



**LETTA**

## **Academic Integrity Policy**

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## 1. Purpose

LETTA is committed to providing high-quality qualifications and assessments that are delivered fairly and accurately. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that LETTA is vigilant about any events which may lead to malpractice/maladministration and that robust arrangements are in place to prevent and investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration.

This policy aims to define malpractice and maladministration and provide support to centres, staff and learners.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 Academic integrity

Academic integrity means demonstrating honest, moral behaviours when producing and/or assessing academic work. This involves acknowledging the work of others, giving appropriate credit to others where their ideas are presented as part of your work and the importance of producing work in your own voice. Contributions by artificial intelligence (AI) tools must be properly acknowledged. As part of a learning community, learners share ideas and develop new ones. Learners need to be able to interpret and present other people's ideas and combine these with their own when producing work. To achieve this, learners will be supported to develop skills of reflection and self-awareness about topics such as fairness, responsibility and respect in academic practice.

Academic integrity includes a variety of elements including:

- **honesty** - being truthful about which ideas are our own and which are derived from others and about the methodologies and results of our work.
- **trust** - the ability to rely on the truth of someone or something is a fundamental pillar of academic pursuit and a necessary foundation of academic work.
- **fairness** - not trying to gain an advantage by unfair means for instance by passing off the work of others as your own.
- **responsibility** - taking an active role in our own learning.
- **respect** - for the work of fellow students, teachers and other writers and scholars.
- **courage** - being courageous means acting in accordance with one's convictions. Students who exhibit courage hold themselves and their fellow learners to the highest standards of academic integrity even when doing so involves risk of negative consequences, such as a bad grade, or reprisal from their peers or others.

### 2.2 Malpractice

Malpractice refers to a deliberate act, activity or practice which is in breach of the regulations and compromises the integrity of assessment, quality assurance, the validity of results and certificates, the reputation of LETTA, gives rise to prejudice in learners or compromises public confidence in LETTA's qualifications.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Staff or learners intentionally providing inaccurate or misleading submissions of declaration forms and/or other evidence
- Any staff or learners undertaking any part of the assessment on behalf of someone else
- Any action or inaction that allows a learner to have an unfair advantage or causes a learner to be disadvantaged
- Failure to carry out appropriate quality assurance and moderation in line with LETTA requirements, internal assessment or internal moderation in accordance with LETTA requirements
- Plagiarism or fraud by learners or staff
- Collusion
- The unauthorised obtaining, disseminating, or facilitating of access to secure examination/assessment material
- Members of staff undertaking or amending learner answers for any examination on behalf of learner(s)

### **2.3 Maladministration**

Maladministration refers to the activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements, or the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration.

Examples include:

- Unreasonable delays in responding to requests and/or communications from LETTA
- Failure to maintain and keep appropriate and accurate auditable records

### **2.5 Academic misconduct**

Academic misconduct refers to a learner gaining or attempting to gain, or helping others to gain or attempt to gain, an unfair academic advantage in formal University assessment, or any activity likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research. It includes being in possession of unauthorised materials or electronic devices during an examination, including

recording or communication devices or devices that can store data, even where the Registered Student is unaware that such materials or devices are unauthorised, has no intention of using them, or is unaware that they have them in their possession.

## **2.6 Poor academic practice**

LETTA recognises that there is a difference between academic misconduct and poor academic practice. Poor academic practice involves minor breaches of discipline-specific citation and/or referencing conventions that give no discernible academic advantage. Where poor academic practice is identified, a learner's work will be marked according to the relevant grade criteria, and they will be directed to the resources available to help them improve their working methods and academic writing to avoid potential academic misconduct.

## **3. Types of academic misconduct**

### **3.1 Plagiarism**

Definition of plagiarism is defined by LETTA as learners authenticating and submitting work for assessment that has been taken from another person or source. This could be any percentage of work this has been copied from published work, the internet, other learners or any other sources. Plagiarism also includes copied text that has not been cited and referenced correctly.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- The use of downloaded content including text, images, diagrams etc. from the internet without acknowledgement of the source
- Copying and pasting extracts or whole texts from another's work, published or unpublished, without the use of quotation marks and/or acknowledgement of the source
- Use of diagrams, images, and course materials without acknowledgement of the source
- Paraphrasing/summarising extensively the work of another or using their ideas without an acknowledgement of the source
- The use of purchased essays submitted as a learner's work

### **3.2 Self-plagiarism**

The act of a learner presenting part or all of their work that has been previously submitted to meet the requirements of a different assessment, except where the nature of the assessment makes this permissible.

### **3.3 Collusion**

Collusion is defined as two or more learners who collaborate on a piece of work and submit this as their own.

