



# Plagiarism, Cheating & Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

## Purpose

The purpose of these policy and procedures is to address assessment requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 and the National Code 2018.

The objectives are to encourage ethical conduct by students, and to inform staff and students about the AVTI standards of academic behaviour.

The policy also aims to ensure that mechanisms are in place to minimise student plagiarism and cheating, and to outline the strategies and procedures in place to detect and respond to such incidents.

## Definitions

**Cheating** – seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in the assessment of any piece of work such as by copying, falsifying identity or employing another person to undertake assessments on own behalf

**Plagiarism** – to take and use the ideas and/or expressions and/or wording of another person or organisation and pass them off as one's own by failing to give appropriate acknowledgement. This includes material from any source such as staff, students, texts, resources and the internet, whether published or unpublished. It includes documents, designs, images, photographs and computer codes and may be in print and/or electronic media.

**Academic Misconduct** - falsifying or misrepresenting information, or forging or falsifying documents

## Policy

Australian Vocational Training Institute (AVTI) is committed to ensuring a great learning experience for its students. It aims to provide a learning environment that fosters the qualities of independent learning and academic integrity.

This policy seeks to ensure that students are aware that they have a responsibility to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in their work. Students must not cheat in assessment and must ensure that they do not plagiarise.

## Procedures

### Academic integrity

One of the core functions of AVTI is to develop student's ability to apply critical reasoning to assessment activities through independent thought and to make decisions that reflect the student's considerations of the task or workplace requirement.

AVTI acknowledges that to develop this ability, the student will need to study the work of others via issued textbooks, learning material or through their own research. However, it is important that students in their learning, acknowledge through appropriate referencing, the work from which they have drawn information.

### Referencing

Referencing demonstrates that the student has read the issued material or has undertaken their own research in other sources. Failure to reference appropriately is considered unethical academic behaviour and will result in a student work not being accepted.

Students should understand that assignment and project work submitted for assessment 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. Work submitted by a student must have an original

component.

The following are examples of plagiarism where a student intentionally does not acknowledge or reference an author or source:

- Direct copying of paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence or significant parts of a sentence;
- Direct copying of paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence or significant parts of a sentence with an end reference but without quotation marks around the copied text;
- Copying ideas, concepts, research results, computer codes, statistical tables, designs, images, sounds or text or any combination of these;
- Paraphrasing, summarising or simply rearranging another person's words, ideas, etc., without reference or explanation;
- Offering an idea or interpretation that is not one's own without identifying whose idea or interpretation it is;
- A 'cut and paste' of statements from multiple sources;
- Presenting as independent, work done in collaboration with others;
- Copying or adapting another student's original work into a submitted assessment item;
- Copying or adapting a student's own work submitted in a previous essay or assessment;
- Alternatively, there will be instances when a student unintentionally fails to cite sources or to do so adequately.

Careless or inadequate referencing or failure to reference will be considered poor practice. Where careless referencing is identified, the student will be required to correct the error and resubmit an assignment.

### How to reference

At AVTI, students are to be encouraged to apply the Harvard Referencing System in-text citation. This approach requires three pieces of information about a source within the text of the students work. This information is:

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

Examples:

1. Write the name of the resource in brackets after you quote or paraphrase (summarise) information you have used. For example:

(Student Learning Guide, p6),

OR

(Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s\\_hierarchy\\_of\\_needs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs) )

OR

(The Very Well Mind: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-4136760> P1)

OR

(Bloggs B. 2018, p50)

Where a student has sourced information from an internet site, it is sufficient to include the website link in brackets e.g.:

(<https://www.fwc.gov.au/disputes-at-work/how-the-commission-works>)

## Reference List

At the end of the students work, a List of References must be included. This should include all the books, journal articles and other sources of information you have used to research your assignment. The reference list should be laid out alphabetically and the title of the source should be italicised. Each reference must include:

- the name of the author or authors
- the year of publication
- the title of the publication
- the edition of publication
- the publisher
- place of publication

Example:

- Dwyer, J and Hopwood, N, 2010, *Management Strategies and Skills*, Sydney, McGraw Hill Australia

For assessments in the form of Knowledge Questions or Short Answer Questions, where students have used the learning materials provided by their trainer, it is sufficient to state 'Course learning materials', or 'Course PowerPoint presentation'.

## Common Knowledge

In every field, there is a body of knowledge and material that has become part of the public domain and which can be drawn on without specific acknowledgment. Common knowledge includes facts that are generally known, such as common facts of history, common sense information, accepted folklore and aphorisms that have been adopted as part of common English language.

As examples, it would not be necessary to reference the following:

- that John Howard was the Prime Minister of Australia (common fact of history)
- that humans need food and water for survival (common sense observation)
- that the "Bunyip" is a man-eating Australian animal that lives in water-holes, swamps and creeks (accepted folklore)

## Cheating

Cheating is a form of deceit with a view to gaining an advantage for the cheater. At AVTI, cheating is usually related to taking unauthorised material into assessments. AVTI trainers have a responsibility to explain clearly the expectations related to any assessment, what constitutes cheating, and to promote a climate of honesty in students.

