

NEBOSH Ethical Practice Report

January – March 2025



NEBOSH Ethical Practice Report

NEBOSH’s Ethical Practice Report publishes information about our approach to ethical practice and the outcomes of our activities from January – March 2025.

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

of our activities. This report also includes important information, for learners and employers, about our verification service and how to use it safely.

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

At a glance: January – March 2025

1,435 investigations concluded

4 fake certificate selling websites taken down or had content removed



1,360 learners were found to have engaged in malpractice

2,084 penalties issued



724 BANS

40 LIFETIME BANS

4,988 cases of fraudulent activity on social media removed

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Investigations

NEBOSH employs a team of Ethical Practice experts who review assessments, collect evidence, and conduct thorough investigations into potential incidents of malpractice. Some investigations are more complex than others and may take many months of work, and 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.

Between January and March 2025, we completed 1,435 investigations.

A whistleblower reported that several learners had been using a WhatsApp group to help each other during the 24-hour assessment window. On investigation, we found that although the group had started out as a study group for the cohort, a proportion of the members had been asking for or giving advice whilst the assessment was live. This led to 22 learners' results being declared void. Learners must not engage with others about the assessment during the assessment window.

Penalties and sanctions

Penalties depend on the severity of the offence and the strength of the evidence collected during the investigation; they can range from voided results to lifetime bans.

The number of penalties is greater than the number of learners sanctioned, 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 2,084 penalties being issued to 1,360 learners in this reporting period. They included:

- 40 lifetime bans
- 6 five-year bans
- 313 three-year bans
- 130 two-year bans
- 235 one-year bans

The high number of lifetime bans in this quarter was due to the completion of a series of investigations into learners who had deliberately inserted additional 'hidden' characters between words in their answers. This type of malpractice is invisible to the human eye and attempts to defeat anti-plagiarism software and mask identical content. NEBOSH has the capability to detect hidden characters, and the learners who were found to have used them received lifetime bans.

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During the closing interview, a Learning Partner reported a discrepancy between the learner's identification at the closing interview and the identification that had been used to register for the assessment.

Upon review, we found that the identification used at the interview had been altered, and the person who attended the interview was not the actual learner. The learner's unit was voided, and they received a lifetime ban. This shows the lengths that some individuals will go to cheat and highlights the importance of identification checks during closing interviews.

An Examiner reported similar and identical content in a cohort of learners' assessments. Following an investigation, 18 learners' results were declared void, and 7 of the learners also received bans.

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An important reminder: verification service

NEBOSH has a free online verification service for learners and employers of health and safety professionals to verify the authenticity of a qualification.

As a learner, we strongly recommend that you keep your certificate details safe and only allow trusted organisations to access these documents.

As an employer, we strongly recommend that you always verify the credentials of prospective employees.

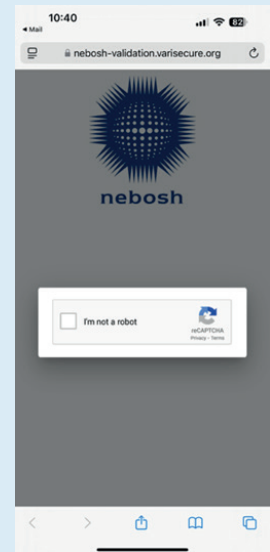
More information, including guidance, about our verifications service is available on our website; visit: <https://www.nebosh.org.uk/nebosh-online-verification/>

Please be vigilant. The verification tool should only be accessed by:

- Visiting the NEBOSH website and following the links provided there. Our URL is **www.nebosh.org.uk**; or
- Scanning a QR code which will take you to: **<https://nebosh-validation.verisecure.org>**

Emails sent from the verification service will be from the name 'Veri-Secure' and the email address **noreply@nebosh.org.uk**

Please check URLs carefully, as criminals try to impersonate our website to gather learner data. Here is an example of one website we found and removed from the internet. There is a very subtle difference where the URL is verisecure and not verisecure.



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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:

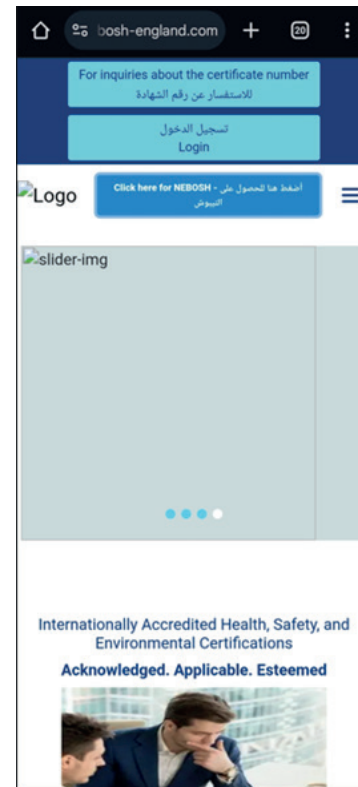
- Falsely promotes an association with NEBOSH
- Sells fake NEBOSH certificates
- Sells training from an unaccredited organisation
- Helps learners answer a live assessment
- Sells or distributes pre-written answers

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

In the quarter we:

- Removed 4,988 social media posts and pages
- Reported and closed 4 fraudulent certificate websites
- Reported and closed 11 websites which imitated our assessment platform, website or verification service.
- Removed content from and/or had a website suspended on 47 sites, for misuse of the NEBOSH brand

Here is an example of a website we had removed, which was imitating the NEBOSH website. The creators had amended the buttons at the top of the web page to try to gather learner data.



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You can help

Malpractice concerns

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.

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

Fraudulent online content

NEBOSH's Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) experts and lawyers find and remove fraudulent activity such as fake certificates, assessment writing services, guarantees of 100% pass rates, or claims 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.

Private chat groups

It only takes a moment for someone to set up a private chat or group, such as on WhatsApp. Unfortunately, these are hard to detect and report; they are usually accessed by personal phone numbers/accounts and can be invite-only groups. You can help by reporting these groups using in-platform reporting features. You can also share member details with NEBOSH using the details above (we require details such as names, phone numbers and images of conversations to investigate thoroughly).

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