



AC Training Plagiarism, Cheating & Collusion Policy

(Includes reference to the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence - GenAI)

This policy aims to set AC Training's position on plagiarism and collusion. It lays out staff and learner responsibilities. This policy defines the term 'plagiarism' and 'collusion' and explains why both are not acceptable.

It will also outline specific guidelines for the use of GenAI by learners and checks to ensure validity, authenticity and reliability of the assessment and marking processes.

AC Training's commitment to prevent plagiarism and collusion, advises of the action to be taken if detected. AC Training will not accept any plagiarism and collusion and views this as academic misconduct if it occurs. We will not accept the unacknowledged use of another person's work and involvement of unauthorised cooperation between at least two people, with the intent to deceive or gain an unfair advantage.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which applies to all assessments and or examinations. There are many definitions, but they all have in common the idea of taking someone else's intellectual effort and presenting it as your own.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's work. It can take the following forms:

- The reproduction without acknowledgement, of the work of others (including the work of fellow learners), published or unpublished, either verbatim or in close paraphrase. In this context, the work of others includes material downloaded from computer files and the internet (including GenAI), discussions in seminars, ideas, text, and diagrams from lecture handouts.
- Extract or copying and pasting word for word from another person's work, published or unpublished, without using quotations marks and acknowledgement of the original source. Use of diagrams, images, course notes without acknowledgement of the source, paraphrasing, summarising extensively the work of another or using their ideas without an acknowledgement of the source
- Poor academic practice which is unintentional. It can occur in 'open book' examinations and/or coursework assessments which may take a variety of forms, including, but not exclusively confined to assignments, reports, presentations and projects.
- Downloading content including text, images, diagrams etc from the Internet without acknowledgement of the source.
- Purchasing essays to submit them as your own work.

All learners are required to present their own work to demonstrate knowledge and understanding, therefore references to other sources should be limited. As indicated the copying from other sources is deemed plagiarism.

What is Collusion?

Collusion is a form of plagiarism, involving unauthorised cooperation between at least two people, with the intent to deceive.

- The conspiring by two or more learners to produce a piece of work together with the intention that at least one passes it off as his or her own work.
- The submission by a learner of the work of another learner, in circumstances where the latter has willingly lent the former the work and where it should be evident to the learner giving the work that the other learner would submit it as their own. In this case both learners are guilty of collusion.
- Unauthorised co-operation between a learner and another person in the preparation and production of work which is presented as the learner's own.
- The commissioning and submission of work as the learner's own, where the learner has purchased or solicited another individual to produce work on the learner's behalf.

It is acceptable to discuss ideas, talk about books, articles, online material and strategies for example with other learners. However, it is not acceptable to help a fellow learner to produce work that will be submitted as their own and an individual piece of work. Learners should never lend their work to another learner under any circumstance as it may be copied or reproduced.

Learners should leave themselves enough time to check their work thoroughly before submitting it for marking or evaluation. Keeping to strict deadlines will limit the temptation of colluding with another learner or third party or purchasing work with the intention of submitting it as their own.

Learners should make sure that if they use a shared or public computer that they protect their work. If a learner uses a shared or public printer to print hard copy versions of work, they should ensure that any work is collected promptly from the printer and that any additional copies are securely destroyed.

What is Cheating?

Cheating is an attempt to deceive AC Training staff, awarding bodies and end-point assessment organisations and includes:

- using books, notes, instruments, computer files or other materials or aids that are not permitted. Assistance or the communication of information by one learner to another in an assessment where this is not permitted.
- copying or reading from the work of another learner or from another learner's books, notes, computer files or other materials or aids, unless expressly permitted.
- offering a bribe of any kind to an invigilator or another person connected with an assessment.
- providing or receiving information about the content of an assessment before it takes place, except when allowed by the Awarding Organisation or End point assessment organisation (e.g., case study materials issued before an examination).
- impersonating or trying to impersonate a learner or attempting to procure a third party to impersonate oneself.

- any attempt to tamper with an assignment or examination scripts after they have been submitted by learners.
- fabricating or falsifying data or results by individual learners or groups of learners.
- Communicating with or copying from any other learners during an assessment except insofar as the examination regulations may specifically permit this e.g., group assessments i.e., Functional Skills (FS) English Speaking and Listening.
- Communicating during an assessment with any person other than a properly authorised Invigilator or another authorised member of the AC Training staff.
- Introducing any written or printed materials into the assessment room, unless expressly permitted by the assessment guidelines.
- Use of GenAI without adaptation **or during a controlled exam**.

AC Training duty on Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating

We have a duty to our awarding bodies, learners, end-point assessment organisations and employers to ensure that learners do not obtain a qualification as a result of plagiarism or collusion, whereby their work has not been accurately represented. AC Training will take appropriate action to ensure that learners' work is their own and that plagiarism has not taken place.

