

# Plagiarism and Cheating Policy

## 1. Purpose

This policy, Plagiarism and Cheating Policy and Procedures are within the scope of compliance requirements adhering to the Standards of RTO 2015, Standard 1 clause 1.8; Standard 4 clause 4.1 and Standard 5 clause 5.2; ESOS framework (ESOS Act 2000) National Code 2018 Standard 8. Vocational Training Institute (VTI) shall monitor the work of students to ensure academic integrity and validity of its courses to ensure that assessments are being conducted in accordance with the rules of evidence and principles of assessment.

## 2. Scope

The Plagiarism and Cheating Policy and Procedure applies to students pursuing all qualifications in VTI.

## 3. Definitions

**Academic misconduct:** Academic misconduct includes but is not restricted to: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and improper collaboration during the preparation of any prescribed assessment tasks.

**Plagiarism:** is the presentation of the works of another person / other persons as though they are one's own by failing to properly acknowledge that person / those persons. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and is a very serious academic offence that may lead to cancellation of Enrolment. Plagiarised material can be drawn from, and presented in, written, graphic, auditory and visual form, including electronic data, and oral presentations. Plagiarism occurs when the origin of the material used is not appropriately cited.

**Intentional Plagiarism:** is plagiarism associated with intent to deceive.

**Unintentional Plagiarism:** is plagiarism associated with a lack of understanding of plagiarism or a lack of skill in referencing / acknowledging others' work (still a breach of this Policy).

**Collusion:** is the unauthorised act of a student presenting work, which is the outcome of directly working with others, as his or her own.

**Cooperative Learning:** is the informal process of students interacting to enhance their learning outcomes and is encouraged.

**Cheating:** Is an intention to gain an unfair advantage in the assessment of or entry to a unit or course.

This may include (but is not limited to) the following:

- resubmitting or largely reusing previously assessed work;
- fabrication or falsification of data and /or results;
- presenting work, which is the outcome of directly working with others, as his or her own (collusion); allowing another person to complete an assessment or examination on behalf of a student;
- accessing/obtaining an advance copy of an examination paper unless otherwise authorised (for example a 'seen' paper);
- communicating with, or copying from, another person(s) during an examination;
- bringing into, or receiving during, an examination unauthorised material/information;
- presenting untrue medical/special consideration forms;
- knowingly helping others to cheat;
- taking actions which intrude on the ability of others to complete their assessable tasks

#### 4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 VTI commits to ensure that the ethical practices must be followed amongst students to conduct their studies in accordance with the accepted academic standards in an ethical and honest manner.
- 4.2 VTI shall monitor the work of students to ensure the academic integrity of its courses and that assessments are being conducted according to the rules of evidences and principles of assessments.
- 4.3 All students enrolled in VTI must be aware of the implications of plagiarism and cheating. They must seek assistance from trainers and assessors for the correct method of gathering data and referencing in their assessments.
- 4.4 All students enrolled in qualifications within VTI's scope of registration are required to act honestly and ensure that they do not cheat or commit acts of plagiarism.
- 4.5 All VTI's Trainers and Assessors should be aware of the potential of plagiarism and cheating and apply necessary risk management strategies. They should inform the students about implication of plagiarism and cheating.
- 4.6 If a student is found guilty of plagiarism or cheating it will be considered to be an academic misconduct with outcomes determined upon investigation and after the conclusion of the appeals process.

#### 5. Procedure

VTI follows a systematic approach to the treatment of plagiarism (intentional or unintentional) in academic work. This procedure sets out the processes for reporting, recording, adjudicating and penalising incidents of student plagiarism. The objective of this procedure is to provide a positive learning

environment for all students that encourages academic integrity, originality and literacy amongst students.

