



## **PLAGIARISM POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **Policy**

This policy contains requirements that apply to all students that are currently studying or formally enrolled at The Ashmark Institute of Australia.

This policy outlines the principles under which preventing, detecting and managing cases of plagiarism/cheating are applied. It is developed for the student to be aware of plagiarism/cheating and ways to avoid it. AIA views plagiarism seriously and will not be tolerated in any course.

### **Related Forms/Documents**

- Student Plagiarism Policy and Procedure
- Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure
- Written Letter outlining Plagiarism/Cheating
- Suspected/Plagiarism and Cheating Notification Form
- Plagiarism/Cheating Register

### **Definition**

*Plagiarism* defines that a student shall not plagiarize any idea, writing, data or invention belonging to another person. It includes the following:

- the act of taking an idea, writing, data or invention of another person and claiming that the idea, writing, data or invention is the result of one's own findings or creation
- an attempt to make out or the act of making out, in such a way that one is the original source or the creator of an idea, writing, data or invention which has actually been taken some other source
  - it is not limited to a book, journal, newspaper article, current or past student's work, any other person's work, a website or database

*“Simple stated, plagiarism is copying someone else's words, information or even ideas without acknowledging the source (the person and the work)”*



Specifically, students shall not:

- copy from other students or from notes;
- introduce specified items (e.g. pencil cases), notes or other unauthorised material (including blank paper) into the test room;
- communicate in any way with other students or person(s) except the invigilators;

*Cheating* defines seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in an examination or in other written or practical work required to be submitted or completed for assessment. Hence if the passing off was:

- done intentionally, the student has cheated;
- not intentional, the only offence the student has committed is the academic misdemeanour of failing to reference a source correctly.

This policy makes a distinction between plagiarism and cheating. Essentially, plagiarism by itself is not grounds for disallowing work or failing an assessment task. Only 'cheating' which means plagiarism that can be shown to be 'deliberate', or that involves some intent to deceive or to gain unfair advantage, or that is done despite prior warnings and instructions – can be a ground for disallowing work.

## **Responsibilities**

The Ashmark Institute of Australia recognises its obligation to educate students in the definition, identification and avoidance of plagiarism. On enrolment, students agree that they must abide by the applicable standards of conduct as defined in the appropriate statutes, regulations, policies and procedures of AIA including that plagiarism is not acceptable in any assessment work and that their assessments may be submitted to plagiarism checking software.



## Categories of plagiarism

For the purposes of determining the potential actions in cases of plagiarism, plagiarism can be categorised into **three (3) different level of seriousness**:

- **Level 1** – inadequate or misleading citing, referencing or paraphrasing, arising mainly from a student's limited knowledge about plagiarism, or how to conform to academic conventions, or from carelessness or neglect rather than intention to deceive. Level 1 plagiarism is not considered academic misconduct.
- **Level 2** – inappropriate or fraudulent acts or work arising from a student's ignorance of academic integrity or academic conventions (where adequate knowledge would have been expected), and where intention to deceive an assessor or cheat by way of plagiarism is apparent, but where the overall effect or consequence of the plagiarism does not significantly compromise the assessment process.
- **Level 3** – copied or appropriated work arising from clear intention to deceive an assessor or premeditated cheating by way of plagiarism. The effect of the plagiarism is to seriously compromise the assessment process

In determining the seriousness of an act of plagiarism/cheating the following should be considered:

1. the experience of the student;
2. the nature and extent of the plagiarism/cheating; and
3. where evidence is available, the intention of the student to plagiarise/cheat



### **Careless and/or minor plagiarism (falls under Level 1)**

Careless plagiarism occurs when an individual unintentionally fails to adequately cite sources. For example, the individual:

- may recognise the need for referencing, but the references are presented carelessly or inadequately for the context of the relevant discipline
- has undertaken extensive research and has lost track of the source of some of the material

Minor plagiarism offences are limited instances of academic misconduct, for example, breaches in referencing, and/or collaborating and may be due to inexperience in regard to academic conventions and normally due to a lack of understanding of appropriate academic behaviour in a VET context

### **Substantial plagiarism (falls under Level 2)**

Examples of substantial plagiarism are where the extent, magnitude, repetitiveness and/or blatancy of the plagiarism are significant and there is:

- an intention to gain an unfair academic advantage- whether the advantage occurs or not; or
- negligence in respect of submitted work which is inconsistent with the experience of the student

### **Intentional plagiarism (falls under Level 3)**

Intentional plagiarism is plagiarism conducted by a student who is aware, or had the opportunity to be aware, that they were using another person's ideas, words, or works without appropriate acknowledgement as for their own advantage.



## Penalties for Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a very serious academic offence, and can result in serious consequences for you as a student including:

- a “NYC” grade for your work (eg: assessment, assignment)
- suspension of one semester or one academic session
- expulsion from the Institute
- withdrawal of your certificate
- require the student to meet and to apologise formally to any aggrieved part, both orally and in writing

Cheating is an illegitimate behaviour designed to deceived those setting, administering and marking the assessment. Cheating in AIA’s assessment is a very serious academic offence, which may lead ultimately to expulsion from the Institute. Cheating can take one of a number of forms, including

- a) The use of unauthorised books, notes, electronic aids or other materials in an examination;
- b) Obtaining a Test paper ahead of its authorised release;
- c) Collusions, i.e. the representation of another’s work or ideas as one’s own without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing, where the owner of the work knows of the situation and both work towards the deceit of a third party (while in plagiarism the owner of the work does not knowingly allow the use of his or her work);
- d) Acting dishonestly in any way including fabrication of data, whether before, during or after an examination or other assessment so as to either obtain or offer to others an unfair advantage in that assessment.



