

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1.22. Plagiarism and Cheating Policy and Procedure

Policy Content

Aspect	Details
Regulator	Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
Standards Referenced	
Legislation / Requirements	

Purpose

This policy ensures that academic integrity is maintained throughout all training and assessment activities conducted by the RTO. It establishes clear expectations for student conduct regarding original work, outlines mechanisms for detecting academic misconduct, and defines the procedures for managing and responding to incidents of plagiarism and cheating in accordance with the Standards for RTOs and the ESOS National Code.

Policy Statement

The RTO promotes a culture of integrity, fairness, and accountability. All students are expected to complete assessments and coursework with honesty and without engaging in academic misconduct. Any instance of plagiarism, collusion, or cheating will be addressed promptly and in accordance with this policy to protect the credibility of the qualifications issued and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

Objectives

- To prevent and manage academic misconduct across all training and assessment activities.
- To educate students and staff about appropriate referencing, authorship, and data use.
- To enforce consistent disciplinary action in confirmed cases of cheating or plagiarism.
- To maintain the validity and reliability of assessment outcomes as per the Rules of Evidence and Principles of Assessment.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All current and prospective students enrolled in RTO courses.
- All trainers, assessors, and administrative staff involved in training delivery and assessment.

Procedures

1.22.1. Student and Staff Understanding

- Students must comply with the academic integrity expectations of the RTO, including avoiding plagiarism, cheating, and collusion.
- Trainers and assessors are required to explain what constitutes academic misconduct during course induction, classroom briefings, and through written materials (e.g., learner handbooks and assessment instructions).
- Students are advised to seek guidance from trainers if unsure about correct referencing, use of data, or sourcing material for assessments.
- Trainers must emphasise the consequences of plagiarism and cheating and reinforce the importance of ethical academic conduct.
- All staff are expected to actively monitor student conduct and discourage dishonest practices through regular reminders and clear assessment guidelines.
- The RTO ensures students and staff have access to this policy through the student handbook, staff induction program, and the organisation's website.

1.22.2. Detection of Plagiarism

- Trainers and assessors must remain alert to the possibility of plagiarism during assessment marking and review.
- If plagiarism is suspected, the trainer must conduct a reasonable investigation to confirm the extent of copied or improperly referenced material.
- Online plagiarism detection tools may be used to assist in verifying suspected instances of copied work.
- The severity of the issue is judged on a case-by-case basis, ranging from incorrect referencing to substantial duplication of content.

- **Minor cases (e.g., citation errors) may be addressed with written comments and instruction on proper referencing.**
- **Moderate or serious cases may lead to a formal warning and require the student to resubmit the assessment.**
- **For proven or repeated plagiarism, the student is recorded as Not Yet Competent (NYC) and may be required to re-enrol and pay to repeat the full unit.**

1.22.3. Detection of Cheating

- **Trainers and assessors must observe and intervene immediately if cheating is suspected during an assessment task or test situation.**
- **If cheating is observed in real-time (e.g., copying during a test), the trainer must discreetly stop the student and remove them from the assessment area.**
- **Evidence of cheating must be documented clearly, including time, location, and method used (e.g., notes, devices, copying answers).**
- **If a single student is found cheating independently, they are to be marked “Not Yet Competent” (NYC) and denied a reattempt under the Assessment Policy.**
- **If collusion is suspected (e.g., two or more students sharing answers), all involved students must be marked as having failed the assessment.**
- **The incident must be recorded formally using the Meeting Minutes Template and signed by the student(s), assessor, and the PEO.**
- **Trainers are to report the issue to the RTO Manager and PEO immediately for investigation and further action.**

Roles and Responsibilities

Role/Position	Responsibilities
Trainers / Assessors	- Inform students about academic integrity standards during induction and prior to assessments.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor assessments for signs of cheating or plagiarism. - Detect and investigate suspected misconduct. - Record initial findings and notify the RTO Manager using the correct documentation. - Ensure fairness and confidentiality throughout the process.
RTO Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review all cases of suspected plagiarism and cheating submitted by trainers. - Conduct formal investigations and determine outcomes in line with policy. - Issue formal notifications and manage student appeals. - Ensure that records are accurately filed and securely stored. - Report incidents to the PEO and table patterns at management meetings.
PEO (Principal Executive Officer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oversee academic misconduct investigations as required. - Sign off final decisions related to repeat offences or appeals. - Authorise actions that affect course progression or disciplinary action. - Ensure that staff are trained on misconduct procedures and ethical standards.
Compliance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor compliance with SRT0 and ESOS standards regarding academic integrity. - Conduct audits on misconduct records and ensure adherence to continuous improvement protocols. - Ensure confidentiality and privacy obligations are upheld.

Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand and comply with assessment rules and academic conduct requirements. - Ask for clarification if unsure about referencing or research requirements. - Cooperate fully with any investigation processes.
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Confidentiality and Privacy

- All allegations, investigations, and outcomes related to plagiarism or cheating are treated with strict confidentiality.
- Student privacy is protected in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* and RTO’s internal Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.
- Information about academic misconduct is only disclosed to those directly involved in the investigation or resolution.
- All records are securely stored in the Student Management System (SMS) and are accessible only to authorised personnel.
- During induction and professional development, staff are reminded of their obligations to maintain student confidentiality and data protection.

Continuous Improvement

- All confirmed incidents of plagiarism and cheating are reviewed during monthly academic and quarterly management meetings.
- Patterns or recurring issues are documented and addressed through policy revision, staff training, or student education initiatives.
- Feedback from trainers, compliance staff, and students is analysed to strengthen assessment integrity practices.
- Improvement actions are recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register and monitored for implementation effectiveness.
- The policy is reviewed annually or as changes to legislation, standards, or industry practices require.

Retention of Records

- All records related to plagiarism and cheating incidents including meeting minutes, evidence files, formal decisions, and appeal outcomes

are retained for two (2) years after the student's completion or withdrawal from the training product, as required under *SRTO 2025* compliance obligations.

- Records are stored in the Student Management System (SMS) under restricted access protocols.
- Disposal of records is managed securely in line with the RTO's Document Control and Record Management Policy.