This is undertaken by:

- a. Adequately and consistently educating students in how to correctly research, present and reference their work in an Australian educational environment.
- b. Ensuring that students are clearly informed of what constitutes plagiarism and that it is an unacceptable academic practice (prior to enrolment via student handbook, at the time of orientation).
- c. Supplying students with information on how to avoid plagiarism and how to access information on correctly preparing their work.
- d. Providing a fair and consistent approach to managing cases of alleged plagiarism.
- e. Ensuring that the penalties for plagiarism are clear and readily understood by staff and students.

### **5.1 Identification and Reporting**

- a. All staff and students must report any suspected instances of plagiarism or cheating by a student to the relevant trainer.
- b. The report must be made in writing (email is suitable) and given to the relevant trainer within 7 days of the alleged plagiarism or cheating taking place; and be accompanied by any supporting evidence.

### **5.2 Investigation**

- a. Upon receiving a report/evidence of suspected plagiarism or cheating, the Trainer and Assessor, or their delegate, must investigate the matter promptly and determine whether the allegations are correct.
- b. This investigation must include meeting with the student and relevant Trainer and Assessor as well as, in the case of allegations of plagiarism, a review of the alleged copied material and student's class work.
- c. The student has the right to have a support person present during any meeting.

### **5.3 Outcome of investigation**

- a. Trainer and Assessor/delegate will advise the student in writing of the outcome of their investigation within 14 days of receiving the report of alleged cheating or plagiarism.

#### 5.4. Consequences of plagiarism

- a. Trainer and Assessor/delegate will check if a student or group of students have or is more than likely to have committed plagiarism or cheated and this is the first instance of plagiarism or cheating committed by the student/group during their enrolment with VTI.
- b. The Trainer and Assessor/delegate will:
  - sends a written warning letter/Email to the student advising them that their enrolment may be cancelled if they are found, in the future, to have committed another act of plagiarism or cheating at VTI; and
  - meeting with the student and counsel them not to engage in any further cheating or plagiarism; and
  - apply a Not Yet Competent grade to the unit of competency
  - requires the student to resubmit the relevant class work or undertake the relevant assessment again or undertake any other remedial action deemed appropriate (additional charges may incur for re-assessment).
- c. If the Trainer and Assessor/delegate determines that the student or group of students have or is more than likely to have committed plagiarism or cheated and this is the second instance of plagiarism or cheating committed by the participant during their enrolment with VTI, they will:
  - recommends that the student's enrolment be cancelled for academic misconduct;
  - sends a letter to the student advising them that their enrolment has been recommended for cancellation. The letter will advise the student that they have 20 working days to appeal the outcome of the investigation (as per the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure).
- d. The Trainer and Assessor/delegate will submit a withdrawal request to the Administration Team for the Student's enrolment if the participant fails to lodge an appeal within the time period, withdrawal from an appeal or the outcome of the appeal process results in a decision in support of the Trainer and Assessor/delegate.
- e. The Trainer and Assessor/delegate has the discretion not to cancel the student's enrolment. This discretion may be applied in a number of different circumstances, including (but without limitation) where the student can prove that there were compassionate or compelling circumstances which contributed to their dishonest actions. Students should note that a decision not to cancel their enrolment is discretionary only and will not always be exercised even where there are compassionate or compelling circumstances.

#### 5.5 Record Keeping

Admin staff will be responsible for maintaining full and proper written records in the students file. The following items must be kept on the student's file:

- a. the initial report/evidence of the alleged cheating or plagiarism;

- b. the steps taken in the investigation;
- c. copies of any correspondence sent to/or from the student;
- d. records of any meetings with the student, including counselling;
- e. outcome of any appeal by the student; and
- f. if the student's enrolment is cancelled, verification of the cancellation must be provided to the student.

## **6. Responsibility**

Trainers/Assessors, Academic Coordinator are responsible to ensure academic standards are maintained. They are responsible for the control and implementation of this procedure.

## **7. Relevant Documents**

- Student Handbook
- Assessment Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Compliant and Appeal Form
- Deferrals, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure
- Enrolment Cancellation Form