken/to be taken following an investigation into maladministration or malpractice. See page 15 for the related process.

2.2. Process for dealing with suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration

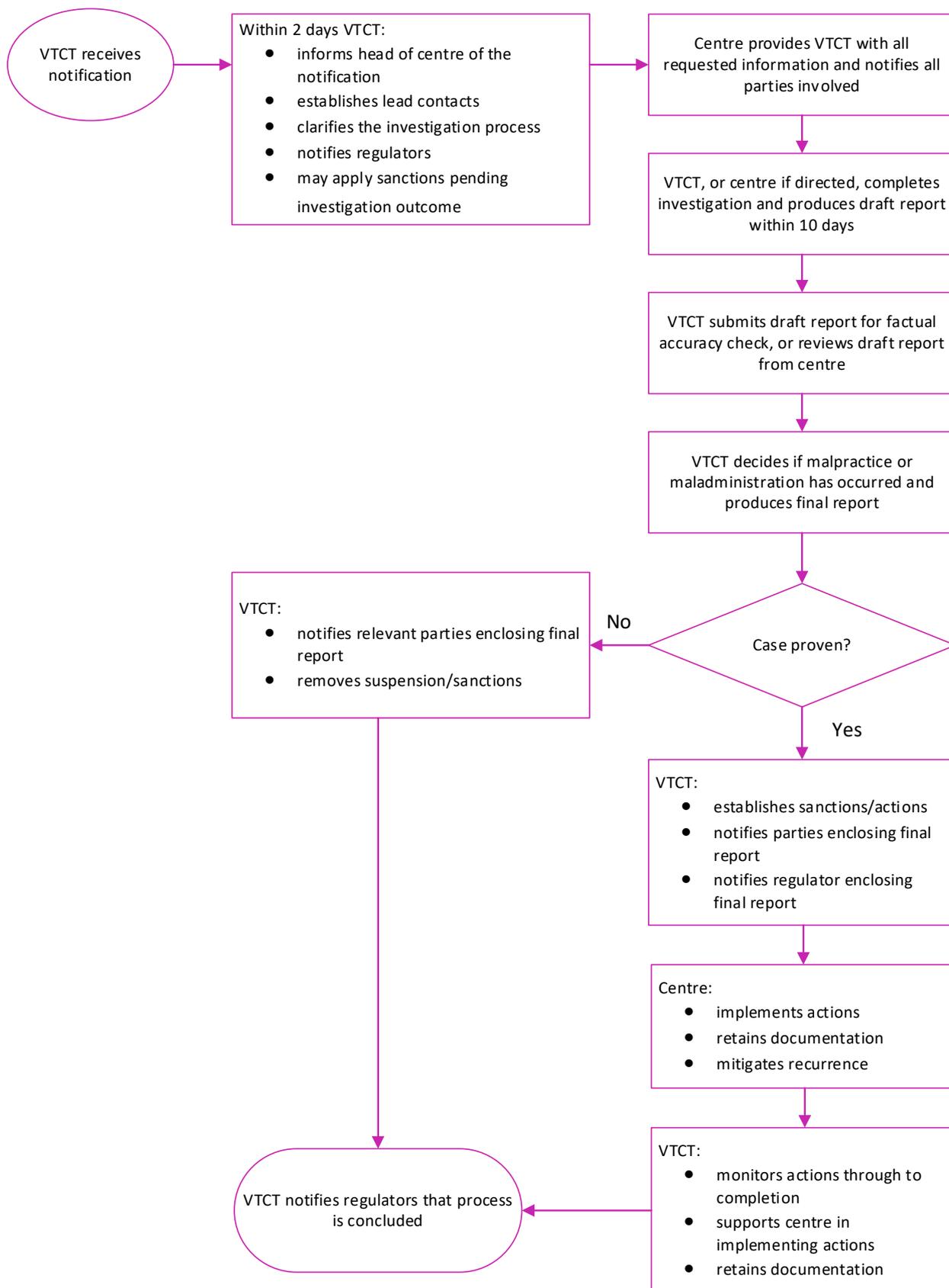
- An initial notification of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration should be submitted to qualityassurance@vtct.org.uk no later than 2 days after the occurrence of the event. The notification must include the following information:
 - centre name and contact details of person submitting the notification;
 - learner's name and registration number (if applicable);
 - name(s) and job role(s) of centre/awarding organisation personnel involved in the case;
 - qualification(s) or service(s) affected;
 - nature of the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration and associated dates;
 - details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by the centre or other person involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances;
 - declaration of any personal interest by the person making the allegation.
- Within 2 days of notification VTCT:
 - informs the head of centre in writing of the allegation, the information provided to date, the process of investigation and the possible outcomes;
 - shares with the head of centre any information in relation to the allegation and investigation that will be, or has been, shared with regulator(s) and may be shared with other relevant bodies (e.g. police);
 - draws the attention of the head of centre to the right to appeal in case the centre ultimately wishes to appeal against the outcome of the process;
 - establishes/confirms the lead contacts for VTCT and the centre for the impending investigation;
 - may direct the centre to carry out an investigation, or inform the centre VTCT will be undertaking the investigation itself;
 - clarifies the process for the investigation;

