Guidance in relation to suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments

This guidance is principally for centre staff who may witness malpractice in examinations and assessments but may be unsure about what action to take.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) gives legal protection to employees from being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing ("blowing the whistle on") certain serious concerns. This allows you the opportunity to bring to your Senior Management Team's attention possible corruption or non-conformance with legal obligations for example, but also when you suspect malpractice is taking place.

What should you do if you see malpractice taking place in examinations or assessments?

If you believe that your management team will take action to remedy the situation then informing your line manager may be the best solution. However, if you believe that your Senior Management Team is involved, or you believe that you may be victimised by raising the issues with them, then you may wish to talk to the relevant awarding body.

You will still be protected by the PIDA if:

- you reasonably believe that by making the disclosure to your employer you will be victimised; or
- you reasonably believe that by making the disclosure to your employer there is likely to be a cover-up; or
- the matter has previously been raised internally or with the sector regulator.

Who do you talk to and what happens if you contact an awarding body?

Each awarding body has staff who deal with malpractice. You can talk to them in confidence and explain your concerns.

The awarding body will:

- respect your rights under the PIDA;
- understand the difficult position that you are in;
- have experience of similar situations; and
- explain the importance of supporting evidence and the sort of evidence that might help in your particular case.

The awarding body will make every effort to protect your identity, if that is what you wish, unless legally obliged to release it. This may be in the course of a police investigation, for example.

Please be aware that it will not be possible for the awarding body to provide you with a report on the findings or outcome of any investigation that may ensue.

On behalf of PERSES

Signed: Date: 28th of January 2026

Mr Stephen McCann – Managing Director