

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a systematic approach to the treatment of plagiarism and cheating at the Quality Training and Hospitality College Pty Ltd, trading as Quality College of Australia (QCA).

QCA has an expectation that all students produce their own independent work and comply with standard agreements for authorship (Copyright). In addition, all forms of intellectual material must be used appropriately and with full acknowledgment to authors. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) or any other automated technology by students to generate assessment answers is considered cheating and is strictly prohibited.

Contravention of this policy will result in students being penalised.

Communication of the Plagiarism and Cheating Policy

The QCA Plagiarism and Cheating Policy and Procedure is addressed as part of the new staff induction process and available to all staff via the QCA Document Management System (intranet) and the QCA website. Students are informed of the QCA Plagiarism and Cheating Policy and Procedure during their enrolment process. Plagiarism and Cheating is also referred to in the Student Information Handbook and a full copy of this Policy and Procedure can be accessed via the QCA website.

Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the act of using the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were one's own without giving proper credit to the source. Such an act is not plagiarism if it is ascertained that the ideas were arrived through independent reasoning or logic or where the thought or idea is common knowledge. Acknowledgement of an original author or source (including the course resources) must be made through appropriate references; i.e. quotation marks, footnotes, or commentary. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to the following: the submission of a work, either in part or in whole completed by another; failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts or conclusions which rightfully belong to another; failure to use quotation marks (or other means of setting apart, such as the use of referencing, indentation or a different font size) when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence, or even a part thereof; close and lengthy paraphrasing of another's writing without credit or originality; use of another's project or programs or part thereof without giving credit.

Definition of Cheating

Cheating is defined as obtaining or attempting to obtain, or aiding another to obtain credit for work, or any improvement in evaluation of performance, by any dishonest or deceptive means. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: lying; copying from another's assessment/project or examination; discussion at any time of answers or questions on assessment/project or examination, unless such discussion is specifically authorised by the trainer/assessor; taking or receiving copies of an assessment/project or examination without the permission of the trainer/assessor; using or displaying notes, "cheat sheets," or other information devices inappropriate to the prescribed assessment conditions; allowing someone other than the officially enrolled student to represent same. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) or any other automated technology to generate assessment answers, either in part or in whole, is considered cheating and strictly prohibited.

It is cheating to:

- o use notes or other resources without permission during formal assessment/tests
- o hand in someone else's work as your own (with or without that person's permission)
- o hand in a completely duplicated assessment/project
- o take work without the author's knowledge
- o allow someone else to hand up your work as their own (enabling plagiarism)
- o have several people write one assessment/project/exercise and hand up multiple copies, all represented (implicitly or explicitly) as individual work

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- use any part of someone else's work without the proper acknowledgement
- steal an assessment/examination or solution from a Trainer/Assessor
- use artificial intelligence (AI) software to generate answers to assessment questions

It is not cheating to:

- discuss assignments/projects with your Trainer/Assessor or other students to understand what is being asked for
- hand in work done alone or with the help of staff
- get help to correct minor errors in spelling, grammar or syntax (sentence construction)
- discuss assignment/project requirements and course materials so that you can better understand the subject (this is, in fact, encouraged)
- submit one assignment from a group of students where this is explicitly permitted or required
- use other people's ideas where they are acknowledged in the appropriate way, such as referencing using footnotes, end notes or the Harvard system of referencing.

Unintentional Plagiarism: This is plagiarism associated with a lack of understanding or knowledge that plagiarism had occurred, or a lack of skill in referencing / acknowledging others' work. This may include accidentally or inadvertently using other's work without acknowledgement.

Cooperative Learning: Is the informal process of students interacting to enhance their learning outcomes and is instigated by the trainer.

Group work: Is the authorised collaboration of students to produce either a common assessable work or an individually assessed piece of work as part of a larger project which is instigated by the trainer.

A claim by a student (domestic or international)

- that they did not know about or understand the rules of plagiarism and cheating or
- that the rules are different in their country of origin and that they didn't know the rules regarding plagiarism and cheating in Australia

Will not be regarded as an acceptable excuse.

