



nebosh

**Policy and procedures for suspected
malpractice in examinations and
assessments**

Version 12 (May 2018)

Contents

1. Policy	4
2. Scope	4
3. Regulatory authorities' criteria	4
4. Malpractice and maladministration	5
4.1 Malpractice	5
4.2 Maladministration	5
4.3 Accredited course provider staff malpractice	5
4.4 Candidate malpractice	5
5. Responsibilities	6
5.1 NEBOSH	6
5.2 Head of accredited course provider	6
5.3 Internal assessors' responsibilities for reporting malpractice	7
5.4 Invigilators' responsibilities for reporting malpractice	7
5.5 NEBOSH Examiners and Moderator's responsibilities for reporting malpractice	7
6. NEBOSH procedures for dealing with allegations of malpractice	8
6.1 Phases	8
6.2 Communications	8
7. The allegation	8
8. The response	9
9. The investigation	9
9.1 Investigations carried out by NEBOSH	9
9.1.2 Suspension of Accreditation	10
9.1.3 Withholding of results or certificates during an investigation	10
9.1.4 Interviews	10
9.2 Rights of the accused individuals	10
10. The report	11
11. The decision	11
11.1 NEBOSH Head of Compliance/Ethical Practice Manager	11
11.2 Malpractice Review Panel	12
11.2.1 Timescales for convening the Malpractice Review Panel	12
11.2.2 Malpractice Review Panel membership	12
11.3 Making the decision	12

12. Sanctions and penalties	13
12.1 Imposition of sanctions and penalties	13
12.2 Sanctions and penalties for accredited course provider staff malpractice - individuals	14
12.3 Sanctions for accredited course provider staff malpractice – accredited course provider	14
12.4 Sanctions for candidate malpractice	16
12.5 Recall of invalid unit certificates and/or qualification parchments	17
13. Communicating decisions	17
14. Appeals	17
14.1 Grounds for an Appeal	17
14.2 Application for an Appeal	18
14.3 Cost	19
14.4 Stage 1 Appeal	19
14.4.1 Procedure	19
14.4.2 Outcomes	19
14.5 Stage 2 Appeal	19
14.5.1 Procedures	19
Before the Appeal Panel meeting	20
14.5.2 Outcomes	20
14.6 Unresolved Appeals	20
15. Document control	20
Appendix 1: Examples of malpractice	21
Appendix 2: Report of Suspected Malpractice form	25
Appendix 3: Malpractice Review Panel Terms of Reference	31
Appendix 4: Stage 2 Malpractice Appeals Process	33

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1. Policy

NEBOSH is committed to safeguarding the integrity of its qualifications and meeting its statutory obligations.

NEBOSH will provide information to accredited course providers, their staff and candidates regarding its regulations for the conduct of examinations and assessments.

Where there is evidence to suggest that there has been a failure to comply with NEBOSH requirements for the conduct of an examination and/or an assessment; it will be investigated.

If on the balance of probabilities it is concluded by NEBOSH that malpractice or maladministration has occurred, sanctions will be applied in a consistent and proportionate manner.

In the event of malpractice by an accredited course provider, NEBOSH will consider action to:

- minimise the risk to the integrity of certification now and in the future;
- maintain public confidence in the delivery and awarding of qualifications;
- discourage others from doing likewise;
- ensure there has been no gain from compromising standards.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all NEBOSH qualifications.

The policy:

- defines malpractice and maladministration in the context of examinations and assessments;
- sets out the responsibilities of NEBOSH, accredited course providers, their staff and candidates in relation to such matters;
- describes the procedures to be followed in cases where there is reason to suspect that malpractice or maladministration has occurred.

3. Regulatory authorities' criteria

NEBOSH is an awarding body approved by Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Accreditation, which has a UK-wide regulatory remit.

In addition to statutory duties, this policy is intended to meet the relevant requirements of the regulatory criteria as set out in Principle 13 and Principle 14 of the *'SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2014)'*:

"13. The awarding body and its providers shall have clear, fair and equitable procedures to manage appeals."

"14. The awarding body and its providers shall ensure that it has safeguards to prevent and manage cases of malpractice and maladministration."

4. Malpractice and maladministration

4.1 Malpractice

Malpractice means ‘any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises or could compromise the assessment process, the integrity of a qualification, the validity of a result or certificate, the reputation and credibility of NEBOSH, or the qualification or the wider qualifications community’.

Malpractice may also include a range of issues including the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems, deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certification and neglect of professional duty/unethical conduct. Failure by an accredited course provider to notify, investigate and report to NEBOSH allegations of suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice.

Also, failure to take action as required by NEBOSH, as detailed in this document, or failure to co-operate with NEBOSH’s investigation constitutes malpractice.

Cases of deliberate deception, trickery or cheating intended to gain advantage, including financial advantage may also be reportable as fraud. This can include cases where candidate resources are not as stated, candidates paying fees and not receiving certificates, or erratic internal assessment practice. Where there is evidence of deliberate fraud this will be reported to the police and regulatory authorities.

4.2 Maladministration

Maladministration means ‘any actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the accreditation or quality assurance process, including the integrity of accredited qualifications, the validity of certificates or the reputation and credibility of NEBOSH’.

For definition of other terms used in this document please see NEBOSH’s Glossary of Terms, available from the NEBOSH website: www.nebosh.org.uk.

4.3 Accredited course provider staff malpractice

‘Accredited course provider staff malpractice’ means malpractice committed by a member of staff at an accredited course provider, or an individual appointed in another capacity by an accredited course provider such as an invigilator, an oral language modifier, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader, a sign language interpreter, or a scribe to a candidate.

Examples of accredited course provider staff malpractice are set out in Appendix 1. These examples are not an exhaustive list and as such do not limit the scope of the definitions set out in this document. Other instances of malpractice may be identified and considered by NEBOSH at its discretion.

4.4 Candidate malpractice

‘Candidate malpractice’ means malpractice by a candidate in the course of any examination or assessment, including the preparation and authentication of any controlled assessments, the presentation of any practical work and the writing of any question paper response.

Examples of candidate malpractice are set out in Appendix 1. These examples are not an exhaustive list and as such do not limit the scope of the definitions set out in this document.