- notifies the regulators, and subsequently updates them throughout the investigation;
 - may apply sanctions if deemed appropriate, pending the outcome of the investigation, and if so informs the head of centre of these.
- The centre must:
 - provide VTCT with all the requested information;
 - advise all parties implicated in the case of the allegation and possible outcomes;
 - ensure all parties involved receive a copy of the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedures and are made aware of the timescales for the investigation;
 - inform those parties of any actions taken pending the outcome of the investigation;
 - advise all parties implicated that they have the right to respond to allegations and the right to appeal against any decisions for actions against them.
 - VTCT carries out its investigation, or the centre investigates if directed by VTCT for example, in the case of an allegation of collusion in an assessment.
 - If the centre is directed to investigate the case, it completes its internal investigation within 10 days and submits its report to VTCT immediately upon completion. If there is a reason why this timescale cannot be met, the centre must notify VTCT immediately, giving the reason. The report should cover the points set out in this section below. A report template is available upon request.
 - On receipt of the centre's investigation report, VTCT undertakes to complete its review of the report within 5 working days. If for any reason this is likely to take longer, the centre will be notified immediately. If VTCT does not agree with points of factual accuracy in the report, the centre will be notified and a record will be maintained.
 - If VTCT investigates, it aims to complete this within 10 days of notification and produces a draft report summarising, in line with the objectives set out on page 9:
 - the origin of the issue or mode of discovery of the alleged irregularity;
 - where the breach, if any, occurred;
 - the facts of the case;
 - any mitigating factors;
 - with whom the responsibility for the breach lies;
 - details of the investigation;
 - the evidence provided;
 - the conclusions drawn.
 - The draft report is submitted to all parties concerned to check for factual accuracy. Any subsequent amendments are agreed between the parties and VTCT.
 - VTCT decides whether malpractice or maladministration has occurred.
 - If VTCT has concluded that malpractice or maladministration has or is likely to have occurred, it decides upon the appropriate action to be taken, in line with its Sanctions Policy.
 - If malpractice or maladministration is not found, VTCT lifts any related sanctions which have been imposed.
 - VTCT produces and submits a final summary report to all relevant parties and informs them in writing of any actions to be taken and sanctions to be imposed/removed.
 - VTCT submits the final report and action plan to the regulator.
 - VTCT makes the final report available to other external agencies as required.



- Where an independent/third party made the original allegation, VTCT informs them of the outcome. In doing so some details may be withheld, if to disclose such information would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.
- Where the allegation was about a member of awarding body staff or contractor, appropriate training and/or disciplinary procedures will be implemented. In some circumstances the police or other external authorities may need to be alerted.
- The centre must:
 - implement any actions require as a result of its own investigation or that carried out by VTCT;
 - retain all relevant documentation securely and in line with its own policies;
 - take actions to prevent a recurrence of the incident.
- VTCT:
 - monitors the completion of actions and/or compliance with any sanctions by the centre;
 - provides the regulators with updates and informs them when the actions have been completed;
 - supports the centre in implementing actions to be taken relating to the case and preventing recurrence;
 - retains all relevant documentation in line with data protection legislation.

2.3. Malpractice/Maladministration Investigation – Flowchart





2.4. Process for dealing with an appeal against a decision or action relating to malpractice or maladministration

A centre or learner may submit an appeal against a decision or action to be taken following an investigation into maladministration or malpractice. This section sets out the process to be followed to appeal against such a decision or action. For clarity, this appeal process is separate from appeal against an assessment decision, unless an assessment decision is the subject of the appeal following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.