Examples of collusion include:

- More than one learner collaborates to produce a piece of work together with the intention that it is submitted as their work. If a learner has taken part in a joint project, assignments should be written up individually
- A learner submitting the work of another learner (with their consent) as their own, individual work. In such cases, both learners would be deemed to have committed collusion
- A learner working with a third party to produce work that will be submitted as the learner's own

### **3.4 Cheating**

LETTA defines cheating in an examination venue as including:

- Taking notes or any unauthorised materials into an examination venue. This includes having notes available in toilets or other areas that may be visited during the examination. If students refuse to comply with instructions if they request to leave the examination venue during the examination (e.g. a toilet visit), this may be considered evidence of attempted academic misconduct
- Obtaining an advanced copy of a question paper
- Unauthorised communication during an examination (including via telephone or other electronic media)
- Removing an examination answer book from the examination venue
- Copying from another candidate
- Allowing oneself to be impersonated
- Impersonating another candidate

### **3.5 Fabricating or falsifying data or using without permission another person's work**

The act of fabricating or falsifying data to include presenting work that has not taken place. This includes reports or projects based on experimental or field work. It may also include falsifying attendance sheets for placements where this is part of the assessment requirements.

### **3.6 Purchasing or commissioning**

The act of attempting to purchase or purchasing work for an assessment including, for example from the internet, or attempting to commission, or commissioning someone else to complete an assessment on your behalf.

#### **4. Reporting and investigating allegations of academic misconduct, malpractice or maladministration**

##### **4.1 Responsibilities of LETTA staff**

LETTA staff and associates who discover or suspect academic misconduct must immediately report this to the course Programme Leader, or a designate member of staff with sufficient authority and independence.

The Programme Leader is required to notify the Director of School Improvement of all allegations or incidents of malpractice, actual or suspected within 10 working days of it being reported to them and before the commencement of any internal investigation activity.

LETTA expects staff to cooperate fully with any investigations into cases of suspected or actual academic misconduct. Failure to report suspected academic misconduct or malpractice and/or cooperate with follow-up activity can be construed as malpractice and may lead to qualifications not being awarded, certificates not being issued, future entries and/or registrations not being accepted or withdrawal of qualification.

##### **4.2 Reporting malpractice and suspected malpractice**

All suspected cases of academic misconduct/maladministration/malpractice must be reported to the course Programme Leader. LETTA intends to acknowledge receipt of any incident reports within 48 hours.

The Programme Leader will be responsible for carrying out investigations promptly and effectively in accordance with this policy.

As part of the investigation, we retain the right to:

- Involve the learner, staff members and others in the investigation process
- Contact the learner (and/or the learner's representative) directly; and
- Contact staff members directly

If additional information is required from staff or learners in the form of interviews, emails or copies of documentation, LETTA will ensure all material collected as part of the investigation is kept secure and retained for no less than 5 years.

LETTA aim to complete a full investigation of academic misconduct/malpractice/maladministration within 10 working days of acknowledgement of the incident report.

Once the investigation is completed, LETTA will complete a full written report which will be communicated to all those involved. This will be communicated by the Programme Leader.

This will include:

- Identify where the breach, if any, occurred
- Confirm the facts of the case. Identify who is responsible for the breach (if any)
- Confirm an appropriate level of remedial action to be applied

#### **4.3 Sanctions relating to staff involvement with proven academic misconduct, malpractice and maladministration**

Where academic misconduct/malpractice/maladministration is proven, LETTA will consider the severity of the incident and the impact and will always act to protect the integrity of its service. Where a staff member is found to have wilfully or unintentionally committed malpractice or maladministration, this could invoke the disciplinary procedure which could ultimately lead to their dismissal. Failure to act and disclose acts of academic misconduct, malpractice and maladministration in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy may also lead to disciplinary action being taken.

#### **4.4 Sanctions relating to learner involvement with proven academic misconduct, malpractice and maladministration**

Where academic misconduct/malpractice/maladministration is proven, LETTA will consider the severity of the incident and the impact and will always act to protect the integrity of its service. Several actions may be taken where a learner has committed academic misconduct, malpractice or maladministration. This action may include:

- Stopping access to an assessment or suspending delivery of an EPA or qualification
- Termination of the service agreement
- Refusing to issue results
- Invalidating claims for a certificate
- Disqualifying a learner from taking any component of the qualification, or completing a qualification



- Reporting learners or tutors to the relevant awarding organisation for investigation
- Refusing to accept the assessment undertaken. In some circumstances, a resit may be offered with capped grading.
- Further training provided about plagiarism where appropriate

## 5. Appeals

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Feedback and Complaints Policy, and appeals should be made under the procedures set out within that policy.