Other instances of malpractice may be considered by NEBOSH at its discretion.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 NEBOSH

NEBOSH will:

- provide explicit guidance to its accredited course providers, their staff and candidates on NEBOSH's examination and assessment regulations and requirements;
- carry out or oversee all investigations into alleged or suspected malpractice;
- inform Heads of accredited course providers, members of accredited course provider staff and candidates of the nature of the malpractice allegation, unless it would create a risk for the complainant or whistleblower;
- allow the alleged to provide written responses to any allegations of malpractice and/or maladministration and consider these written statements when reaching a decision;
- report the matter to SQA Accreditation if there is evidence that certificates may be invalid, and as otherwise required by SQA Accreditation;
- notify SQA Accreditation as soon as it receives an allegation of fraud or a serious breach of security;
- notify SQA Accreditation of the name of any UK accredited course provider that has an allegation of malpractice and/or maladministration made against it;
- maintain a register of all allegations of malpractice and make the register available to SQA Accreditation on request;
- keep all material collected as part of an investigation secure and not normally disclose to any third parties (other than the police, other awarding bodies, professional bodies, Appeals Panel, SQA Accreditation or Court Order, where appropriate). All relevant documents and evidence will be retained in accordance with this policy and its procedures.
- NEBOSH has identified a lawful basis for processing malpractice/maladministration data. This lawful basis is Legitimate Interests.

5.2 Head of accredited course provider

The Head of accredited course provider must:

- ensure that candidates and staff are aware of NEBOSH's regulations and requirements for examinations and assessments;
- report to NEBOSH at the earliest opportunity all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice, using the Report of Suspected Malpractice form (Appendix 2);
- supervise personally investigations that NEBOSH directs the accredited course provider to undertake or ensure that if it is necessary to delegate the investigation to a member of course provider staff that the member of staff chosen is independent of the suspected malpractice;
 - maintain confidentiality in relation to any investigation of malpractice. This includes details of the complainant or whistleblower, the alleged candidate(s) or accredited course provider staff and the nature of the incident, in accordance with the principles and detail of the General Data Protection Regulation;
- respond speedily and openly to all requests for an investigation into an allegation of malpractice;

- provide or make available information requested by NEBOSH;
- co-operate and ensure their staff co-operate fully with an enquiry into an allegation of malpractice, whether the accredited course provider is directly involved in the case or not;
- inform staff members and candidates of their individual responsibilities and rights as set out in this document;
- pass on to the individuals concerned any warnings or notifications of penalties and ensure compliance with any requests made by NEBOSH as a result of an accredited course provider staff malpractice case;
- review internal quality procedures to minimise the risk of further malpractice;
- retain the following records for three years (or five years in an investigation involving criminal activity):
 - a report containing a statement of the facts, a detailed account of the circumstances of alleged malpractice and details of any investigations carried out by the accredited course provider into the suspected case of candidate(s) malpractice;
 - written statements from accredited course provider staff and candidate(s) involved;
 - any work of the candidate(s) and internal assessment records relevant to the investigation;
 - details of any remedial action taken to ensure the integrity of certification now and in the future.

Accredited course providers are advised to implement a system and procedure for recording all suspected instances of candidate malpractice.

Heads of accredited course providers are reminded that a failure to comply with the requirements set out above may itself constitute malpractice.

5.3 Internal assessors' responsibilities for reporting malpractice

It is the responsibility of internal practical assessors to inform NEBOSH in writing and the Head of accredited course provider of any suspected malpractice identified. Failure to report suspected malpractice by internal assessors will be treated as malpractice in itself and investigated in accordance with this policy and its procedures. The Report of Suspected Malpractice form (Appendix 2) should be used.

5.4 Invigilators' responsibilities for reporting malpractice

It is the responsibility of invigilators to inform NEBOSH in writing and the Head of accredited course provider of any suspected malpractice identified. Failure to report suspected malpractice by invigilators will be treated as malpractice in itself and investigated in accordance with this policy and its procedures. The Report of Suspected Malpractice form (Appendix 2) should be used.

5.5 NEBOSH Examiners and Moderator's responsibilities for reporting malpractice

Examiners and Moderators who suspect malpractice in an examination or assessment must report this suspicion immediately. Examiners are required to identify candidate numbers and suspect questions in the report.

6. NEBOSH procedures for dealing with allegations of malpractice

6.1 Phases

The handling of malpractice allegations involves the following phases:

- the allegation (**Section 7**);
- the response (**Section 8**);
- the investigation (**Section 9**);
- the report (**Section 10**);
- the decision (**Section 11**);
- the appeal (**Section 14**).

6.2 Communications

NEBOSH will normally communicate with the Head of accredited course provider and affected candidate(s) regarding malpractice. NEBOSH will usually advise the Head of accredited course provider in writing that it proposes to deal directly with the candidate(s). A Head of accredited course provider, once advised by NEBOSH, should not ordinarily communicate further with the candidate(s).

When the Head of accredited course provider is under investigation, communications may be required with other appropriate authorities.

NEBOSH may communicate directly with members of accredited course provider staff who have been accused of malpractice if the circumstances warrant this.

7. The allegation

There are a number of ways to identify suspected malpractice and NEBOSH has appropriate systems in place to identify malpractice including scheduled quality assurance activity and monitoring. Suspected malpractice may also be identified by an accredited course provider representative, a whistleblower, a candidate, the regulators or other parties such as employers, members of the public, etc.

Whistleblowing is when an individual discloses information relating to malpractice and/or the covering up of malpractice.

If a suspected case of malpractice is brought to NEBOSH's attention by a third party or whistleblower, NEBOSH will take steps to establish the veracity of the alleged case including seeking permission to use the whistleblower's name to communicate the details of the allegation. If the whistleblower refuses permission to use his/her name and the allegation still merits investigation, NEBOSH will advise the whistleblower that the investigation may be impaired and that NEBOSH will strive to preserve his/her anonymity.

NEBOSH will protect the identity of the informant if this is requested, unless NEBOSH is legally obliged to disclose the identity.

If the information is provided verbally (eg by telephone), the informant will usually be asked to make the allegation in writing (including by email) before instigating a full investigation.

When NEBOSH receives an allegation from someone other than the Head of accredited course provider (including anonymous reports), NEBOSH will evaluate the allegation in the light of any other available information, to decide if there is cause to investigate.

8. The response

In the case of reports of suspected malpractice NEBOSH will review the information presented and decide whether it is appropriate to:

- take no further action;
- ask the Head of accredited course provider to conduct a full investigation into the alleged malpractice and to submit a written report;
- investigate the matter directly.

Where NEBOSH decides that it is appropriate to either investigate the matter directly, or that the Head of accredited course provider is required to undertake an investigation NEBOSH will notify the Head of accredited course provider and affected candidates that an allegation of malpractice and/or maladministration has been made.

