Policy area	Training and Assessment
Standards	Outcome Standards for RTOs, Standard 1.4
National Code	
Responsibility	Students, Trainers and Trainers, Training Manager
Classification	**Public**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to uphold academic integrity and the authenticity of assessment evidence by defining what constitutes plagiarism and outlining the consequences of engaging in plagiarism.

2. Definitions

Plagiarism - Plagiarism is the act of misrepresenting as one's own original work the ideas, interpretations, words or creative works of another. These include published and unpublished documents, designs, music, sounds, images, photographs, computer codes and ideas gained through working in a group. These ideas, interpretations, words or works may be found in print and/or electronic media. Plagiarism includes:

- Copying text directly from sources without quotation marks and citation.
- Paraphrasing someone else's ideas without proper acknowledgment.
- Submitting someone else's work as one's own.

Academic Misconduct - Any form of dishonest behaviour in academic work, including plagiarism, collusion, and cheating.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Systems or tools capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, decision-making, natural language processing, or learning from data.

AI Misuse: Unethical or inappropriate use of AI tools, including cheating, plagiarism, or generating misleading information.

3. Policy statement

Australian College of Studies is committed to ensuring a great learning experience for our students. We aim to provide a learning environment that fosters the qualities of independent learning and academic integrity.

This policy seeks to encourage ethical conduct and to inform staff and students about our standards of academic behaviour. Students 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 the work of others or from AI sources.

3.1 Academic integrity requirements

One of our core functions is to develop the 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.

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

It is compulsory for students to acknowledge and/or provide appropriate referencing when using the work of others. Failure to comply with this requirement will constitute a breach of academic integrity.

The rules of evidence of assessment also require that the work which trainers are basing their assessment decisions, is the authentic work of the student. Content drawn from AI sources presents a significant risk to the integrity of assessment as students will obtain work through using prompts in AI platforms rather that develop this work themselves. Acknowledging this, the growth in the use of AI in all aspects of society is undeniable. Australian College of Studies has needed to find the right balance between strictly prohibiting the use of AI and allowing the student to use AI like any other tool at their disposal (where it is appropriate to do so) to enhance the work they produce in work and study.

Where permitted in the assessment instructions, it is compulsory for students to acknowledge and/or provide appropriate referencing for any work generated by AI including where the student is paraphrasing, quoting, or summarising this material.

Where permitted in the assessment instructions, it is compulsory for students to acknowledge where work has been edited, rewritten, or translated by AI by providing an acknowledgement and

details of this as part of their assessment submission. This acknowledgement can be included in the *Assessment Authenticity Declaration*.

Where the assessment instructions expressly do not allow the use of AI or where there is no clear permission to do so, students are not permitted to use AI to respond to assessment tasks. All assessment work will be reviewed for AI content and failure to comply with this requirement will constitute a breach of academic integrity.

3.2 Referencing

Referencing demonstrates that the student has read the issued material or has undertaken their own research using other sources. Failure to reference appropriately is considered unethical academic behaviour and will result in a student's 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. 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 assessment.

3.3 How to reference

Students are 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

Examples

Citations may be placed at the end of a sentence (before the concluding punctuation) in brackets, e.g.:

- To succeed, the team will rely on both task process and group process (Dwyer, Hopwood 2010, p. 239)

A reference may also be placed in the text to integrate the author's surname into the sentence, followed by the year of publication and page number, in brackets, e.g.:

- Dwyer and Hopwood (2010, p. 239) identify that to succeed, the team will rely on both task process and group process.

3.4 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

3.5 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 Julia Gillard 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 animals that live in water-holes, swamps and creeks (accepted folklore)

3.6 Cheating

Cheating is defined as "a form of deceit with a view to gaining an advantage for the cheat." Cheating is usually related to taking unauthorised material into assessments. 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.

3.7 AI-Generated Content in Student Submissions

AI-based platforms, such as ChatGPT, are capable of producing detailed and coherent content on a wide array of topics. They pose challenges in ensuring academic integrity. Students might be tempted to use AI-generated content for assessments, mistakenly believing this is a shortcut to achieving their academic goals. In some assessments, student may be permitted to use AI generated content, and this will be expressly notified to the student in the assessment instructions. In these circumstances, students will be required to acknowledge and reference this work like any other information source. Where this permission has not been expressly provided, the use of AI sources and tools to prepare assessment submissions is prohibited.

Acceptable uses

Acceptable uses of AI software where no permission is required:

- Assisting students to understand complex concepts by explaining them in simpler terms.
- Researching a subject to understand better.
- Assisting with creative thinking and brainstorming ideas.
- Explaining phrases or figures of speech that students are unfamiliar with.
- Analysing information to identify trends and patterns.
- Improving written communication.

Unacceptable uses

If a student uses AI sources to generate material for assessment that they represent as their own ideas, research and/or analysis, they are NOT submitting their own work. The following examples are scenarios which are considered unacceptable use of AI:

- Direct generation of assessment responses
- Bypassing skill development

- Professional communication tasks
- Evidence collection
- Practical skills documentation
- Group work and collaboration

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;
- Only use AI tool according to the acceptable use guidelines.
- Discouraging others from plagiarising by observing the practices above.