

Plagiarism and Cheating Policy

Purpose

The policy is intended to promote honesty in learning and assessment and respect for the work of others. Contravention of this policy will result in students being penalised as per our student code of conduct.

Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own. You are expected to acknowledge the intellectual property of others used in the preparation of projects and assessment tasks.

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's ideas or expressions without appropriate acknowledgement and presenting these ideas or forms of expression as your own. It includes not only written works such as books or journals, but data or images that may be presented in tables, diagrams, designs, plans, photographs, film, music, formulae, web sites and computer programs.

RTO 22215 regards plagiarism and cheating as using material, in contravention of the assessment rules, to gain unfair advantage, usually in a 'closed book' assessment and is an extremely serious academic offence. The penalties associated with plagiarism and cheating are severe and extend from cancelling all marks for the specific assessment item or for the entire unit through to exclusion from your course.

The penalty will depend on the severity of the plagiarism and cheating, whether the student is a repeat offender, whether there is evidence of deliberate deceit and whether another student has been coerced into participating in the plagiarism and cheating.

Cases of suspected Plagiarism

1. A Trainer or Assessor who suspects plagiarism should report this to the Executive Officer.
2. The Executive Officer must decide whether the plagiarism amounts to cheating. In other words, the Executive Officer must determine whether it is more likely than not that the plagiarism was done with the intention of gaining an unfair advantage.
3. The Executive Officer should use available online tools to objectively assess potential plagiarism in submitted work.

A) Executive Officer decides there was no Plagiarism and Cheating

If the Executive Officer decides that it is a case of unsatisfactory assessment and not cheating, the Executive Officer will then mark the work appropriately.

In some cases the Executive Officer may require the student to attend a meeting with the Executive Officer to discuss the issue of plagiarism and cheating. If this occurs the Executive Officer should send a student – plagiarism and cheating warning letter to the student in the appropriate form.

A copy of the student – plagiarism and cheating warning letter is to be placed on the student's personal file.

B) Executive Officer decides there is a possible case of Plagiarism and Cheating

If the Executive Officer reaches the conclusion that there is evidence that the student intended to obtain an unfair advantage, the Executive Officer must give the student an opportunity to respond before making a final determination.

In addition to more obvious cases of plagiarism (e.g. copying large slabs of information from the Internet), this situation would arise where two students, contrary to instructions, submit substantially the same work.

C) Executive Officer decides that Plagiarism and Cheating has occurred

If after giving the student an opportunity to respond, the Executive Officer decides that the student has acted with an intention to obtain an unfair advantage, the Executive Officer will either:

(i) disallow a Competency for that unit of Competence;

inform the student that the marks have been disallowed and advise the student that he/she has a right to appeal as per our complaints and appeals procedure; and place a copy of the letter (the student–plagiarism and cheating warning letter); on the student’s personal file.

D) Where cheating has occurred the student must be graded as ‘Not Yet Competent’ and will be required to retake the unit as their expense. They must be notified in writing and offered the right to appeal.

E) Executive Officer decides that Plagiarism and Cheating has not occurred

If, having heard the student’s explanation, the Executive Officer decides that the student’s conduct did not amount to plagiarism and cheating, the Executive Officer:

(a) Will treat the case as one of unsatisfactory academic work and mark the assessment appropriately (i.e. Not Yet Competent); and

(b) May, if it is deemed necessary, advise and counsel the student about the rules relating to plagiarism and cheating.

If (b) occurs, the Executive Officer should consider whether it is necessary to send a warning letter to the student. If a student – plagiarism and cheating warning letter is sent to the student, the Executive Officer must place a copy of the students’ individual file.

Penalties of Plagiarism and Cheating

Students who are found cheating or guilty of plagiarism on any form of assessment will be deemed Not Yet Competent for the relevant Unit of Competence.

The student will then need to re-submit, re-sit assessment.

Students who are found cheating or guilty of plagiarism for a second time will need to re-enrol and repeat the entire Unit of Competence and pay applicable fees.

Students who are found cheating or guilty of plagiarism for a third or subsequent time, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management.

Students will also be issued an official written warning which will be placed in the students’ file.

Continued behaviour of this kind may result in students being expelled from the RTO 22215.