Affected candidates will not be allowed to register for any further NEBOSH assessments until the investigation has concluded.

9. The investigation

9.1 Investigations carried out by NEBOSH

Investigations will be conducted in a fair, reasonable manner and in accordance with this policy, ensuring that all relevant information is considered without bias. The NEBOSH Head of Compliance is responsible for overseeing malpractice investigations.

The main purpose of an investigation is to establish the facts relating to the allegation(s) made in order to determine if any regulations have been breached and to determine whether there is any irregularity. The investigation will also aim to establish the facts, circumstances and scale of the alleged malpractice. The investigation will consider the broader impact the malpractice could have had on the accredited course provider, candidates and qualifications.

The investigation may also:

- identify the cause of the irregularities and those involved;
- identify and, if necessary, take action to minimise the risk to current candidates;
- evaluate any action already taken by the accredited course provider;
- determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current candidates and to preserve the integrity of the qualification;
- ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued;
- obtain evidence to support any sanctions to be applied to the accredited course provider, and/or to members of staff;
- identify any patterns or trends;

- identify any changes to policy or procedure that need to be made by NEBOSH and/or the accredited course provider.

Once all relevant information has been received, NEBOSH will aim to complete investigations within 40 working days.

9.1.2 Suspension of Accreditation

During the investigation it may be necessary for NEBOSH to suspend accreditation until completion of the investigation. Circumstances that may lead to the suspension of an accredited course provider may include, but are not limited to:

- evidence of a serious breach of security and/or evidence of an accredited course provider's member of staff or third party service provider being involved;
- evidence of malpractice that may compromise the integrity of any examinations or assessments managed by the accredited course provider;
- a failure to respond to any request(s) from NEBOSH during a malpractice investigation;
- any material breach under the accredited course provider's agreement.

On conclusion of the investigation the suspension will be reviewed.

9.1.3 Withholding of results or certificates during an investigation

NEBOSH will withhold the issuing of results for the unit(s) under investigation until the conclusion of the investigation, or permanently, where the outcome of the investigation warrants it.

9.1.4 Interviews

If it is necessary for NEBOSH to interview a candidate or any other persons during an investigation, those being interviewed will be permitted to have another individual of their choosing present. The person accompanying the interviewee should not take an active part in the interview, in particular he/she is **not** to answer questions on the interviewee's behalf.

If the individual being interviewed wishes to be accompanied by a solicitor, NEBOSH must be informed beforehand to give them the opportunity to be similarly supported.

Interviews may also be conducted over the telephone. The individual being interviewed may also be requested to provide a written statement.

9.2 Rights of the accused individuals

When an incident of suspected malpractice is to be investigated by NEBOSH, an individual, whether a candidate or a member of staff, accused of malpractice must:

- be informed (preferably in writing) of the allegation made against him/her;
- know what evidence there is to support that allegation;
- be advised to refer to this policy for information on the possible consequences should malpractice be proven; the appeals procedure and the possibility that information relating to a serious case of malpractice may be shared with other awarding bodies, SQA Accreditation, the police and/or professional bodies as appropriate;
- have the opportunity to consider their response to the allegations (if required);

- have an opportunity to submit a written statement;
- have an opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a supplementary statement (if required).

The conduct of an accused candidate or member of staff in other examinations or assessments should not be taken into account unless there is an established, clearly evidenced, repeated pattern of behaviour.

10. The report

After investigating a complaint or allegation of malpractice, NEBOSH may produce a written report of the case summarising the findings and incorporating any pertinent evidence. A report will be prepared if a sanction against a course provider is considered.

The report may include the following, as appropriate:

- a statement of the facts;
- an account of the circumstances of the alleged malpractice;
- details of any investigations carried out by the accredited course provider if relevant;
- written statement(s) from the invigilator(s), assessor or other staff who are involved;
- written statement(s) from the candidate(s);
- any mitigating or aggravating factors;
- seating plans;
- unauthorised material found in the examination room;
- any work of the candidate(s) and any associated material that is relevant to the investigation;
- any other available information or documentation.

NEBOSH will not normally withhold from the Head of accredited course provider any evidence pertinent to cases of suspected malpractice. However, it may do so if deemed necessary and, in such cases, NEBOSH will provide summaries of evidence and a statement as to why the evidence itself cannot be presented in its original form.

11. The decision

11.1 NEBOSH Head of Compliance/Ethical Practice Manager

The NEBOSH Head of Compliance and/or the NEBOSH Ethical Practice Manager will make a decision on more straightforward investigations; including, but not limited to, investigations that are likely to result in the following outcomes:

- written warnings to candidates or accredited course providers;
- loss of marks for a section of work and/or a unit;
- voiding of candidate(s) results;
- debarring candidate(s) from units and/or NEBOSH examinations and assessments;
- suspension or permanent barring of accredited course provider members of staff;
- imposing a condition of accreditation (for example third party examination management).

11.2 Malpractice Review Panel

For more complex decisions a Malpractice Review Panel will make decisions that are likely to result in:

- withdrawal of accreditation of an accredited course provider following a malpractice investigation(s);
- withdrawal of qualifications and/or certificates already awarded to candidates;
- the permanent barring of a Head of accredited course provider from any future involvement with NEBOSH qualifications.

11.2.1 Timescales for convening the Malpractice Review Panel

A Malpractice Review Panel report will be completed within 15 working days of the conclusion of the investigation and (subject to redaction) will be forwarded to the Head of accredited course provider to allow a response to be submitted for consideration by the Malpractice Review Panel.

In complex cases, for example where the Malpractice Review Panel are being asked to consider multiple malpractice investigations outcomes, NEBOSH will advise the Head of accredited course provider that the 15 working day period may be extended.

The Head of accredited course provider will be given 28 working days to respond to the Malpractice Review Panel report. The Malpractice Review Panel will be convened between 28 working days and 40 working days from the despatch of the report. The Malpractice Review Panel will only consider the information presented in the Malpractice Review Panel Report and the associated exhibits when making a decision.

During the preparation of the report for the Malpractice Review Panel, the Ethical Practice Manager will identify any existing appeal requests from candidates and determine whether the appeal(s) should be exhausted before the completed report is sent to the Head of accredited course provider. In such circumstances, the Head of accredited course provider will be notified.

11.2.2 Malpractice Review Panel membership

The Malpractice Review Panel will consist of three members of the NEBOSH Leadership Team, one of which will also act as Chair; plus the NEBOSH Head of Compliance and any other person requested by the Chair.

