

Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

September 2024



Effective Date: 27/09/2024

Review Date: 26/09/2025

Approved by: Charlotte Sapey (Managing Director), Natalie Foster (HR Manager/Director)

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the commitment of Integr8 Dance to maintain high standards of integrity and fairness in all areas of its operations. It defines the procedures for identifying, addressing, and preventing malpractice and maladministration, ensuring the protection of students, staff, and suppliers, as well as maintaining the school's reputation and compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.

2. Definitions

- **Malpractice:** Any activity or practice that deliberately breach established rules or standards. This may include but is not limited to:
 - Deliberate falsification of student or staff records or documents
 - Unlawful or unethical behaviour that compromises the reputation, integrity or operations of Integr8 Dance.
 - Plagiarism of Choreography: The unauthorised copying, use, or presentation of someone else's choreography or creative work without proper credit or permission.
- **Maladministration:** Inefficient or improper management practices or negligence that leads to the misapplication of procedures or policies. Examples include:

- Poor record-keeping.
- Mismanagement of resources or funds.
- Unintentional failure to follow school policies or statutory requirements.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students, staff, volunteers and contractors of Integr8 Dance
- All operations and activities within the school, including teaching, event management, and administration

4. Responsibilities

- **Charlotte Sapey (Managing Director):** Oversees the implementation of this policy, ensuring that proper procedures are in place and followed.
- **Natalie Foster (HR Manager/Director):** Responsible for the administration of this policy, including staff training, record-keeping, and investigation of any incidents related to malpractice or maladministration.
- **All Staff:** Required to act in accordance with this policy, report suspected malpractice or maladministration, and cooperate with any investigations.
- **Students:** Expected to adhere to the school's code of conduct and report any malpractice or maladministration they witness.

5. Identifying Malpractice and Maladministration

Malpractice or maladministration may be identified in several ways, including:

- Internal monitoring of records and activities. This could be through observation of teaching, rehearsals, or performances.
- Complaints or concerns raised by students, staff, or external suppliers
- External audits or reviews

6. Reporting Procedures

- **Staff Reporting:** Any staff member who becomes aware of potential malpractice or maladministration must report it immediately to the HR Manager (Natalie Foster).
- **Student Reporting:** Students should report any concerns to their instructor or the HR Manager. Reports can be made verbally or in writing and will be treated confidentially where appropriate.
- **External Stakeholders:** Concerns from external partners or stakeholders should be directed to the Managing Director (Charlotte Sapey).

7. Investigation Process

Once a report is received:

- **Preliminary Review:** The HR Manager will conduct an initial assessment to determine if the issue warrants a formal investigation. This involves evaluating the seriousness of the issue, the credibility of the report, and whether it aligns with definitions of malpractice or maladministration as set out in the policy.

7.1 Formal Investigation:

- The HR Manager (Natalie Foster) will appoint an Investigative Officer (IO) to oversee the formal investigation. This individual should be impartial and have no prior involvement in the matter being investigated. Depending on the nature of the concern, the IO could be a senior staff member or an external advisor if necessary.
 - Collect relevant documentation, conduct interviews with involved parties, and review relevant procedures.
 - The investigation should aim to be completed within 30 working days.
- **Notification of Parties Involved**

Written Notification:

- All individuals involved in the investigation, including the person(s) accused of malpractice or maladministration and the person(s) raising the concern, will receive written notification that a formal investigation is being initiated.
- The notification will outline the following:
 - The nature of the concern.
 - The details of the formal investigation process.
 - Expected timelines.
 - The rights and responsibilities of those involved (e.g., the right to provide evidence, the right to representation or support).
- Confidentiality will be emphasised in this communication.

7.2 Evidence Gathering

Document Review:

- The IO will collect and review all relevant documentation, including:
 - Correspondence (emails, letters, etc.).
 - Choreography records (for cases involving plagiarism of choreography).
 - Any policies or procedures related to the issue.
 - Administrative or financial records (if relevant to the case).

7.3 Interviews:

- The IO will conduct interviews with key individuals, including:

- The person(s) accused of malpractice or maladministration.
- The person(s) raising the concern.
- Witnesses or others with relevant knowledge.
- Interviewees will be informed of their right to bring a representative (such as a colleague or support person) to the meeting. All interviews will be documented, and interviewees may be asked to sign off on their statements for accuracy.

7.2 Interim Measures (if necessary)

- In certain cases, it may be necessary to put interim measures in place while the investigation is ongoing. These could include:
 - **Temporary Suspension:**
If the accused individual's continued presence at Integr8 Dance could jeopardise the investigation or affect others, they may be temporarily suspended with pay (for staff) or excused from classes (for students).
 - **Restricted Duties:**
A staff member might be temporarily reassigned to different duties if their current role is central to the investigation.
 - Any interim measures will be non-punitive and will not imply guilt or fault.

