

Assessment Integrity Policy Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies (IHGS)

Document Title: Assessment Integrity Policy

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1. Purpose

IHGS is committed to ensuring that all assessments are conducted fairly, consistently, and with integrity. This policy sets out the standards expected of learners, tutors, assessors, and staff and describes how concerns regarding assessment misconduct will be managed.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect the integrity and reputation of Institute qualifications.
- Ensure that assessment outcomes accurately reflect learners' own knowledge, skills, and research.
- Promote honesty and ethical conduct in genealogical research and reporting.
- Provide a fair and transparent process for investigating suspected misconduct.
- Maintain valid, reliable, and unbiased assessments through clear roles, moderation, and separation of duties.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all learners, all staff, and all forms of assessment undertaken as part of IHGS courses and qualifications.

It covers:

- All learners enrolled on Institute courses and qualifications.
- Tutors, assessors, moderators, external reviewers, and exam setters.
- Administrative staff involved in assessment processes.
- All assessed work including assignments, projects, portfolios, and examinations.

The principles and requirements of this policy apply to every piece of assessed work. However, the intensity of moderation, separation of duties, and quality assurance processes will be applied proportionately according to the level and importance of the assessment (see Section 8 – Key Procedures).

3. Core Principles

The Institute will:

- Assess learners fairly, consistently, and free from bias.
- Maintain separation of duties – no single individual should control the entire process of course writing, tutoring, exam setting, and marking for the same cohort.
- Investigate concerns objectively and confidentially.

- Give individuals an opportunity to respond to allegations.
- Apply sanctions proportionately.
- Ensure transparency so students understand how they are assessed and can appeal decisions.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility	Restriction	Permitted Overlaps
Course Writer / Developer	Creates and updates course materials	Must not mark final exams for students they have tutored	Can also act as Tutor or Moderator
Tutor	Student support and assignment feedback	Must not set or solely mark the final examination for their own students	Can also act as Course Writer or Moderator
Exam Setter	Prepares examination papers	Should be a different person from the main tutor where possible	Can also act as Marker (subject to moderation)
Marker / Assessor	Marks examinations and assessments	Work is subject to moderation. Must not solely mark students they have tutored	Can also act as Exam Setter or Course Writer
Moderator	Reviews exam papers and sample marking	Must be independent from the original marker	Can also act as Course Writer or Tutor (if not involved in the specific assessment)

Note on Role Combinations: Due to the specialist nature of IHGS, one individual may undertake more than one role. However, separation of duties must be maintained wherever practical. No single person should control the full assessment process (course writing, tutoring, exam setting, and marking) for the same group of students. All final examinations must be moderated by an independent person.

5. Assessment Integrity Requirements

Learners must:

- Submit only their own work unless collaboration is expressly permitted.
- Accurately acknowledge all sources used.
- Present research findings honestly.
- Retain research notes where reasonably requested.
- Comply with assessment instructions.

Staff must:

- Apply assessment criteria consistently.
- Maintain assessment security and confidentiality.
- Avoid and declare conflicts of interest.

- Report suspected misconduct promptly.
- Follow published assessment procedures.

6. Assessment Misconduct

Assessment misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

Learner Misconduct

- Plagiarism from any source (books, journals, websites, databases, family trees, reports, etc.).
- Presenting another person's genealogical research as one's own.
- Collusion where independent work is required.
- Fabrication or falsification of evidence, records, citations, or findings.
- Impersonation or having another person complete assessed work.
- Unauthorised use of assistance during assessments.
- False declarations regarding authorship.

Staff Misconduct

- Providing inappropriate assistance to learners.
- Altering marks without justification.
- Failing to follow published assessment procedures.
- Deliberately overlooking known misconduct.
- Falsifying assessment or quality assurance records.

7. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Students must adhere to the IHGS Terms and Conditions, specifically section 11.8 regarding AI use.

8. Key Procedures

Proportionate Application:

Assessment Type	Full Policy Applies	Moderation Required	Separation of Duties	Independent Marking
Elementary	Yes	All borderline/fail + sample	Recommended	Not normally required
Intermediate	Yes	All borderline/fail + sample	Recommended	Not normally required
Advanced	Yes	All borderline/fail + sample	Recommended	Not normally required
Higher Level Final Exams	Yes	All papers	Strongly required	Yes
Diploma & Licentiate Level &	Yes	Full moderation	Strongly required	Yes

Additional Procedures:

- **Moderation:** All final examinations and borderline/fail results will be second-marked or moderated by a different qualified member of staff or approved external examiner.
- **Exam Setting:** Examination papers must be reviewed and approved by at least one other person before use.
- **Marking Standards:** Clear marking schemes and rubrics will be used. Markers will record brief reasons for awarded marks.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Any tutor who has provided significant one-to-one support to a student must declare this before marking. Alternative marking arrangements will be made where practical.

9. Reporting Concerns

Any learner, tutor, assessor, or staff member may report suspected misconduct to the Assessment Integrity Officer (or designated senior manager).

Reports should include:

- Details of the concern.
- Relevant evidence.
- Names of those involved (where known).

10. Investigation Procedure

1. A preliminary review will determine whether there is a case to answer.
2. Relevant evidence will be gathered.
3. The individual concerned will be informed of the allegation and given an opportunity to respond.
4. A decision will be made by the Assessment Integrity Officer or designated manager.
5. The outcome will be communicated in writing.

Investigations will normally be completed within 30 working days where practicable.

11. Outcomes and Sanctions

Where misconduct is proven, sanctions may include:

- Written warning.
- Requirement to resubmit work.
- Reduction of marks.
- Failure of the assessment.
- Failure of the qualification.
- Withdrawal of a qualification already awarded (in exceptional cases).

Staff misconduct may result in disciplinary action.

12. Appeals

Any individual subject to a finding of misconduct may appeal within 10 working days of receiving the decision (or 14 days for result reviews).

Appeals must:

- Be submitted in writing.
- State the grounds for appeal.
- Include any supporting evidence.

The appeal will be handled by a senior staff member not involved in the original decision and will be final.

13. Record Keeping

The Institute will maintain confidential records of all allegations, evidence, investigation outcomes, moderation decisions, and appeals. Records will be retained in accordance with the Institute's data protection and records retention policy (minimum of 3 years for moderation records).

14. Compliance and Review

All academic staff must read and confirm they understand this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if assessment practices, technology, organisational requirements, or significant complaints necessitate changes.