



Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting. This is most relevant at a vocational level as it relates to providing credit to other people when using their ideas. It requires the acknowledgement of other individual's contributions. Failure to provide such acknowledgement is considered plagiarism.

United Institute is committed in minimising instances of student plagiarism, cheating and collusion and aims to provide a learning environment that fosters the qualities of independent learning and academic integrity.

General Academic Integrity Principles

One of the essential functions of United Institute is to develop our learner's ability to apply critical reasoning and knowledge to assessment activities through independent thought and to make decisions that reflect the learner's considerations of the task or workplace requirement.

This policy seeks to encourage ethical conduct and set high standards of academic behaviour. Learners have a responsibility to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in their work, and not cheat or plagiarise in assessment.

United Institute will treat any and all forms of plagiarism, cheating and collusion seriously and consequences may apply where learners have been caught or found to be plagiarising, cheating or colluding.

United Institute will inform learners of the importance of academic integrity and the impact plagiarism, cheating and colluding has on not just the learners, but their classmates, the RTO and the wider vocational education reputation.

We will educate learners that their assessment submissions must consist of original effort. It is insufficient to simply copy work from other sources and submit it, even if those sources are appropriately acknowledged.

Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible in overseeing and ensuring the policy is implemented appropriately.

The Trainers and Assessors are responsible for:

- Informing all learners of expectations relating to assessment;
- Informing learners of the correct referencing techniques and provide clear examples of what is acceptable;



- Explain to learners what constitutes plagiarism;
- Set realistic assessment activities and vary assignments and questions;
- Assist learners in understanding and applying correct referencing techniques;
- Set appropriate conditions for group activities;
- Make clear the distinction between group work and individual work; and
- Cultivate a mutual respect for original work.

Plagiarism

It is important to know what plagiarism is, what form it takes and how plagiarism happens. Many students who plagiarise do so unintentionally, often because they do not have the academic skills to avoid over-reliance on the work of others or because they do not know what constitutes plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own work. It is a type of intellectual theft and can take on many forms:

- Collusion – when learners submit the work of someone else and call it one's own, with full knowledge and consent of the other person who has supplied the work, in order to give a false representation of one's effort or performance on the assessment item. The person supplying the work can also be deemed to have participated in collusion. Unintentional collusion can arise from study groups and from group-based assessment where students are unsure about the boundaries between what is considered acceptable group work and collusion.
- Ghost writing – when an assessment is purposely written by another person and represented by the student as his or her own work.
- Incorrect referencing – when material is copied word for word and acknowledged as paraphrased but should have been in quotation marks, or material paraphrased without appropriate acknowledgement of its source.
- Purloining – when material is copied from another learner's assessment or work without that person's knowledge.
- Re-submission of material – when the material has been submitted by another student.

Plagiarism Detected

Where plagiarism has been detected, United Institute will consider the extent of the plagiarism, noting that the more extensive the plagiarism, the more likely it was intentional, and continuing learners are more likely to understand plagiarism and its consequences than a learner who is new to formal vocational education.



Where it has been determined that the plagiarism or colluding has arisen from a lack of understanding, the learner will be issued with a formal warning and requested to revise and re-submit the work for assessment. The Trainer and Assessor is also to sit down with the learner to help them understand our Academic Integrity policy by explaining it to them clearly and clarifying any doubts they may have. Where a learner continues to commit plagiarism or collusion, they will be removed from the training program.

Where it has been determined that plagiarism, cheating or colluding was intentional, their work is not to be accepted, and the learner will be issued with an alternative assessment to complete. The learner will be issued with a formal warning in writing detailing the seriousness of the incident and the consequences if the learner is found to plagiarise, cheat or collude again – they will be removed from the training program.

We will also review the Student Handbook and the assessment tools to determine if adequate information and instructions had been provided and this will form part of our continuous improvement process.

Referencing

Referencing enables learners to acknowledge the contribution of and provide credit to others in their work. This shows that the learners respect the intellectual property rights of others. Failure to reference appropriately is considered unethical academic behaviour and will result in a learner's work not being accepted. Careless or inadequate referencing is considered as poor practice. Where careless referencing is identified, the learner will be required to correct the error and re-submit their assessment.