7.3 Investigation Timeline

- **Completion of Investigation:**
 - The investigation should be completed within 30 working days of its initiation, unless there are exceptional circumstances requiring an extension.
 - If an extension is necessary, all parties will be informed of the new timeline and the reasons for the delay.

7.4 Outcome & Reporting:

Final Report:

- The IO will compile a formal report at the conclusion of the investigation. The report will include:
 - A summary of the concern raised.
 - A list of evidence collected and reviewed.
 - A summary of interviews conducted.
 - The findings, with a clear explanation of whether malpractice or maladministration has been identified.
 - Recommended actions or sanctions, if necessary.

Submission of Report:

- The report will be submitted to the HR Manager (Natalie Foster) and the Managing Director (Charlotte Sapey) for review and decision-making.

7.5 Decision and Actions

The HR Manager and Managing Director will review the investigation report and jointly decide on the outcome. This may include:

- Confirmation of malpractice or maladministration.
- Exoneration of the accused if no evidence is found to support the claim.
- Implementation of corrective actions to prevent future occurrences.

7.6 Communication of Outcome

Formal Notification:

- All parties will receive written notification of the outcome of the investigation. This communication will include:
 - A summary of the findings.
 - Any actions or sanctions decided upon.
 - Details on how the outcome was determined.

8 Decision Not to Investigate:

If the HR Manager determines that the concern does not meet the threshold for a formal investigation (e.g., insufficient evidence, minor or unintentional issue, or misunderstanding), the following actions will be taken:

- **Documenting the Decision:**

A record of the report, the preliminary assessment, and the decision not to proceed with a formal investigation will be kept on file. This is essential for future reference and accountability.
- **Communication with the Reporter:**

The individual who raised the concern (whether a student, staff member, or external party) will be informed of the decision not to pursue a formal investigation. This communication should:

 - Explain the reasons for the decision.
 - Offer any advice or guidance if relevant (e.g., suggestions for preventing similar issues in the future).
 - Reassure the individual that their report was taken seriously and recorded.

8.1 Resolution and Next Steps:

- **Informal Resolution:**

If the issue is minor or based on a misunderstanding, the HR Manager or relevant staff member may suggest an informal resolution. This could involve:

 - Clarifying policies, expectations, or communication channels.
 - Offering mediation between involved parties.
 - Providing constructive feedback to the student or staff member involved.

- **Training or Guidance:**

In cases where the concern involves a minor procedural error or knowledge gap, the HR Manager may arrange for additional training or guidance to ensure better understanding of the school's policies and procedures.

- **Monitoring:**

Even though no formal investigation is initiated, the HR Manager may decide to monitor the situation or person involved to ensure that the issue does not escalate or recur in the future. This monitoring will be done discreetly and without prejudice.

8.2. Reassessing the Decision

If new evidence or information arises after the initial assessment, the decision not to investigate can be revisited. In such cases:

- The concern may be re-evaluated and, if necessary, escalated to a formal investigation.
- The individual who reported the issue will be informed of this change in status and updated throughout the process.

9. Actions and Sanctions

If malpractice or maladministration is confirmed, actions may include:

- For Staff:
 - Formal warning or disciplinary action up to dismissal
 - Retraining or reassignment of duties
 - In cases of minor maladministration, coaching or procedural improvements may be recommended instead of formal sanctions.
- For Students:
 - A meeting to discuss the issue, with possible sanctions including a warning, required acknowledgment of the breach, or, in severe cases, suspension or expulsion.
- For Integr8 Dance:
 - A review and update of school policies and procedures to prevent recurrence.
 - Reporting to external bodies if necessary

10. Preventative Measures

To minimise the occurrence of malpractice or maladministration, Integr8 Dance will:

- Provide ongoing staff training and awareness on school policies and procedures
- Conduct regular internal reviews of administrative processes and records.
- Encourage a culture of transparency and ethical behaviour through leadership and example

11. Appeals Process

- **Right to Appeal:**
 - If any party involved in the investigation (the accused or the individual who raised the concern) is dissatisfied with the outcome, they have the right to submit a formal appeal.
 - The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Managing Director (Charlotte Sapey) within 10 working days of the outcome notification.
- **Appeal Panel:**
 - An independent panel, consisting of individuals who were not involved in the original investigation, will review the appeal.
 - The appeal panel will reassess the evidence and the decision and provide a final ruling within 20 working days.
- **Final Decision:**
 - The decision made by the appeal panel is final, and all parties will be informed in writing of the appeal's outcome.

12. Confidentiality and Whistleblowing

- All reports related to malpractice or maladministration will be treated in strict confidence. The identity of the person making the report will only be disclosed if absolutely necessary, and in compliance with legal obligations.
- Whistleblowers will be protected from retaliation or unfair treatment for raising concerns in good faith.

13. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the HR Manager (Natalie Foster) and Managing Director (Charlotte Sapey) or as necessary to ensure it remains effective and compliant with relevant legislation and best practices.

Approved by:

Charlotte Sapey - Managing Director
Natalie Foster - HR Manager/Director

Date:

27/09/2024