The following applies to the activities of the Malpractice Review Panel (or to the personnel acting in this capacity):

- the work of the Malpractice Review Panel will be as Terms of Reference at Appendix 3;
- accused individuals, Heads of accredited course providers and their representatives are not entitled to be present at meetings of the Panel but will be informed when the Panel will convene and when they will be notified of the outcome.

11.3 Making the decision

In making a decision, the Head of Compliance/Ethical Practice Manager/Malpractice Review Panel will establish that correct procedures have been followed in the investigation of the case and that all individuals involved have been given the opportunity to make a written statement.

The Head of Compliance/Ethical Practice Manager/Malpractice Review Panel will also:

- identify the requirements(s)/accredited course provider criteria that it is alleged has/have been compromised;
- consider the facts of the case;
- decide whether on the balance of probabilities malpractice has occurred;
- establish who is responsible if requirements have been compromised;
- determine an appropriate level of sanction or penalty;
- summarise their findings with reference to the evidence on which they based their decision.

The Head of Compliance/Ethical Practice Manager/Malpractice Review Panel must be satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the allegation is substantiated. It is possible that the evidence in some cases may be inconclusive, but NEBOSH may make a decision in order to protect the integrity of the qualification for the majority.

12. Sanctions and penalties

12.1 Imposition of sanctions and penalties

NEBOSH will determine the application of sanctions and penalties according to the evidence presented, the nature and circumstances of the malpractice and the type of qualification involved. Not all sanctions and penalties are applicable to every type of qualification or circumstance.

NEBOSH imposes sanctions and penalties on individuals and on accredited course providers found guilty of malpractice and/or maladministration in order to:

- minimise the risk to the integrity of examinations and assessments, both in the present and in the future;
- ensure that only those candidates who have reached the required standard are awarded the qualification;
- maintain the confidence of the public in the delivery and awarding of qualifications;
- ensure as a minimum that there is nothing to gain from breaking the regulations;
- deter others from doing likewise.

NEBOSH will not apply sanctions and penalties to offences according to a fixed scale, but will allocate proportionate sanctions in order to reflect the particular circumstances of each case and any mitigating factors. NEBOSH reserves the right to apply sanctions and penalties flexibly, outside the defined ranges, if particular mitigating or aggravating circumstances are found to exist. Ignorance of the regulations will not, by itself, be considered a mitigating factor.

A permanent record will be kept of the effect of any sanctions or penalties on an individual's results.

Individuals found guilty of malpractice may have their details passed on to other awarding bodies and other relevant bodies. This information will typically be the names and offences of those found guilty of breaching the published regulations.

12.2 Sanctions and penalties for accredited course provider staff malpractice - individuals

NEBOSH may report course provider staff to their professional membership bodies if it considers that individuals have breached the codes of conduct or ethics of that body.

Penalties may be applied individually or in combination.

Where a member of staff or contractor has been found guilty of malpractice or maladministration, NEBOSH may impose the following sanctions or penalties.

Written warning

Issue the member of staff with a written warning that if the offence is repeated within a set period of time, further specified sanctions will be applied.

Training

Require the member of staff, as a condition of future involvement in its assessments, to undertake specific training or mentoring within a particular period of time and a review process at the end of the training.

Special conditions

Impose special conditions on the future involvement in its examinations and/or assessments by the member of staff, whether this involves the internal assessment, the conduct, supervision or administration of its examinations and assessments.

Suspension

Bar the member of staff from all involvement in the delivery or administration of its examinations and assessments for a set period of time or permanently.

These sanctions will be notified to the Head of accredited course provider who will be required to ensure that they are carried out.

The Head of accredited course provider should notify NEBOSH if a member of staff subject to a sanction moves to a different course provider.

NEBOSH may, at its discretion, ask for monitoring activity to be undertaken, or a plan devised to provide assurance that sanctions against the accredited course provider staff are being appropriately applied. Such requirements are distinct and separate from the sanctions described in the section below.

12.3 Sanctions for accredited course provider staff malpractice – accredited course provider

NEBOSH will inform other awarding bodies, professional bodies and the regulators when a malpractice investigation or a Malpractice Review Panel has concluded malpractice on the part of an accredited course provider.

These penalties may be applied individually or in combination.

NEBOSH may, at its discretion, impose the following sanctions against accredited course providers.

Written warning

A letter to the Head of accredited course provider advising of the breach (including the report) and advising of the further action that may be taken (including the application of penalties and special conditions) should there be a recurrence of this breach or subsequent breaches at the accredited course provider.

Review and report (Action plans)

The Head of accredited course provider will be required to review procedures for the conduct or administration of a particular examination/assessment, or all examinations/assessments in general, and to report back to NEBOSH by a set date on improvements implemented. Alternatively, an action plan will be agreed between NEBOSH and the accredited course provider and will need to be implemented as a condition of continuing to accept entries or registrations.

Additional monitoring or inspection

NEBOSH may increase, at the accredited course provider's expense, the normal level of monitoring that takes place in relation to the qualification(s).

Management of examination materials by third parties/British Council

NEBOSH may, for a period of time or permanently, or until a specific matter has been rectified, require an accredited course provider, at their expense, to use the British Council or other approved third party to manage examinations on their behalf.

Suspension of candidate registrations or entries

NEBOSH may, for a period of time or permanently, or until a specific matter has been rectified, refuse to accept candidate entries or registrations. This may be applied for selected units or qualifications or all units/qualifications.

Withdrawal of approval for a specific qualification(s)

NEBOSH may withdraw the accreditation to deliver one or more qualifications.

Withdrawal of accreditation

NEBOSH may withdraw recognition or approval. This means that as a result the accredited course provider will not be able to deliver or offer NEBOSH qualifications. Other awarding bodies may be informed of this action.

Any expense incurred in ensuring compliance with the penalties and/or special conditions must be borne by the accredited course provider.

If the Head of accredited course provider leaves while the accredited course provider is subject to any sanctions or special measures, NEBOSH will, if approached to do so, review the need for the continuation of these measures with the new Head of accredited course provider and any new accredited course provider the Head of accredited course provider is associated with.

12.4 Sanctions for candidate malpractice

These penalties may be applied individually or in combination. The NEBOSH guidance document *'Illustrations of malpractice and sanctions'* shows how the sanctions and penalties might be applied.