- The appellant should submit a report to the Chief Academic Officer setting out the reasons for the appeal, together with any supporting evidence, as soon as possible and no later than 15 working days after the date of receipt of the decision. Please note that appeal applications without supporting evidence will not be accepted.
- The following information must be included in the appeal:
 - Centre name and number;
 - Learner name(s) and registration number(s) if relevant;
 - The affected service;
 - The name of the qualification involved;
 - Details of any investigation carried out relating to the issue;
 - The appellant's name, position and signature.
- VTCT will:
 - consider if it will accept the appeal and notifies the appellant of this decision, normally within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal;
 - if it accepts the appeal, arrange for a panel comprising a minimum one senior manager and an independent person to review the case and come to a decision, normally within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal.
- If it is not possible to complete the review within 20 working days, VTCT will notify the appellant of the expected timescale.
- Possible outcomes are as follows:
 - the appeal is not upheld;
 - the decision has been judged to be unreasonable, and has been removed or changed;
 - procedures were judged to have not been applied consistently, properly or fairly. The subsequent decision is reviewed and revised accordingly.
- The panel's decision is final and completes the internal appeals procedures. No further appeal will be accepted.
- If an appellant wishes to take the matter further they may consider contacting the relevant regulator(s). The regulators would require evidence that the appellant had exhausted VTCT's own appeals procedure as set out above prior to taking this step.



3. 3. Appendix 1 Examples of Malpractice and Maladministration

3.1. Malpractice

The following list provides examples of centre and learner malpractice. This list is not exhaustive and is intended as guidance on VTCT's definition of malpractice.

- Deliberate failure to adhere continually to VTCT's centre approval and/or qualification approval requirements or actions assigned to the centre within stated timelines;
- Denial of access to premises, records, information, learners and staff by any authorised VTCT representative and/or the regulatory authorities;
- Inadequate centre procedures for the induction of staff or any contracted person involved in the delivery of qualifications;
- Failure to carry out internal assessment, internal moderation or internal verification in accordance with VTCT's requirements;
- Deliberate failure to adhere to VTCT's learner registration and certification procedures;
- Deliberate failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence.
- Fraudulent claim for certificates;
- Intentional withholding of information from VTCT which is critical to maintaining the rigour of quality assurance and standards of qualifications;
- Deliberate misuse of VTCT's logo and trademarks or misrepresentation of a centre's relationship with VTCT and/or its recognition and approval status with VTCT;
- Collusion or permitting collusion in exams/assessments, e.g. allowing another learner to copy work or the unsanctioned collaboration between a learner or another individual in the production of work to be submitted;
- Learners still working towards a qualification after certification claims have been made;
- Persistent instances of maladministration within a centre;
- Deliberate contravention by a centre and/or its learners of the assessment arrangements as specified for VTCT and ITEC qualifications;
- Loss of, theft of, or a breach of confidentiality in any assessment materials;
- Plagiarism of any nature by learners and/or staff;
- Copying from another learner (including using ICT to do so);
- Personation - assuming the identity of another learner or having someone assume the identity of the named learner during an assessment;
- Unauthorised amendment, copying or distributing of exam/assessment papers/materials;
- Inappropriate assistance to learners by centre staff (e.g. unfairly helping them to pass a unit or qualification);
- Deliberate submission of false information to gain a qualification or unit;
- Deliberate failure to adhere to, or attempts to circumnavigate the requirements of VTCT's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy;

- False ID used at the registration stage;
- Creation of false records;
- Cheating;
- Cash for certificates (e.g. the selling of certificates for cash);
- Selling papers/assessment details/certificates;
- Failure to manage and prevent conflicts of interest;
- Failure to provide learners and staff, including contractors, with the knowledge of their responsibilities through policies and procedures;
- Failure to review systems, policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose;
- Centre postponement of visits by VTCT's External Quality Assurer for more than 6 months;
- Failure to carry out delivery, internal assessment, internal moderation or internal quality assurance in accordance with VTCT's requirements;
- Failure to conduct assessments or other external assessment according to VTCT's procedures or regulations;
- Inaccurate recording of learner assessment decisions leading to invalid claims for certification;
- Deliberate falsification, fabrication or forgery of assessment evidence, records or authentication statements by centres or learners;
- Failure to retain accurate learner assessment decision for the specified timescale;
- Deliberate destruction of another's work;
- Obtaining examination or assessment material without authorization;
- Introduction of unauthorised material into an assessment room, for example notes, study guides, own blank paper, personal stereos, mobile phones and other similar electronic devices;
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information during an assessment (or the attempt to) by any means;
- Failure to follow a centre's own malpractice and maladministration policy and/or report occurrences to VTCT;
- Tampering with learners' scripts or other assessed work after collection;
- Non-compliance with invigilation requirements during assessments;
- Failing to keep assessment papers secure prior to assessment;
- Withholding of information from VTCT, by deliberate act or omission, which is required to assure VTCT of the centre's ability to deliver qualifications appropriately.

