



IIMTS
Awarding Body

IIMT STUDIES LTD **CENTRE POLICY**

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Investigation Policy

Policy Compliance:

This policy complies with
Ofqual, Handbook- General Conditions of Recognition

- A7 Management of accidents
- A8 Malpractice and maladministration B1
- Role of Responsible Officer
- B3 Notification to Ofqual of certain events I1
- Appeals Process



Awarding Quality Qualifications through Global Recognition

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Important contact-

Any query or concern related to this policy may be directly addressed to the Responsible Officer-

[IIMT Studies Ltd] Company
number 11649333

Registered office address
[Havelock Hub
14 Havelock Place Harrow
London HA1
1LJ

Ph- +44-7466650066
Email- info@iimtsab.co.uk
Website- www.iimtsab.co.uk

Awarding body:

IIMT Studies Ltd- www.iimtsab.co.uk

Acronym used to represent IIMT Studies Ltd (IIMT Studies):

IIMTS AB

Regulating Body:

OFQUAL

Ofqual.gov.uk

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(A) Policy Code: IIMTS_AO_OGCR_INVP_01_2020

(B) Policy Statement:

IIMT Studies is dedicated to ensuring the standards of the qualifications it certifies. In our commitment to quality assurance, we provide guidance and support to Centres and learners, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements. Annual policy reviews and timely adjustments guarantee the relevance of our policies.

This policy document explains procedures for investigating suspected malpractice, compliance with regulatory standards, and fairness, thoroughness, impartiality, and objectivity. IIMT Studies publishes these procedures, guiding Centres in maintaining the integrity of qualifications. Applicable to all employees, centres and learners, this procedure ensures a standardised approach to investigations.

(C) Policy Scope:

This procedure applies to IIMT Studies employees, contracted staff, and recognised centres, establishing the essential conditions for conducting investigations. It ensures a uniform and impartial approach to investigation for all.

This policy explains the measures adopted by IIMT Studies to address and mitigate any adverse effects during the delivery, assessment, and awarding of our qualifications. The policy clarifies instances where preventative measures prove unattainable, necessitating process compliance clarified by IIMT Studies. This policy sets a standard for maintaining transparency, accountability and fairness in investigation.

(D) Objectives of Policy:

In this policy, IIMT Studies ensures the implementation of measures to mitigate any negative impacts during the delivery, assessment, and awarding of our qualifications, in instances where prevention is unattainable, attending to such cases according to the process explained by IIMT Studies.

- a. To ensure timely and appropriate step-by-step decision-making at all stages of business.
- b. To ensure that every decision related to business and service delivery is taken only by the authorised professional, the authorised body or council.
- c. To consider all relevant information and data while making all important decisions.

- d. To ensure that appropriate authority and accountability are assigned to appropriate and designated professionals, committees or bodies when making decisions related to the various functions and matters of business.

(E) Policy Framework:

Investigation Procedures:

In order to remain compliant and ensure the integrity of our qualification is maintained, IIMT Studies mentions the following measures to take when there is a situation of investigation.

Identification of Instances:

Below are some possible examples, but not limited to, to understand where investigation becomes essential:

- Assessment irregularities
- Curriculum delivery issues
- Internal verification irregularities
- Non-compliance with policies
- Discrimination or unfair treatment
- Mismanagement in assessment records
- Credential fraud
- Fraudulent claims
- Supporting learners beyond it is permitted

Example

Writing/supporting in writing learners' assignments

- Health and Safety violations
- Conflict of Interest
- Operational irregularities
- Compromised technological facilities
- IT disaster/failure

Purpose of Investigation:

IIMT Studies sets out an approach to ensure the investigation aims to meet expectations set by IIMT Studies.

- Establish the facts related to allegations/complaints, avoiding assumptions of irregularities solely based on the allegation.
- Examine the facts, circumstances, and scale of the allegation.
- Identify the cause of irregularities and those involved.
- Minimise the risk to current learners and certification requests, if necessary.
- Evaluate any prior actions taken by the Centre.
- Determine if remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current learners and

preserve the integrity of the qualification.

- Ascertain if any action is required concerning previously issued certificates.
- Gather evidence to support sanctions applied to the Centre and/or staff, following IIMT Studies procedures.
- Identify patterns, trends, and necessary changes to policies or procedures by IIMT Studies and/or the Centre(s).
- Preparing a detailed report of the investigation

Carrying out the investigation:

It's important to decide who carries out the investigation. IIMT Studies ensures it takes all steps in order to ensure the integrity of its qualifications. Depending on the situation, which includes the consideration of conflict of interest policy, IIMT Studies would decide if the Centre has to investigate, or the investigation will be carried out by IIMT Studies itself. If needed, IIMT Studies will nominate a competent third party to investigate on its behalf. In case the investigation responsibility is given to the Centre.