NEBOSH will endeavour to protect candidates who, through no fault of their own, are affected by a malpractice incident. However, results may not be issued if the case is inconclusive; that is, there is evidence of malpractice but it cannot be proven who was to blame; or if the case so damages the integrity of the examination(s) and/or assessment that NEBOSH considers it unsafe to award marks and/or qualifications.

In cases where it is not reasonable or possible to determine responsibility for malpractice, and where it is clear that the integrity of the examination or assessment has been impaired in respect of an individual or individuals, NEBOSH may decide not to accept the work submitted or undertaken for assessment, or may decide it would be unsafe to award marks and/or qualifications. In these cases the candidate(s) may retake the examination or assessment at the next opportunity.

NEBOSH may, at its discretion, impose the following sanctions against candidates.

Written warning

The candidate is issued with a warning that if the offence is repeated within a set period of time, further specified sanctions will be applied.

Loss of marks for a section

The candidate loses all marks gained for a discrete section of the work. A section may be part of a unit.

Void the results

The candidate's results for the unit(s) will be declared void.

Disqualification from all units in one or more qualifications

The candidate is disqualified from all units in a qualification or qualifications.

Candidate debarred

The candidate is barred from entering one or more examinations for a set period of time or permanently. This penalty is applied in conjunction with any of the other penalties above, if the circumstances warrant it.

Unless a penalty is accompanied by a bar on future entry, all candidates penalised by loss of marks or disqualification, may retake the unit(s) or qualification(s) affected at the next assessment opportunity if the specification permits this.

12.5 Recall of invalid unit certificates and/or qualification parchments

If malpractice comes to light after unit certificates and/or qualification parchments have been issued, and/or there is evidence that unit certificates and/or qualification parchments are invalid, NEBOSH may do the following:

- follow the principle of seeking to protect the interests of candidates, in so far as is reasonable and possible in the circumstances;
- contact the candidates involved and notify them of the status of their unit certificates and/or qualification parchments and of any arrangements for reassessment;
- ensure that the original unit certificates and/or qualification parchments are cancelled on the appropriate NEBOSH database to ensure that duplicates cannot be issued;
- inform IOSH and any other bodies for whom the unit certificates and/or qualification parchments fulfil(s) requirements for membership or certification;
- inform the regulatory authorities of the details of the invalidated unit certificates and/or qualification parchments and, where appropriate, make the information available to public funding bodies.

13. Communicating decisions

Heads of accredited course providers and candidates will be informed of decisions in writing as soon as possible after decisions are made and, in any case, within 5 working days. In cases of accredited course provider staff malpractice, it is the responsibility of the Head of accredited course provider to communicate the decision to the individuals concerned and to pass on warnings in cases where this is indicated.

NEBOSH will forward written notification for candidates to the Head of accredited course provider to communicate to the individuals concerned where it is not possible for NEBOSH to contact the candidate(s) directly.

For allegations of malpractice that involve fraud or a serious breach of examination security, NEBOSH will determine whether the matter should be reported to the regulators and/or the police who may also investigate the matter.

14. Appeals

Appeals may be made against decisions, penalties and sanctions arising from a malpractice or maladministration investigation or a malpractice investigation decision.

There are two stages to the appeals process, Stage 1 consists of a review of the case by NEBOSH; Stage 2 consists of consideration of the case by a panel, which will include an independent member.

14.1 Grounds for an Appeal

When making an appeal, the candidate, individual, or accredited course provider must establish the grounds for the appeal and if possible supply supporting evidence; which may include:

- a reasonable belief that the case was not dealt with in accordance with the policy and procedures;

- a reasonable belief that the evidence has been misinterpreted;
- further evidence coming to light that changes the basis of the decision;
- a reasonable belief that the outcome is not in line with the guidelines or procedure.

It should also be noted that in cases where candidates' results have been affected due to breaches by accredited course providers and/or their staff, candidates' appeals must establish the grounds for the appeal as above, ie declaration of individual compliance with regulations cannot constitute grounds for appeal.

14.2 Application for an Appeal

The appeal must be made within 14 days of the date of issue of the outcome of the malpractice investigation (or in the case of a Stage 2 Appeal; within 14 days of the issues of the outcome of the Stage 1 Appeal).

To submit a Stage 1 Appeal, please write to NEBOSH at the following address:

Customer Services (Malpractice Appeals)
NEBOSH
Dominus Way
Meridian Business Park
Leicester
LE19 1QW

Or email to:
info@nebosh.org.uk

To submit a Stage 2 Appeal, please write to NEBOSH at the following address:

Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive (Malpractice Appeals)
NEBOSH
Dominus Way
Meridian Business Park
Leicester
LE19 1QW

Or email to:
postassessment@nebosh.org.uk

The following must be included:

- the current fee;
- person making the appeal;
- NEBOSH student number (if appropriate);
- accredited course provider name;
- assessment name and date (found on the candidate examination entry confirmation/confirmation of examination registration, where applicable);
- grounds for the appeal (see above) and any supporting evidence where applicable.

NEBOSH will acknowledge the request within 5 working days of receipt of payment.

14.3 Cost

The Appeal fee covers the administrative costs of the investigation.

For the cost of submitting either a Stage 1 or Stage 2 Appeal, please see the current NEBOSH Fees List available from the NEBOSH website: www.nebosh.org.uk. For details of how to make a payment contact NEBOSH on +44 (0)116 263 4700.

14.4 Stage 1 Appeal

14.4.1 Procedure

A Stage 1 Appeal consists of an investigation of the case by a senior NEBOSH Officer who has not had any previous involvement with the matter, nominated by the Director of Technical Standards. The person conducting the appeal must not have been a member of the Malpractice Review Panel (if convened). The investigation will take into account the written submission of the appellant and focus on whether:

- NEBOSH used procedures that were consistent with the regulatory criteria;
- NEBOSH applied procedures properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

The investigation is **not** concerned with making judgements about a candidate's work and does **not** include further re-marking of candidate scripts. However, further re-marking can be ordered if the investigation finds procedures have not been satisfactorily followed.

The appeal will either be rejected or upheld. If the appeal is upheld, any necessary further work on the candidates' scripts or results will be undertaken.

The appellant will receive written confirmation of the outcome within 15 working days of the Stage 1 Appeal payment being received.

14.4.2 Outcomes

If the Stage 1 Appeal investigation recommends that the original malpractice investigation outcome (sanctions, penalties) was not appropriate and should not be applied:

- appeal fees will be refunded to the candidate or accredited course provider (as appropriate). Any relevant re-registration fee already paid by the candidate will also be refunded;
- if the outcome requires the issue of unit certificates or re-issue of a qualification parchment, this will be done free of charge.

