

Group Operations

Fraudulent Activity and Plagiarism Policy

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION..... 3
SCOPE 3
POLICY..... 3
PLAGIARISM..... 4

Introduction

In 2007, the Fraud Act came into effect. It required that for an offence to have occurred, the person must have acted [dishonestly](#), and that they had to have acted with the intent of making a gain for themselves or anyone else, or inflicting a loss (or a risk of loss) on another.

Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline BCS's responsibilities when fraud is suspected or identified. BCS considers any contributions to, use of, or sharing of materials pertaining to PDS Certifications (or "brain dumps") to be a violation of the Fraudulent Activity Policy.

Policy

We reserve the right to take action against any person or organisation (be that an accredited organisation or not) that is believed to have been involved in fraudulent activities, including, but not limited to, cheating in an examination, alteration of certificates, or other activities deemed as fraudulent by BCS.

If we determine, at our sole discretion, that fraudulent activity has taken place by an individual or individuals, we reserve the right to take action up to and including, but not limited to, decertification of a candidate's qualification, temporary, indefinite or permanent ban of a candidate from BCS examinations, notification to a candidate's employer, and notification to the relevant authorities.

If we determine, at our sole discretion, that fraudulent activity has taken place by an organisation, we reserve the right to take action up to and including, but not limited to, the suspension or withdrawal of accreditation (if applicable) and notification to any relevant authorities.

In addition, all fees previously paid to BCS will be forfeited and the individual or organisation may be required to pay additional fees for services rendered.

It is the responsibility of the individual or organisation to ensure that materials that are purchased or used to prepare for examinations are not violations of this Fraudulent Activity and Plagiarism Policy.

To ensure that all materials purchased are legitimate these should be purchased directly from BCS. Sample papers can be purchased by calling Customer Services on + 44 (0) 1793 417 655.

If a candidate suspects another candidate is cheating, then they should report it to the invigilator immediately after the examination has concluded. The invigilator will then take appropriate action. If you suspect another candidate was cheating and this was not reported to the invigilator, then please put the details in writing to pds-certifications@bcs.uk as soon as possible after the examination has finished.

BCS will then investigate the matter based on the evidence provided. Please note that the outcome of the investigation and any sanctions imposed will not be disclosed to the individual making the complaint because of our responsibilities under the Data Protection Act.

Falsely claiming to hold a certification is a criminal offence under the Fraud Act 2006. The person making the claim is guilty of “Fraud by False Representation” under Section 2 of the Act.

We keep records of all examination candidates and all persons who have been awarded one of our certifications and each certificate has a unique identifying number enabling us to cross check the details of the person to whom that certificate was issued to. We will assist employers and recruitment agencies in verifying that prospective or existing employees actually do hold BCS qualifications.

Falsifying qualifications in order to obtain a job is a reason for instantly dismissing the employee concerned for serious misconduct under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

Further, we may inform appropriate professional bodies of the attempted fraud where their members have participated.

Plagiarism

What constitutes plagiarism or cheating?

If you submit an assignment that contains work that is not your own, without indicating this to the marker (acknowledging your sources), you are committing ‘plagiarism’ and this is an offence. This might occur in an assignment when:

- using a choice phrase or sentence that you have come across
- copying word-for-word directly from a text
- paraphrasing the words from a text very closely
- using text downloaded from the internet
- borrowing statistics or assembled facts from another person or source
- copying or downloading figures, photographs, pictures or diagrams without acknowledging your sources
- copying from the notes or essays of a fellow student
- copying from your own notes, on a text, tutorial, video or lecture, that contain direct quotations.

Although you are encouraged to show the results of your reading by referring to and quoting from works on your subject, copying from such sources without acknowledgement is deemed to be plagiarism and will not be accepted by BCS.

This means that you must make it clear which words and ideas are yours and which have come from elsewhere, through the use of quotation marks as well as in-text citations. BCS reserves the right to use text comparison software which it applies to electronic assignments as well as scanned or retyped assignments.

Therefore, you will be asked to acknowledge a statement to confirm that all assessment work you have submitted is your own and that you have not cheated. Submitting work that has been done by someone else and persistent borrowing of other people’s work without citation are obvious instances of plagiarism and are regarded as cheating. Copying answers from social networking sites is cheating. Paying for work from other sources and submitting it as your own is also cheating. Passing on your assignments to others, with the knowledge that another student may plagiarise the assignment will also lead to disqualification. If a case of plagiarism is proven, you will be referred to the Membership Committee.

To check students are working in a fair and academically appropriate manner, may use one or more types of text comparison software to detect potential cases of plagiarism in work that is submitted for assessment.

- Software which compares work submitted by one student with assignments submitted by all other students on the module (as well as previous presentations of the module where appropriate). The main use of this software is to check for cases of collusion.
- Software which carries out the equivalent of an internet search, looks for matches between the text included in a piece of work submitted by a student with all forms of information and resources publicly available on the internet. The main use of this software is to check for cases of direct copying, and/or not properly referencing various types of source materials. It can also be used to compare each student's assignments with the module materials and other commonly used or provided references. When using these systems, BCS will not submit any personal details about you to either of them. The reports created by this software will be made available to the assessment team and in some cases they may decide to take the matter further.

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