Printed books are not the only sources that require acknowledgement. Reference will need to be made when using words or ideas from:

- Books and journal articles
- Organisation reports
- Pamphlets or brochures
- Films, documentaries, television programs or advertisements
- Websites, letters, e-mails, online discussion forums

Where the knowledge and material has become part of the public domain, and which can be drawn on without specific acknowledgement such as common facts of history, common sense information, accepted folklore and aphorisms do not require any referencing. For example, Singapore became an independent nation in 1965.



At United Institute, we encourage our learners to apply the Harvard Referencing System in-text citation and reference list. This approach requires three pieces of information about a source:

- The name of the author(s)
- The year of publication
- The page number

Example:

In-text Citation	Reference List
According to Salzmänn, Stanlaw and Adachi (2012), unwritten languages are primitive. OR Salzmänn, Stanlaw and Adachi (2012, p.4) further explore the established misconception that unwritten languages are primitive. OR A common misconception is that unwritten languages are primitive (Salzmänn, Stanlaw & Adachi 2012, p. 4).	Salzmänn, Z, Stanlaw, J & Adachi, N 2012, <i>Language, Culture and Society: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology</i> , Westview Press, Boulder, CO.

Here are some quick guides created by other institutions for reference:

- Monash University's Harvard Referencing Guide
- The University of Sydney's Your guide to Harvard style referencing
- Deakin University's Harvard – Guide to referencing

Academic Integrity Procedure

- 1 Educate learners on their responsibilities** – to submit only work that is their own or that properly acknowledges the ideas or works of others, avoid lending original work to others for any reason, understand assessment conditions and seek out clarification if in doubt, understand how to correctly reference and the consequences of inappropriate referencing.



- 1 Where a learner is suspected of plagiarising, cheating or colluding** – in the case of suspected plagiarism, the Trainer and Assessor will report the incident to the CEO. The CEO, in consultation with the Trainer and Assessor will determine if the plagiarism resulted from poor understanding of our Academic Integrity policy, or it was intentional. The CEO will speak to the learner and consider the extent of the plagiarism (noting that the more extensive the plagiarism, the more likely it was intentional), review the Student Handbook and assessment tools provided to learners to determine if adequate information and instructions had been provided, identify if the learner has previously been warned of plagiarism, and determine whether the learner has completed any vocational or higher education learning in the past.
- 2 Where it has been determined that plagiarism or colluding has arisen from lack of understanding** – the learner will be requested to revise the work and re-submit for the assessment and the learner will be issued with a formal warning in writing detailing the seriousness of the incident and the consequences if the learner is found to plagiarise again – they will be removed from the training program. The Trainer and Assessor is also to sit down with the learner and help them understand our Academic Integrity policy by explaining it to them clearly and clarifying any doubts they may have.
- 3 Where it has been determined that plagiarism, cheating or colluding was intentional** – if after consideration and investigation, the learner is found to have plagiarised, cheated or colluded intentionally, their work is not to be accepted and the learner will be issued with an alternative assessment to complete. The learner will be issued with a formal warning in writing detailing the seriousness of the incident and the consequences if the learner is found to plagiarise again – they will be removed from the training program.
- 4 Serial plagiarism, cheating or colluding offenders** – learners who commit plagiarism after being formally warned are to be removed from the training program.
- 5 Record notes in student's file on RTO Manager** – all notes are to be recorded promptly in the student's file on RTO Manager in detail with all evidences such as the completed assessment tool and meeting agenda from interviewing the learner, are to be scanned and saved.

Academic Integrity Process Flow-Chart

Suspected plagiarism, cheating or collusion reported to the CEO

CEO investigates and interviews learner

Save all records to the student's file on RTO Manager

N



Y

Candidate formally warned and requested to re-submit assessment

Plagiarism intentional?

Candidate issued with a written warning and alternative assessment

Learner removed from training program

Previous warning issued?

N

Y

Suspected plagiarism, cheating or collusion reported to the CEO

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