If an appellant remains dissatisfied after a Stage 1 Appeal they may proceed to Stage 2.

14.5 Stage 2 Appeal

14.5.1 Procedures

The Stage 2 Appeals process is designed to ensure that the appellant has a formal opportunity to have their case heard by a panel which will include one independent person. The independent panel member must not have been involved with NEBOSH for the past five years.

Before the Appeal Panel meeting

The appellant will be informed of the date that the appeal will be heard at the earliest opportunity, subject to availability of the panel.

The appellant will receive written confirmation of the outcome within 10 working days of the Stage 2 Appeal hearing. The report compiled as a result of the Stage 2 Appeal will be made available within a further 10 working days. The Stage 2 Appeals Process is detailed in Appendix 4.

14.5.2 Outcomes

If the Stage 2 Appeal report recommends that the original sanctions or penalties imposed by NEBOSH were not appropriate and should not be applied:

- appeal fees will be refunded to the appellant (as appropriate);
- the sanctions or penalties imposed by NEBOSH will be removed.

14.6 Unresolved Appeals

If following the outcome of a Stage 2 appeal, the appellant remains dissatisfied, and where the relevant NEBOSH qualification is accredited by SQA Accreditation *and* was assessed within the UK, they may complain to SQA Accreditation:

<http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/home>. It should be noted that SQA Accreditation will check that NEBOSH followed its own procedure. SQA Accreditation will not overturn the original assessment decision.

A list of NEBOSH qualifications accredited by SQA Accreditation can be found here:

http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Qualifications/Accreditation_Qualification_Search

NB: Complaints relating to qualifications not accredited by SQA Accreditation or cases where the NEBOSH qualification has been assessed outside the UK, may not be submitted for SQA Accreditation review.

Details of the application process may be found at the SQA Accreditation website. At the time of writing this is <http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/home>

Costs, procedures and outcomes will be communicated by SQA Accreditation following receipt of the application for regulatory review.

15. Document control

Ref: TS(QA)004
Version: v12
Date: May 2018
Review Date: September 2018
Owner: NEBOSH Director of Technical Standards

Appendix 1: Examples of malpractice

The following are examples of malpractice. This is not an exhaustive list and as such does not limit the scope of the definitions set out earlier in this document. Other instances of malpractice may be identified and considered by NEBOSH at its discretion.

Part 1 Accredited course provider staff malpractice

Breach of security

Any act which breaks the confidentiality of question papers or materials or the confidentiality of candidates' scripts.

It could involve:

- failing to keep examination material secure prior to an examination;
- discussing or otherwise revealing secure information in public (eg internet forums);
- moving the time or date of a fixed examination (beyond the arrangements permitted by the regulations within the NEBOSH publication 'Instructions for conducting examinations'); conducting an examination before the published date constitutes accredited course provider staff malpractice and a clear breach of security;
- permitting, facilitating or obtaining unauthorised access to examination material prior to an examination;
- failing to return question papers after an examination;
- tampering with candidate scripts or controlled assessments after collection and before despatch to NEBOSH or internal assessor.

Deception

Any act of dishonesty in relation to any examination or assessment, but not limited to:

- inventing or changing marks for internally assessed components where there is no actual evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks being given;
- entering fictitious candidates for examinations or assessments, or otherwise subverting the assessment or certification process with the intention of financial gain (fraud).

Improper assistance to candidates

Giving assistance beyond that permitted by the specification to a candidate or group of candidates that results in a potential or actual advantage in an examination or assessment.

For example:

- assisting candidates in the production of controlled assessments, or evidence of achievement, beyond that permitted by the regulations;
- sharing or lending candidates' controlled assessments with other candidates in a way that allows malpractice to take place;
- assisting or prompting candidates with the production of answers;
- permitting candidates in an examination to access prohibited materials (dictionaries (where prohibited), programmable calculators, electronic devices, mobile phones, smartwatches, etc);

- assisting candidates granted the use of an oral language modifier, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader, a scribe or a sign language interpreter beyond that permitted by the regulations.

Failure to co-operate with an investigation

For example:

- failure to make available information reasonably requested by NEBOSH in the course of the investigation, or in the course of deciding whether an investigation is necessary;
- failure to investigate on request in accordance with NEBOSH's instructions or advice;
- failure to investigate or provide information according to agreed deadlines;
- failure to report all suspicions of malpractice.

Maladministration

Failure to adhere to the regulations regarding the conduct of controlled assessments and examinations, or malpractice in the conduct of the examinations/assessments and/or the handling of question papers, candidate scripts, marks sheets, cumulative assessment records, results and certificate claim forms, etc.

For example:

- inappropriate members of staff assessing candidates for access arrangements where candidates do not meet the criteria as detailed by the NEBOSH regulations;
- failure to use current criteria and/or documentation for assessments;
- failure to train invigilators adequately, leading to non-compliance with NEBOSH regulations;
- failing to issue to candidates the appropriate notices and warnings;
- failure to inform NEBOSH of alternative sites for examinations;
- not ensuring that the examination venue conforms to NEBOSH requirements;
- the introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room, either during or prior to the examination (NB this precludes the use of the examination room to coach candidates or give subject-specific presentations, including power-point presentations, prior to the start of the examination);
- failing to ensure that mobile phones/smartwatches are placed out of the reach of candidates and failing to remind candidates that any mobile phones, smartwatches or other unauthorised items found in their possession must be handed to the invigilator prior to the examination starting;
- failure to invigilate in accordance with the NEBOSH publication *'Instructions for conducting examinations'*;
- failure to keep accurate records in relation to very late arrivals;
- failure to keep accurate and up-to-date records in respect of access arrangements that have been processed electronically using the access arrangements online system;
- granting access arrangements to candidates who do not meet the requirements of the NEBOSH publication *'Policy and procedures for access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration'*;
- granting access arrangements to candidates where prior approval has not been obtained from NEBOSH;
- failing to retain candidates' controlled assessments in secure conditions after the

authentication statements have been signed;

- failing to maintain the security of candidate scripts prior to despatch to NEBOSH or internal assessor;
- failing to despatch candidate scripts to NEBOSH, Examiners or Moderators in a timely way;
- failing to report an instance of suspected malpractice in examinations or assessments to NEBOSH as soon as possible after such an instance occurs or is discovered;
- failing to conduct a thorough investigation into suspected examination or assessment malpractice when asked to do so by NEBOSH;
- the inappropriate retention or destruction of certificates;
- misuse of assessments, including inappropriate adjustments to assessment decisions;
- insecure storage of assessment instruments and marking guidance;
- failure to comply with requirements for accurate and safe retention of candidate evidence, assessment and internal verification;
- failure to comply with NEBOSH requirements for managing and transferring accurate candidate data;
- excessive direction from internal assessors.