The fundamental guiding principle of the investigation process at IIMT Studies is a commitment to fairness, reasonableness, and transparency, ensuring an exhaustive and impartial consideration of all relevant information. With this ground, IIMT Studies engages with either the Centre Head or an approved Representative of IIMT Studies at the Centre, often resulting in an on-site pre-announced or unannounced visit to the Centre. In instances where IIMT Studies applies the Centre with the investigation, it ensures the Centre receives not only the autonomy to conduct the inquiry but also comprehensive guidance and support from IIMT Studies. This approach is undertaken with the sole objective of maintaining a timeframe.

If the decision is made for IIMT Studies to conduct the investigation internally, such a choice is made on factors such as the Centre's capacity for investigation or the gravity of the issue/instance identified. In this scenario, the responsibility is delegated to an Approved Senior IIMT Studies Representative, with the selection of the representative guided by the nature of the investigation. In instances of alleged fraud or a significant threat to the integrity of IIMT Studies qualifications, the Head of Compliance conducts the investigation.

For investigations carried out by the Head of the Centre or an appointed investigator:

- Investigations into allegations of malpractice are typically conducted by the Head of the Centre, ensuring a timely resolution.
- Those conducting the investigation must, in a report, establish the full facts and circumstances of any alleged malpractice, avoiding assumptions of factual accuracy based solely on the allegation.
- Must go by the evidence collected and not remain on any assumptions.
- The Head of the Centre, being an independent body, must realise that both staff and learners can be responsible for malpractice/instances that occurred and carry out the investigation accordingly.
- If the investigation is delegated to another senior member of the Centre staff, the Head of the Centre retains overall responsibility, taking steps to avoid conflicts of interest. For example, if an alleged staff member/s is working directly under the head of the Centre, the investigation process can be compromised and subject to the conflict of interest policy; the head of the Centre must mention this situation to IIMT Studies.

- In cases where conflicts of interest arise, investigations should not be delegated to individuals within the section, team, or department involved in the suspected malpractice, as explained above. Concerns should be communicated to the IIMT Studies promptly for resolution.
- Upon reporting an instance/malpractice, the Awarding Organisation would recommend providing the accused individuals with a completed copy of the notification form or letter.
- There may be instances where conducting an interview must be in line with the Centre's policies and disciplinary enquiries.
- The Head of the Centre is responsible for providing a suitable venue for interviews, which can also be conducted over the telephone. Individuals involved may be requested to provide a written statement.

The Centre must ensure that investigations involve access to confidential information belonging to the Centre or individuals. All materials collected during an investigation must be securely stored and not ordinarily disclosed to third parties/individuals not involved in the investigation, except regulators or the police, where necessary.

Right of individuals:

During the investigation, individuals under suspicion will:

- Be informed of the appeals process
- Be in a position to record a statement if they wish to
- Have the right to speak
- Have the right to appeal against the outcome of the investigation

Additionally, the Centre must ensure that the individual is:

- Informed in writing of the allegations against them and the supporting evidence.
- Given the opportunity to consider and respond to the allegations by submitting a written statement or seeking advice.
- Informed of potential consequences if allegations are proven, including the possibility of informing other relevant parties such as regulators, police, funding agencies, and professional organisations.
- Potentially interviewed to gather information.
- Notified that interviews with Centre staff members, if conducted by the Centre, will align with Centre policies, including those for disciplinary enquiries. Staff members may request accompaniment, processed in line with Centre policy.
- Able to request an appropriate advocate if the learner is a vulnerable adult.

Decisions and Action Plans:

Conclusions and decisions will be evidence-based. Proposed actions will be identified, agreed upon between the Centre and IIMT Studies, and implemented and monitored by the IIMT Studies' Head of Compliance upon completion. Actions will address necessary improvements to Centre policies, procedures, and resources. All action points, including the investigation reports, will be shared with the regulatory authorities. In that instance:

Centre must be prepared if IIMT Studies/regulatory authorities may ask for more relevant data or facts, or documentary evidence or may ask for clarifications or justifications on/other than the data/MIS/facts submitted.