Obligations and Responsibilities

All training staff and students are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

QCA:

- Develop and maintain knowledge of the legislation and policy concerning plagiarism and cheating
- Comply with the legislation and policy relating to plagiarism and cheating
- Provide information to students regarding their obligations and potential ramifications in relation plagiarism and cheating legislation and policy
- Be conscientious in the detection of plagiarism and cheating by students
- Ensure that students have information regarding obligations and requirements relating to plagiarism, cheating and copyright

Trainer:

- Responsible for ensuring authenticity of student's assessments
- Compare student's work against other samples / assessments
- Look for inconsistency in writing styles / language used within a document
- Ensure that students understand the difference between cooperative learning, group work, collusion and enabling plagiarism

- Undertake 'spot checks' of student's work, by using online checking methods such as Viper / Plagiarism Checker / Turnitin
- Perform internet searches or AI software searches of student responses to investigate suspected plagiarism

Student:

- To read, understand and comply with information and obligations relating to plagiarism and cheating legislation and policy
- Apply suitable referencing
- Appropriately acknowledge work that has been sourced from others (including course resources)
- Submit all assessments/projects with the relevant plagiarism declaration
- Take reasonable steps to avoid work being reproduced by other students
- Give assurance not to plagiarise, cheat or share their assessment answers with other students

Procedure:

The responsibility for the development and implementation of this policy at QCA lies with the Managing Director. All staff must ensure that they remain diligent and monitor all students work for plagiarism/cheating and report any concerns.

1. Prior to enrolling students are advised of their obligation to comply with copyright requirements in the student information handbook.
2. At their induction into any qualification or unit of competence students are provided with further information regarding their obligations regarding plagiarism and cheating and the requirements for appropriate judging.
3. A trainer/assessor, who has reasonable grounds to believe that plagiarism/cheating has occurred, must report the matter to the Vocational Education Manager.
4. Where there are grounds to believe that plagiarism/cheating has occurred, the trainer/assessor must:
 - Advise the student that further investigation will be undertaken and once a decision is made an appropriate disciplinary action will be determined. During this investigation the student suspected of plagiarising, cheating or colluding must be given a fair hearing and the opportunity to provide evidence of authorship.
5. If plagiarism, cheating or collusion is proven during the investigation the trainer/assessor, in conjunction with the Vocational Education Manager, will determine the penalty, taking into account the penalty schedule listed below.
6. The student must be notified of the outcome in writing and a record of this must also be included in the students file.
7. Students providing other students with answers or copies of their assessment may be resulted as Not Yet Competent (NYC) and may be required to resubmit another assessment.
8. Students have the right to appeal against the application and/or the outcomes of the above procedures. Refer to QCA Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Ethos behind the imposition of penalties for plagiarism, collusion & cheating

1. All students will be given an opportunity to explain the occurrence.
2. Students who unintentionally engage in plagiarism, cheating or collusion must be given appropriate counselling and guidance so that they do not repeat the offence.
3. Any cheating or plagiarism will incur a penalty ranging from a reprimand and warning, in writing, through to dismissal from the QCA training program.

Penalty Schedule

First instance of plagiarism, cheating or collusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reprimand and warning in writing. • Student must provide a written explanation about reason for the occurrence of cheating, collusion or plagiarism to the Vocational Education Manager. • Assessment must be re done and re submitted. • Copy of Letter of reprimand recorded on Student's File.
Second instance of plagiarism, cheating or collusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written warning indicating another occurrence will result in dismissal from the QCA training program. • Student must provide a written explanation about reason for the occurrence of cheating, collusion or plagiarism to the Vocational Education Manager. • A "not yet competent" result will be recorded, and the student will undertake further training and assessment. Associated costs will be the responsibility of the student. • Statement of action taken recorded on Student's File.
Third instance of plagiarism, cheating or collusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismissal with no refund. • A "not competent" result recorded. • Statement of Attainment issued for other units of competency achieved. • Statement of action taken recorded on Student's File. • Student reminded of their right to appeal.