Part 2 Candidate malpractice

For example:

- the alteration or falsification of any results document, including certificates;
- a breach of the instructions or advice of an invigilator, supervisor or NEBOSH in relation to the examination or assessment rules and regulations, as set out in the NEBOSH *'Instructions for conducting examinations'* document and/or additional NEBOSH guidance relevant to a particular qualification;
- failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to maintain the security of the examinations or assessments;
- copying from another candidate (including the use of ICT to do so);
- allowing work to be copied, eg posting on social networking sites prior to an examination/assessment;
- the deliberate destruction of another candidate's work;
- disruptive behaviour in the examination room or during an assessment session (including the use of offensive language, shouting and/or aggressive behaviour);
- exchanging, obtaining, receiving, passing on information (or the attempt to) that could be examination-related by means of talking, electronic, written or non-verbal communication;
- making a false declaration of authenticity in relation to the authorship of controlled assessments;
- allowing others to assist in the production of controlled assessments or assisting others in the production of controlled assessments;
- collusion: working collaboratively with other candidates beyond what is permitted (student should not let other people see their work as this can lead to accusations of collusion);
- the misuse, or the attempted misuse, of examination and assessment materials and resources (eg exemplar materials);
- being in possession of confidential material in advance of the examination;
- inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material in assessment evidence;

-
- impersonation: pretending to be someone else, arranging for another person to take one's place in an examination or an assessment;
 - plagiarism: unacknowledged copying from published sources (including the internet) or incomplete referencing. A source is any resource that an individual uses to collect information – including text books, course notes, the internet and other people. An acknowledgement is a description of a source so that someone else can find it, along with an indication in an individual's work of which information came from that source. It is important for students to understand that when they sign the declaration of authenticity they are confirming the work produced is their own and that they have correctly acknowledged any ideas or words belonging to another author;
 - theft of another candidate's work;
 - bringing into the examination room or assessment situation unauthorised material, for example: notes, study guides and personal organisers, own blank paper, programmable calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), electronic devices, instruments that can capture a digital image, electronic dictionaries, translators, wordlists, glossaries, iPods, mobile phones, smartwatches, MP3 players, pagers or other similar electronic devices;
 - the unauthorised use of a memory stick where a candidate uses a word processor;
 - behaving in a manner so as to undermine the integrity of the examination.

Appendix 2: Report of Suspected Malpractice form

CONFIDENTIAL

This form is to be used to report instances of suspected malpractice to NEBOSH.

Section A:

Date of incident

Time (am/pm)

--	--

Accredited course provider number	
--	--

Accredited course provider name	
--	--

Student number(s)	Student name(s)

Please continue list on a separate sheet if necessary.

Examination/Assessment details

NEBOSH qualification name	

NEBOSH unit	NEBOSH unit title

Name of invigilator(s) / assessment personnel or other witness(es)

Name	Role

Venue details (if different from the accredited course provider head office address)

Organisation name (where appropriate)	
Building name and/or number	
Street	
City Area or District	
Town or City	
County or State	
Country	
Postal code	

Section B

Describe the nature of the suspected malpractice including details as to how it was discovered, by whom and when.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Section C

Did the examination invigilator remind candidates of the need to observe the regulations on the NEBOSH candidate examination entry confirmation/confirmation of examination registration?

YES / NO

If the incident involves assignments, did the tutor remind candidates to read and observe the relevant guidance for assignment completion and submission? Where applicable, has an Assignment Log been completed and signed by the tutor and the candidate?

YES / NO

If the incident involves practical assessments were the correct procedures followed as provided in the relevant NEBOSH publication and/or guidance document(s)?

YES / NO

If the incident involves **disruptive** behaviour, did the candidate's behaviour cause disturbance to other candidates?

YES / NO

NB: If the answer to the above is YES and you wish to submit special consideration for other candidates, please complete the NEBOSH Application for special consideration form available from the NEBOSH website at www.nebosh.org.uk

If the incident involves the introduction of **unauthorised material**, is the unauthorised material enclosed?

YES / NO

If the **unauthorised material** is **not** enclosed, please provide details as to the nature of the unauthorised material.

If the case involves **plagiarism** please provide full details (ie title, author, edition, website, etc) of the material plagiarised and include copies if possible.

Other information

If there are any other details you feel are relevant to this allegation including mitigating circumstances, please give further information below and continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Section D

Supporting evidence

Please indicate by ticking the boxes below, the supporting evidence submitted with this report. ALL relevant information and materials should be submitted at this time. Evidence submitted subsequently may not be considered.

Evidence submitted with this form	
Statement(s) from Invigilator(s)	
Statement(s) from Tutor/Head of accredited course provider/Assessor/Inspector	
Statement(s) from Examination Officer(s)	
Statement(s) from candidates	
Statement(s) from employer	
Seating plan of examination room	
Unauthorised material removed from candidate(s)	
Scripts/Assignments of the candidate(s)	
Copies of sources of plagiarised material	
Assessment and Internal Verification or Moderation records	
Other (please give details)	

If statement(s) from the candidate(s) is/are not enclosed, please tick this box to indicate that the candidate(s) has/have been given the opportunity to make a statement, but has/have chosen not to do so.

By signing the below you are confirming that the information collected will be used to investigate the suspected malpractice and not be forwarded to any third party unless there is a lawful basis to do so.

Name (printed)		Tel no.	
		email	
Signature		Date	

Appendix 3: Malpractice Review Panel Terms of Reference



MALPRACTICE REVIEW PANEL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

To review the evidence of malpractice and determine the outcomes in cases of alleged malpractice where the investigation report recommends: withdrawal of accreditation from an accredited course provider following an investigation; the permanent barring of a Head of accredited course provider from any future involvement with NEBOSH qualifications or the withdrawal of qualifications and/or certificates already awarded to candidates.

Frequency of meetings

The Malpractice Review Panel will be convened between 28 working days and 40 working days from the despatch of the Malpractice Review Panel report to the Head of accredited course provider.

Responsibilities of the Panel

To review malpractice review reports, malpractice material and any information supplied by the accredited course provider/candidate or other person against whom the allegation is made.

