

NEBOSH Ethical Practice Report

October – December 2024



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NEBOSH Ethical Practice Report

NEBOSH's Ethical Practice Report publishes information about our approach to ethical practice and the outcomes of our activities from October - December 2024.

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: October – December 2024

An updated verification service

1,175 investigations concluded

3 fake certificate selling websites had content taken down or removed



1,077 learners identified as engaged in malpractice

1,409 penalties issued



4 Learning Partners had accreditation removed

332 BANS

16 LIFETIME BANS

3,773 cases of fraudulent activity on social media removed

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An updated verification service

NEBOSH has a free online verification service for learners and employers to verify the authenticity of a qualification; we recommend that learners encourage their employer or future employer to use this service to raise awareness and help remove fake certificates from circulation.

To improve the security of NEBOSH certificates, NEBOSH has changed the certificate verification process. Learners themselves now hold the authorisation for all NEBOSH certificates featuring a QR code.

If the QR code on a certificate is used for verification purposes, the learner will receive an email with the option to approve or deny the request themselves.

When an email is sent, it will be from Veri-Secure noreply@nebosh.org.uk, and the URL that will be shown is <https://nebosh-validation.verisecure.org>.

Please be aware that fraudulent emails can look very similar to the above email/URL example. Please check and be vigilant about any requests you receive, and report any activity you suspect to be fraudulent to NEBOSH.

More information about our verifications service is available on our website; visit: <https://www.nebosh.org.uk/policies-and-procedures/verifications/>.

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.

We have produced guides to help both learners and employers. You can read them here: <https://www.nebosh.org.uk/nebosh-verifications/guidance/>

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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.

During October - December 2024 we completed 1,175 investigations.

In one case, a Learning Partner reported an unsatisfactory closing interview for a learner because someone was heard to be in the room assisting them to answer questions.

Upon review of the video recording, a different voice can be heard providing answers before the Learner gives them. The interviewer stopped the interview and informed the Learner he could hear another individual giving him the answers. The learner said that they were alone, but it was observed that they were wearing an earpiece. The learner's result was declared void, and they received a permanent ban from NEBOSH assessments.

We would like to thank our Learning Partners for reporting unsatisfactory closing interviews. This work helps to ensure the integrity of the assessment process and detect inauthentic learners.

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 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 1,409 penalties being issued to 1,077 learners in this reporting period. They included:

- 16 lifetime bans
- 3 five-year bans
- 124 three-year bans
- 48 two-year bans
- 141 one-year bans

Four Learning Partners also had their accreditation removed, including one which had been working with unapproved organisations and attempted deception.

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We received an email that gave information about a learner who had allegedly sat an assessment whilst under a ban with a different Learning Partner.

ID documents provided to both Learning Partners were reviewed, which showed that the ID document provided to the second Learning Partner had been amended. This meant that the second Learning Partner had registered the learner in good faith. Following our investigation, the learner's IG1 result was declared void and they received a lifetime ban from NEBOSH assessments.

We carry out a series of quality checks on learners' submissions. In one example, an assessment was flagged which, upon further review, contained AI-generated content with clear examples of 'AI speak' in the text.

Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content in answers is not permitted, and the learner's result was declared void.

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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.

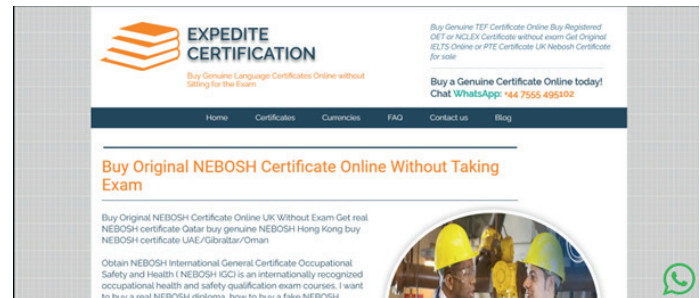
We work with specialist solicitors and social media platforms to contact content owners/publishers and have this type of content removed.

In the quarter we:

- Closed down 716 Scribd pages which were selling unapproved NEBOSH content
- Removed 3,773 social media posts and pages
- Removed content from and/or had a website suspended on 48 sites, for misuse of the NEBOSH brand
- Reported and closed down 3 fraudulent certificate websites

It is not possible to get a genuine NEBOSH qualification without studying with a NEBOSH-accredited Learning Partner and taking and passing our assessments. Certificates or qualifications achieved via any other route will be fake; any organisation providing this service is committing a criminal act.

Here is an example of a website we had removed which was selling fake qualification certificates, including those with a NEBOSH name.



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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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