## Staff responsibilities

AVTI staff are responsible for:

- informing all students of expectations related to assessment;
- informing all students of referencing techniques and providing clear examples of what is acceptable;
- explaining to students what constitutes plagiarism;
- setting realistic assessment activities and varying assignments and questions;
- assisting students to understand and apply correct referencing techniques;
- Setting appropriate conditions for group activities and make clear the distinction between group work and individual work; and
- Cultivating a climate of mutual respect for original work.

## Student responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

- Submitting only work that is their own or that properly acknowledges the ideas, interpretations, words or creative works of others;
- Avoiding lending original work to others for any reason;
- Being clear about assessment conditions and seeking clarification if in doubt;
- Being clear about what is appropriate referencing and the consequences of inappropriate referencing;
- Discouraging others from plagiarising by observing the practices above.

## Avoiding and detecting

1. Upon the submission of all assessment tasks, students are required to sign an Assessment Cover Sheet that includes a declaration of the authenticity of the work.
2. AVTI will take the necessary steps to detect plagiarism and cheating which may include:
  - a) monitoring students in closed book written assessments;
  - b) communication amongst other trainers;
  - c) comparison of work against various academic assessments;
  - d) use of plagiarism detection software where assessment is submitted electronically
3. All staff have an obligation to identify and investigate any possibility of plagiarism, cheating and/or academic misconduct.
4. A staff member who suspects that plagiarism, cheating or academic misconduct may have occurred should first source evidence (through identification of the source) to support their allegation.
5. If there is no source listed on assessments, then students will be given an opportunity to search for and cite their responses.

## Using plagiarism detection software

1. The plagiarism detection software is to be installed on the Student Learning Management system in the college.
2. The plagiarism detection software licence must include sufficient numbers of users to enable all trainers to use it.
3. When assessing electronic assessments, trainers are required to click on the plagiarism report tab to identify incidences of plagiarism.
4. Trainers are to respond as follows:
  - a) If responses to questions have been referenced - checks are to be made to ascertain that references are correct
  - b) If sources are not referenced, then plagiarism policy is to be applied.

## Responding to incidents of plagiarism, cheating or academic misconduct

Any student found to have plagiarised, cheated or been involved in academic misconduct will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

1. Where, following discussion with the student, the trainer forms the view that the student has plagiarised, the trainer will:
  - a) consider the extent of the plagiarism (noting that the more extensive the plagiarism, the more likely it was intentional);
  - b) identify if the student has been previously warned of plagiarism;



- c) determine whether the student is new to adult vocational education and training (it would be expected that continuing students would be more likely to understand plagiarism and its consequences)
2. If the above factors have been considered and it has been determined that the plagiarism has arisen from poor academic practice, the student is to be requested to revise the work and resubmit it for the assessment. The trainer will also be required to refer the student to the referencing guidelines.
3. If, after consideration of the above factors it is determined that the plagiarism was intentional, the student's work is not to be accepted and the student is to be issued with an alternative assessment assignment to complete. The student is to be reported to the Academic Manager and given a formal warning (in writing) explaining the seriousness of the incident and the consequences if the student is found to plagiarise again.
4. Where, following discussion with the student, the trainer forms the view that the student has cheated or been engaged in academic misconduct, the trainer will take the following actions as appropriate, including:
  - a) explaining to the student that they would need to be re-assessed;
  - b) issuing a non-satisfactory outcome in respect of the assessment in question;
  - c) issuing a non-competent result to the student for the relevant unit of study;
  - d) issuing a warning letter.
5. If the trainer finds that plagiarism, cheating or academic misconduct has occurred on more than one occasion, the student will be referred to the Academic Manager or Principal Executive Officer, to discuss the matter.
6. AVTI will cancel the student's enrolment if:
  - a) The student is directed to resubmit the assessment and, on the second submission of the work, the work is determined to be deliberately plagiarised; or
  - b) The student has committed multiple incidences of plagiarism and has been formally warned
  - c) The student has committed another form of academic misconduct or falsified documentation in relation to his or her studies at AVTI.

Students who are withdrawn from the programme/course they are enrolled in, will be issued with a refund of their tuition fees less all expenses incurred by AVTI up to the point of their withdrawal.

## **Record Keeping**

All incidents of plagiarism, cheating and academic misconduct must be recorded as follows:

1. Student's Administration File (RTOManager) – Course Coordinator is to upload:
  - Details of incident (date, unit of competency, nature of offence)
  - Details of interviews or counselling or coaching sessions (date, person who conducted it, outcomes of meeting, dates of warning letters, other correspondence)
  - Hard copies of warning letters, intervention strategies etc.
2. Submitted assessments – hard and/or soft copy – trainer/assessor to attach note which includes:
  - Details of incident (date, nature of offence, remedial action e.g. re-submission, coaching on referencing etc.)
  - Details of reporting to Course Coordinator.