In making a decision on the report, the Malpractice Review Panel will establish that correct procedures have been followed in the investigation of the case and that all individuals involved have been given the opportunity to make a written statement.

In cases recommending the withdrawal of accreditation, the Malpractice Review Panel will review the accredited course provider's accreditation agreement and determine whether the evidence presented demonstrates a contractual breach.

The Panel will also:

- identify the requirement(s)/accredited course provider criteria that it is alleged has/have been compromised;
- consider the facts of the case;
- decide whether on the balance of probabilities malpractice has occurred;
- establish who is responsible if regulations have been compromised;
- determine an appropriate level of sanction or penalty;
- summarise their findings with reference to the evidence on which they based their decision.

The Malpractice Review Panel must be satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the allegation is substantiated and the decision shall be made by consensus.

Notes of the decisions/sanctions and recommendations for further investigation will be taken.

Membership

The membership of the Malpractice Review Panel will consist of three members of the NEBOSH Leadership Team, one of which will also act as Chair, the NEBOSH Head of Compliance and any other person required by the Chair. Also in attendance will be a nominated member of staff from the Chief Executive's Directorate to take notes.

Quorum

The quorum shall be three.

Attendance of meetings

The Panel may invite other persons to attend meetings where there is a need for their specialist input and discussion.

Reporting

Agendas and papers for Panel meetings will be issued 5 working days in advance of the meeting. Notes will be taken and kept for a minimum period of 3 years. A member of the Panel will write to the candidate/member of staff/accredited course provider with the outcome of the meeting within 10 working days of the date of the meeting.

Appendix 4: Stage 2 Malpractice Appeals Process

Purpose

The purpose of the Stage 2 Appeal is to allow an impartial review of the matter.

Panel membership

The Stage 2 Appeal will be heard by a panel consisting of four members: one of the members must not have been associated with NEBOSH within the last 5 years; one member will not be a direct employee of NEBOSH (for example an Examiner); the other two members will be NEBOSH Directors or Heads of Department not previously associated with the matter under appeal. In addition to this there will be one note taker.

Representation

In addition to a written submission the appellant will have the opportunity to make oral representation (either in person or via teleconferencing or video conferencing facilities). The appellant may be supported by one representative and this must be agreed with NEBOSH no later than 5 working days prior to the Stage 2 Appeal.

Documentation provided for the Stage 2 Appeal

The documentation to be reviewed at the Stage 2 panel includes:

- information provided by the appellant as part of the Stage 2 Appeal submission;
- the findings of the Stage 1 Appeal and the evidence on which this was based;
- the original findings of malpractice or the breach of accreditation agreement and the evidence on which this was based;
- additional information or evidence identified by NEBOSH after the Stage 1 Appeal (this must be provided to the appellant 5 working days prior to the Stage 2 Appeal hearing).

NEBOSH reserve the right to provide rebuttal to the Stage 2 Appeal application.

A copy of all materials (correspondence/documents/reports, etc) relating to the appeal will be forwarded to the panel members 5 working days before the panel meeting. The panel members will be required to read the documentation prior to the appeal hearing.

Where any material is considered by NEBOSH to be of a confidential nature, NEBOSH may make such materials available to the appeal hearing under such conditions as are necessary to protect the confidentiality of the material. NEBOSH will ensure compliance with any relevant provision of the General Data Protection Regulation.

This material will include:

- Relevant NEBOSH procedures, guidance, documents, forms:
 - *'Policy and procedures for suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments'*;
 - Evidence from the appellant;
 - The report and supporting evidence on which the decision was based;
 - NEBOSH *'Instructions for conducting examinations'*;
 - Other, as relevant;

- Report produced on conclusion of Stage 1 Appeal;
- Guidance for undertaking the appeal.

The hearing

The hearing will re-examine all of the evidence, comments and reports made available in the initial investigation, any further details that may have come to light as a result of a Stage 1 Appeal and further evidence presented by the appellant as part of the Stage 2 Appeal.

Where the Stage 2 Appeal follows a Malpractice Review Panel, the panel cannot reverse any previous awarding decisions. For example; the decision to void candidate results cannot be reversed, since the appeals procedure for the individual candidate(s) will have already been exhausted.

The panel will consider whether there was sufficient evidence to support the finding of malpractice and how appropriate the original penalty or sanction was in light of NEBOSH precedents and any additional information provided by the appellant or NEBOSH.

Procedure for the hearing

1. Introductions and Proceeding

- The Chair will provide introductions
- The Chair will provide an overview of the proceedings

2. Oral representation from the appellant

- The Chair will invite the appellant to make oral representation
- The Chair will invite panel members to ask questions
- The Chair will invite the NEBOSH representative to ask the appellant questions through the Chair

3. Oral representation from NEBOSH

- The Chair will invite the NEBOSH representative to make oral representation
- The Chair will invite panel members to ask questions
- The Chair will invite the appellant to ask the NEBOSH representative questions through the Chair

4. Decision making

- The appellant and the NEBOSH representative will be invited to withdraw
- The panel will reach a decision

5. Note taking

- The Panel's decisions, justifications and recommendations will be recorded by the note taker.

Making the decision

In reaching a decision, the panel will consider whether NEBOSH's procedures were consistent with the regulator's requirements and were properly and fairly applied. The panel will also consider whether, in the event of a failure of procedures having been identified at an earlier stage, any remedial action then taken by NEBOSH was sufficient to rectify the matter.

The panel may decide to allow the appeal or to reject it. If the appeal is allowed, the panel may:

- refer the matter back to the appropriate NEBOSH Officer for further consideration on such basis the panel may direct;
- direct NEBOSH to carry out further work.

After the Stage 2 Appeal is heard

The notes and the findings of the panel will be detailed in a report. The report will be circulated to panel members within 10 working days of the panel meeting; members will then have 5 working days to review the report. Silence from the panel members will be deemed agreement. NEBOSH will inform the Head of accredited course provider of the outcome within 20 working days of the panel meeting.

Irrespective of whether or not the appeal is upheld, the panel may make recommendations to NEBOSH on issues or concerns that emerged during the hearing.

Any further work carried out will be in full compliance with NEBOSH procedures.

The decision of the panel will be sent to the appellant no later than 10 working from the date that NEBOSH receive the panel's report.

A report of the hearing, subject to redaction, will be provided to the appellant upon request.

The Stage 2 Appeal will complete NEBOSH's internal appeals procedures. No further appeal within NEBOSH will be accepted.