## **AIA Trainer/Assessor's Role and Responsibility in Preventing Plagiarism/Cheating**

All staff involved in training/assessing will assist in providing a learning and teaching environment that upholds academic integrity. It is the trainer/assessor's responsibility to:

1. provide a clear instructions regarding assessment requirements
2. provide resources and feedback, as appropriate, to assist students to practise and learn the academic required for their assessment tasks
3. set appropriate assessment tasks that minimise the opportunities for plagiarism
4. provide marking criteria and an **“Assessment Cover Sheet” for assessment tasks and require the signature of the student declaring that all cited works have been acknowledged.**
5. take all reasonable steps to detect plagiarism and/or cheating
6. if a suspected plagiarism incident is brought to the attention, he/she has a responsibility to investigate the incident according to the procedure.

## **Student's Role and Responsibility in Preventing Plagiarism/Cheating**

As a student, you have a responsibility to prevent plagiarism. You can do this in several ways:

- a) ensure that you have a sound knowledge of what plagiarism is
- b) ask questions to clear any doubts that you may have on plagiarism
- c) clarify/check what actions of yours or your peers could be interpreted as plagiarism
- d) explain the consequences of plagiarism to your peers who are not aware that plagiarism is a serious academic offence.

To achieve academic excellence, you should produce original work with appropriate and correct citations of the work, information, ideas that you have taken from any source. Hence, the best way to do this and to avoid plagiarism is to always:



- take careful notes of where you get your ideas or information from;
- acknowledge others' work correctly (phrases, quotations, ideas, graphics, diagrams, charts, tables and figures);

## **Procedures**

### **Detecting, Reporting and Dealing with Plagiarism/Cheating by Students in Assessment of the Units.**

AIA is committed to dealing with student Plagiarism/Cheating in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness including the right of a student to:

- be informed of the allegations against them in sufficient detail to enable them to understand the precise nature of the allegations and to properly consider and respond;
- have a reasonable period of time within which to respond to the allegation against them;
- have the matter resolved in a timely manner
- invite a Student Support Officer to any meeting regarding alleged Plagiarism/Cheating

Upon receiving details of alleged plagiarism, the trainer/assessor will report the incident, together with relevant evidence to the relevant Head of Departments. The trainer/assessor may use the following to assess the level of seriousness of plagiarism.

1. Level 1 ➤ the trainer/assessor should provide appropriate educational or remedial advice to the student

The trainer/assessor may impose the following to reflect the seriousness of AIA's commitment to academic integrity:

- Re-submit the assessment task with a reduced mark
- Downgrading the mark and/or failing the item of assessment

- Require the student to complete a comparable but different assessment tasks with or without a capped mark
  - Award no marks for the assessment tasks
  - Require the student to meet and to apologise formally to any aggrieved party, both orally and in writing
  - Suspend the student for an appropriate period of time
2. Level 2 or 3 ➤ the trainer/assessor should forward the details to the Head of Departments, who will then follow the process below.

Where, following discussion with the student and forms a view that the student is guilty of Level 2 or 3 Plagiarism/Cheating, the Head of Department will and/or may:

- Advise the student by explaining referencing guidelines, providing a copy of this policy and procedure
- Award no marks for the assessment tasks
- Require the student to meet and to apologise formally to any aggrieved party, both orally and in writing
- Suspend the student for an appropriate period of time
- Issue a written warning that clearly articulates the conditions under which no further action will be taken and any penalties if there are further infringements
  - this written warning issued must be
    - signed and dated by the Head of Department, Director of Studies and the student
    - retained by the student; and
    - placed on the student's folder for future referencing

The Head of Department may also take other appropriate action, including:

- a. requiring the student to resubmit the work for assessment
- b. applying a “NYC” grade to the work or part thereof
- c. applying a “NYC” grade to the unit of study



## Appeals

A student may appeal to the Director of Studies against a finding of Level 1 plagiarism/cheating. The Director of Studies decision will be final.

A student may appeal in writing to the Director of Studies against a penalty imposed for Level 2 or 3 plagiarisms or with leave of the Director to the Campus Manager against the finding of Level 2 or 3 plagiarisms.

An appeal may not proceed if:

- no reasonable grounds are stated for the appeal;
- the student has not ensured that they are in a position to receive notifications from AIA
  - late or no receipt of the written letters will not be accepted as grounds for appeal if changes of email or physical address have not been notified and received by the Institute; or
  - if the appeal is lodged more than 5 weeks after the student is informed of the penalty.

Should the student be unsuccessful in an appeal, the student will have recourse to a further external appeal through the Australian Council of Private Education and Training (ACPET).

For further information on the appeals process, please refer to the AIA's *Complaint and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### 1. What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism: Using another person's ideas, words, data or works without appropriate acknowledgement, showing the source clearly and explicitly. Plagiarism is not just direct copying of someone's work without acknowledgement. It also includes summarising and paraphrasing information or someone else's ideas, without showing the source clearly and explicitly

### 2. How can plagiarism be avoided?

It's easy to avoid plagiarism. All you need to do is to make sure you clearly and explicitly show the source each time you use another person's ideas, words, data or works.

### 3. I've referred to someone's work in my own words. Do I still have to reference this?

Yes. You need to reference the source of your ideas.

### 4. If I use my notes I've taken in class, do they have to be referenced?

If your teacher has spoken about ideas which are common knowledge, you don't have to cite them. However, if your teacher has spoken about his/her own ideas, you must provide a reference.