

NEBOSH Ethical Practice Report



April – June 2022



NEBOSH Ethical Practice Report

Welcome to NEBOSH's Ethical Practice Report which publishes information about our approach to ethical practice and the outcomes of our activities in April – June 2022.

These quarterly reports outline our proactive approach to detecting and investigating malpractice, and the outcomes of our activities.

Cheats do not have a place in the health and safety profession.

At a glance: April – June 2022

1,927
investigations concluded



2,025
learners
identified as engaged
in malpractice

3,210
penalties 

4 LIFETIME
BANS

1 fraudulent certificate
website shut down

~~**1,185**~~
BANS

427
cases of fraudulent
activity on social
media removed

NEBOSH Ethical Practice Report

Investigations

NEBOSH employs a team of Ethical Practice Experts who review every assessment, collect evidence and conduct thorough investigations into every potential incidence of malpractice. Some investigations are more complex than others and may take many months of work whilst we use a range of tools and techniques to gather evidence. Where it has been found that malpractice has taken place, we apply appropriate penalties to any person or organisation involved.

During April – June 2022 we completed 1,927 investigations and opened 947 new investigations.

Penalties and sanctions

The penalties applied for malpractice will depend on the severity of the offence and the strength of the evidence collected during the investigation process. Sanctions can range from results being voided to lifetime bans. The number of penalties is greater than the number of learners punished, as one learner can receive multiple penalties. For example, if a learner has two units voided and receives a ban, that equates to three penalties.

Our completed investigations resulted in 3,210 penalties being issued to 2,025 learners in this reporting period. They included:

- 4 lifetime bans
- 3 five-year bans
- 393 three-year bans
- 350 two-year bans
- 435 one-year bans

Automated plagiarism checking tools assist NEBOSH's investigations and help to pinpoint cases where learners have colluded on their answers, purchased answers from a third party source which they have tried to submit as their own, or plagiarised external materials. In one Diploma assessment, 19 learners were found to have committed plagiarism. NEBOSH voided all results and imposed a range of bans proportionate to the amount of content that had been copied.

In another example, 29 learners were found to have submitted the same or similar content. All 29 learners had their results voided and a range of bans were applied.

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Working with our Learning Partners and Examiners

NEBOSH's Learning Partner network is rigorously accredited and monitored; these organisations also help us to uphold the high standards we expect from our learners. In this reporting period, Learning Partners reported 220 suspected cases of malpractice to NEBOSH for further investigation.

In one case, a Learning Partner reported suspected collusion from two learners in the production of their assessment. On investigation, their assessments were found to contain an extensive amount of identical content and penalties were applied to both learners.

In another case, a Learning Partner was approached by someone with a fraudulent Unit Results Notification (URN). The URN has been doctored from an official URN received by a NEBOSH learner who had permitted use of their details for fraudulent purposes. This learner had not achieved a NEBOSH qualification and has received a lifetime ban from sitting any future NEBOSH assessment.

Our Examiners are experts from the profession and receiving training not only in marking, but in the detection of potential malpractice. In one example, an Examiner reported a learner whose risk assessment contained an extensive amount of plagiarised content. Their unit was declared void and they received a three-year ban from taking NEBOSH assessments.

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Removing fraudulent online content

Our in-house experts monitor websites, blogs and social media daily to identify any content that could jeopardise NEBOSH's reputation or the integrity of our qualifications. This includes content that:

- Falsely promotes an association with NEBOSH
- Sells fake NEBOSH certificates
- Sells training from an unaccredited organisation
- Helps learners to answer a live assessment
- Sells or distributes pre-written answers

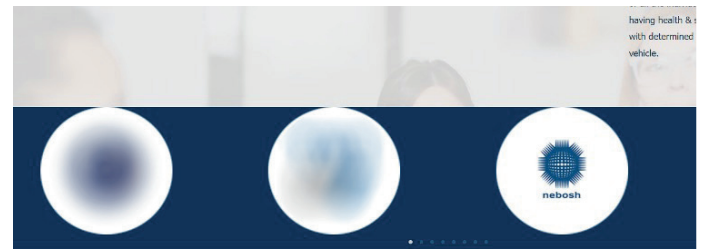
We work with specialist solicitors and social media platforms to contact content owners/publishers and have this type of content removed.

From April – June 2022 we worked to remove 427 social media posts or groups and close down 34 websites or blogs. Our work also resulted in one fraudulent certificate website being taken down.

The intelligence from our IPR work also informs malpractice investigations; we are able to find learners who have engaged with these channels and potentially cheated in their assessments. For example, by monitoring social media, a learner was found to be requesting assistance with their IG1 assessment during the 24-hour assessment period. This learner's IG1 unit was declared void and they were banned from sitting any NEBOSH assessment for one year.

Website misusing NEBOSH logo (reported and content removed)

In this case, an organisation was falsely promoting an association with NEBOSH and advertising NEBOSH courses, for which it did not have accreditation. The NEBOSH logo, and relating content, has now been removed and we continue to monitor its activities.



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Reporting

Malpractice concerns

We review every piece of information and intelligence that is sent to us however, for privacy reasons, we cannot provide an update on individual cases or investigations to you.

If you have any evidence about possible malpractice, please report it to us at postassessment@nebosh.org.uk.

Together we can stamp out malpractice and protect the integrity of the health and safety profession.

Fraudulent online content

We have dedicated Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) experts and lawyers who find and remove fraudulent activity such as fake certificates, assessment writing services, guarantees of 100% pass rates or claiming to have access to NEBOSH's systems to change grades. Although it only takes minutes to post something online it can take days or weeks for NEBOSH to have it removed by the relevant platform. If you see a fraudulent social media post or website you can help by:

- Reporting it to us at ipr@nebosh.org.uk; and
- Reporting posts to the relevant social media platform.

Our free verification service

You can verify any NEBOSH qualification and we highly recommend that employers use our verification services in the recruitment of potential health and safety employees. NEBOSH has two free services that are available:

- If you have a certificate, you can use our online platform to check the authenticity of any NEBOSH qualification: <https://www.nebosh.org.uk/online-verifications>.
- To validate the information on a results document please contact NEBOSH via our Verification Request Form <https://www.nebosh.org.uk/policies-and-procedures/verifications/>.

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NEBOSH, the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health,
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