Plagiarism may result in the matter being escalated to the learner's employer for appropriate action to be taken and being removed from the programme by AC Training.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) guidelines for use by learners

GenAI by its complex nature brings a range of potential issues for consideration and in its use by learners. The following points will address any concerns and ensure that the evidence produced is not considered as a form of cheating or plagiarism.

Any content generated by GenAI must be clearly referenced and sourced. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>) 25/01/2023. The learner must retain a copy of the question(s) used to generate content on platforms such as ChatGPT for reference and authentication purposes. This should be in a noneditable format (such as a screenshot) and the learner should provide a brief summary of how it has been used. This must be submitted with the work, so the assessor is able to review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used.

The key requirement is for the learner to modify and produce evidence which relates to their own understanding of knowledge and theory and how it is applied within their work role. In addition, examples or case studies are to be included to demonstrate practical application.

If an assessor decides that the work produced lacks depth or is insufficient, then a professional discussion can be used to generate further evidence. This would also add a further layer of authentication to the assessment process.

GenAI misuse could be demonstrated through using whole or part of generated content without any acknowledgement or adaptation, failure to reference sources or to individualise content.

Examples of where a learner may have used AI can include:

- Different formats of content or font size

- Use of Americanised terms or words
- Theoretical or academic wording with no individualised reference or work role content
- Evidence which is not consistent with other submissions or above their known academic level

Learners sitting exams e.g. Functional Skills, face to face or remotely are not allowed to source AI material using any form of technology during the controlled session.

If detected or found through investigation by the centre or awarding body, it will lead to a fail result and limitations applied on completing a retake. This could involve having to complete a paper-based test rather than remotely invigilated online.

Any additional costs incurred to the centre will be charged to the employer or individual learner.

Learners who use GenAI to cheat or plagiarise will go through the investigation process as outlined below.

For further regulatory guidance on using GenAI, please use:

‘AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications Guidance for Teachers & Assessors’

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Revised February 2024

www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/AI-Use-in-Assessments_Feb24_v3

Prevention measures

- We will train staff in plagiarism, prevention and detection, and encourage a culture of fairness.
- We will make sure that learners are made aware of how to record researched work and know how to reference it accordingly.
- We will observe teaching and learning, review feedback from staff and learners and provide regular training on GenAI.
- We will use a Plagiarism/GenAI checker to randomly sample content or when an assessor is concerned and requests checks.
- We will, through the quality assurance process, sample evidence and carry out additional checks if required.
- We will keep a log of suspected or proven cases of malpractice and review every three months.

The topic of Plagiarism, Collusion and use of GenAI will be covered at the learner’s induction and outlined within the Learner Handbook.

Learner responsibilities

Learners will be expected to ask staff for help if they are unsure of how to acknowledge and reference researched work. Learners are to advise staff of issues that may impact on their ability to complete work and they are to always refrain from plagiarism and misuse of systems and the differing types of technology.

Investigation (not applicable to exam conditions)

Where a skills coach/assessor, or other person, suspects a learner has engaged in any form of plagiarism or cheating they will report the incident within two working days, to a member of the Quality Team, with supporting evidence related to the allegation.

The Quality Team will conduct within five working days an initial investigation including interviewing those involved to determine whether there are grounds and supporting evidence for the allegation. In doing so, the investigation will give regard to:

- The intention or non-intention of the plagiarism or cheating
- The extent of the plagiarism or cheating
- Whether the learner has been previously warned of plagiarism or cheating; and
- Whether there are any other factors relating to the learner or course that should be considered in assessing the allegations.

In cases where the learner admits misconduct, the learner should put this in writing.

The learner concerned will receive a report from the Quality Team outlining the decision and have five working days to appeal.

If an appeal is requested, it will be investigated by the Commercial Director at AC Training.

The investigation process will mirror and follow the process above and a FINAL decision made in regard to the allegation within five working days.

If the allegation is proven, then the following actions can be administered.

First occasion

- The learner will meet with and receive support from the skills coach/assessor and resubmit the evidence through a professional discussion within ten working days.
- The learner will also receive a confirmation email that it is an official warning for future conduct. The employer (if applicable) will be informed by email of the decision.

Second occasion

- The learner will meet within five working days with the Quality Team to discuss why this activity has taken place a second time and agree actions to avoid any future plagiarism or collusion.
- The learner will resubmit the evidence through a professional discussion with the skills coach/assessor within ten working days. The learner (and employer-if applicable) will be informed that this is a final warning by email.

Third and final occasion

- The learner (and employer-if applicable) will be informed within five working days that they are being removed from the programme or qualification. There will be no right of appeal based on previous judgements.

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

LAST REVIEWED: 11th June 2024