Preparing a report:

In instances where the Centre conducts the investigation, the Head of the Centre or the Approved Centre Representative must submit a written report to IIMT Studies. If the investigation is conducted by IIMT Studies, the Approved Representative will provide a written report. The report should include:

- A statement of facts, a detailed account of circumstances, and details of any investigations carried out by/within the Centre.
- Written statements from Centre staff and learners interviewed during the investigation.
- Learner work and internal assessment or quality assurance records relevant to the investigation.
- In cases of learner malpractice, details of any remedial action taken by the Centre to ensure certification integrity should be provided.
- Any mitigating factors that should be considered?
- In cases of IIMT Studies conducting its investigation, the Head of the Centre or the Approved Centre Representative can comment on the investigation report's factual accuracy before finalisation.

Consequences and Sanctions:

Serious instances may result in reporting to local authorities and appropriate government authorities, along with informing regulators.

- Sanctions applied by IIMT Studies to the Centre will align with the level of non-compliance identified during the investigation, following IIMT Studies' sanctions policy.
- IIMT Studies will impose sanctions and penalties on Centres where allegations are proven, in line with the nature and scale of the allegation and IIMT Studies' published sanctions policy. These measures aim to minimise risks to qualification integrity, protect learners, maintain public confidence, and deter similar actions.

The sanctions aim to:

- Implement strict measures to identify and address potential risks, ensuring work to minimise any threats to the integrity of IIMT Studies qualifications, not only in the current context but also considering future scenarios.
- Establish strong mechanisms to ensure learners who have successfully met the stipulated standards receive their qualifications, emphasising a commitment to fairness and merit.

- Employ transparent and accountable practices in the delivery and awarding of qualifications, aiming to maintain public confidence in the credibility and reliability of IIMT Studies certifications.
- Establishing a strong example by enforcing stringent actions and penalties in response to proven malpractice, ensuring that similar actions that violate will be met with severe consequences, thereby ensuring a culture of compliance and ethical conduct within the Centre.

Retention and Storage of Evidence and Records:

All relevant documents and evidence should be retained following IIMT Studies' policies and procedures. The Centre must ensure that it records all evidence as mentioned in the procedure below.

- Prepare detailed reports containing statements of facts, a detailed account of the circumstances surrounding alleged wrongdoing, and specifics of any investigations conducted by the appointed investigator.
- Maintain written statements from all relevant centre staff and/or learners who have been interviewed during the investigation. This includes documenting details of the interviews in any form, audio, video, written or responses provided, and any supporting evidence.
- Keep records of learner work, internal assessments, or any quality assurance documentation relevant to the investigation separate and private.
- In cases of learner malpractice, document any remedial action being taken by the Centre to ensure the integrity of certification. It can include:
 - Learner's work
 - Identification of one or more learners who benefited from the malpractice
 - Any steps taken to prevent the malpractice
- Record any mitigating factors that may have a bearing on the investigation. These factors could influence decisions related to sanctions or penalties and should be thoroughly documented for a clear understanding of the situation.
- Keep a record of all communications related to the investigation, including notifications, requests for information, telephone records (as a part of the evidence gathered during the investigation), email communications, written communications and any responses sent/received.
- Maintain a timeline of events related to the investigation as prescribed by IIMT Studies.
- Document decisions made at each stage of the investigation to include conclusions drawn, actions proposed, and agreements reached between the Centre and the relevant authorities.
- If there are appeals made against decisions, document the entire appeals process, including any responses provided. It must be in line with the Centre's appeals policy, designed to comply with the quality standard of IIMT Studies.
- Follow record retention requirements as per the Centre's and IIMT Studies' policies. Ensure that all relevant documentation is securely stored for the prescribed duration, especially in cases involving criminal prosecution or civil claims.

- Contain and include detailed information/data/MIS/documentary evidence/learner's work or such relevant and important matter
- Record the timeframe of the investigation

In conducting an investigation, Centres must retain records and documentation in line with Centre and IIMT Studies record retention requirements. In cases involving criminal prosecution or civil claims, records should be retained for the required period post-case and any appeal.

Appeals against decisions:

Appeals against decisions can be made following the IIMT Studies Appeals Policy and procedure.

Alerting Other Awarding Organisations:

IIMT Studies must notify other Awarding Organisations of cases with potential adverse effects on them. This includes situations where:

- The Centre involved is approved by another Awarding Organisation, and malpractice could impact that Organisation.
- There is potential for the Centre to move operations to another Awarding Organisation to avoid sanctions.
- The Centre, where the incident occurred, is seeking approval from another Awarding Organisation for similar or different qualifications.



IIMTS
Awarding Body

Address __

IIMT Studies LTD
Havelock Hub
14 Havelock Place
Harrow
HA1 1LJ
United Kingdom

Call us on __

+44 7466650066

Email us on __

info@iimtsab.co.uk

www.iimtsab.co.uk