3.2. Maladministration

The following list provides examples of centre and learner maladministration. This list is not exhaustive and is intended as guidance on VTCT's definition of maladministration.

- Failure to adhere to VTCT's learner registration and certification procedures;



- Failure to adhere to VTCT's centre agreement and/or qualification requirements and/or associated actions assigned to the centre;
- Late registration of learners;
- Unreasonable delays in responding to requests and/or communications from VTCT;
- Inaccurate claim for certificates;
- Failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, e.g. certification claims;
- Misuse of the VTCT or ITEC's logo and trademarks or misrepresentation of a centre's relationship with VTCT or ITEC and/or its recognition and approval status with regard to VTCT or ITEC qualifications. VTCT may take legal action if centres fail to cooperate with reasonable VTCT requests;
- Failure to adhere to, or to circumnavigate, the requirements of VTCT's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy;
- Failure to adhere to VTCT policies, procedures and practices;
- Failure to adhere to VTCT financial payment terms and/or plans (whether infrequent or persistent).

4. COVID 19 Addendum

4.1. Scope

This addendum is required to ensure that VTCT maintains clear guidance in relation to dealing with malpractice, in accordance with the Extraordinary Regulatory Framework (ERF) during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Covid-19 Malpractice Policy and Process will remain in place until the cessation of the Extraordinary Regulatory Framework.

4.2. Arrangements

VTCT will investigate all alleged malpractice following normal procedures outlined in the Malpractice Policy and Procedure. However, timelines indicated for dealing with individual cases may be extended due to COVID 19 (see COVID-19 Malpractice Investigation – Flowchart/Timelines below).

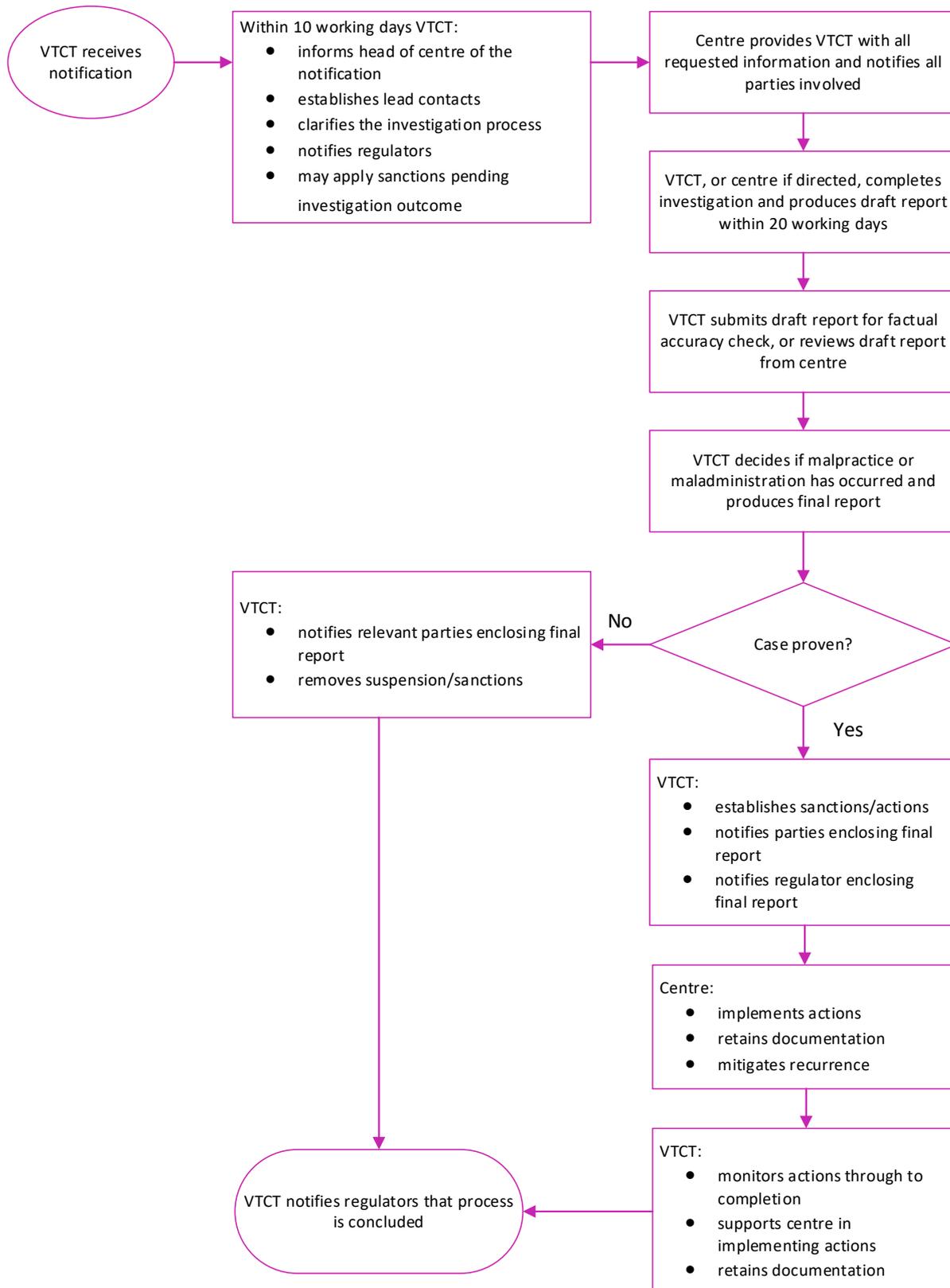
VTCT will prioritise alleged malpractice relating to centres in respect of the following:

- Failure by a Head of Centre submit the required declaration(s) when approving and submitting their Centre Assessment Grades and rank orders
- Failure by a Centre to appropriately manage any Conflicts of Interest within a Centre
- Centre Assessment Grades and/or rank orders being released to learners (or their parents/carers) prior to the issuing of results
- Unusual exam entry behavior including creating entries for learners who had not intended to enter for June 2020
- Additional unit entries for a specific qualification without discussion with VTCT
- A failure to submit Assessment Grades and rank orders which have been derived objectively and honestly by a group of lectures/tutors that represent the grades that learner's would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their assessments as planned.
- A failure to submit Centre Assessment Grades and rank orders which fair and honest and without bias.
- Represent the grades that learner's would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their assessments as planned.
- Centre staff have been unreasonably pressured into making changes to their Centre Assessment Grades and rank order judgements or making such changes themselves without reasonable grounds
- A failure to accurately report learners' completed units for vocational qualifications
- Alleged bribery in relation to awarding of specific grades to specific individuals
- The submission of inauthentic evidence which is identified by External Quality Assurance processes

This list not exhaustive and is in addition to the list within the main body of the Malpractice Policy and Procedure.

4.3. Covid-19 Malpractice Investigation – Flowchart/Timelines

COVID-19 Malpractice Investigation – Flowchart/Timelines





Document amendment history page

Version	Document Owner	Issue Date	Changes	Role
			Previously included as part of the centre handbook up and including Feb 2015.	
v1	Head of Quality	11/06/2015	Standalone document created, separated from the Centre Handbook.	Quality and Processing Manager
v2	Head of Quality	19/04/2017	Updated with new brand	Quality and Processing Supervisor
v2.1	Head of Quality	27/06/2017	Appendix added	Quality and Processing Supervisor
v3	Quality and Processing Manager	14/11/2017	Content added	Quality and Processing Supervisor
v4	Quality and Processing Manager	12/02/2018	Formatted and updated to new branding	Product Designer (Qualifications)
v5	Quality and Processing Manager	03/03/2018	Reviewed in response to SQA feedback and amended to ensure the policy covers requirements of all UK regulators in addition to Ofqual.	Executive Director of Awarding
v6	Quality and Processing Manager	06/03/2018	Removal of appendix 2 and fixed formatting error	Product Administrator
v7	Head of Quality	05/03/2019	Updated formatting onto new template	Compliance Manager
v8	Head of Quality	22/07/2020	Added the COVID – 19 Addendum	Compliance Manager
v8.1	Quality Lead	18/03/2021	Amendment to VTCT job titles following restructure	Quality Assurance Administrator
v9	Quality Lead	19/03/2021	Update to appeals	Product and Regulation Manager



Document Review

Role	Review Status
Quality and Processing Manager	Reviewed
Compliance Manager	Reviewed
Chief Academic Officer	Reviewed

Document Owner

Document Owner	Document shared with
Quality and Processing Manager	Assessment Manager
Head of Quality	Head of Qualifications and Processing
Quality Lead	

Document Sign-off

Role	Sign-off Date
Executive Director of Awarding	03/03/2018
Executive Director of Awarding	06/03/2018
Chief Academic Officer	19/03/2021