

# Plagiarism and Cheating Policy and Procedures

## Policy

1. This policy support Standard 8.9.1 of the ESOS National Code 2018. This policy promotes and upholds the academic integrity of the College's registered course and meets the training package or accredited course requirements where applicable, and processes to address misconduct and allegations of misconduct.
2. The College registered courses must meet the training package or accredited course requirements where applicable.
3. The policy is intended to promote honesty in learning and assessment and respect for the work of others. A breach of this policy will result in students being penalised as per the College's Student Code of Behaviour.
4. The College considers plagiarism or cheating as an extremely serious academic offence.
5. Definitions:
  - a. Plagiarism means knowingly presenting the work or property of another person as if it were one's own/ without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing. It includes:
    - word for word copying of sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources which are the work or data of other persons (including books, article's themes, unpublished works, working papers, seminar and conference papers, internal reports, lecture notes, tapes or works of creative arts) without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing;
    - closely paraphrasing sentences, paragraphs or themes without acknowledgement;
    - using another person's ideas, work or research data without due acknowledgment;
    - submitting work which has been produced by someone else on the student's behalf as if it were the work of the student;
    - using parts of a past student's assignment in the student's assignment without acknowledgment
    - copying or submitting computer files in whole or in part without indicating their origin;
    - in the case of collaborative projects, falsely representing the individual contributions of the collaborating students where individual contributions are to be identified.
  - b. Cheating is an attempt to give or obtain assistance in a formal academic exercise or examination without due acknowledgment.
6. The College's Student Code of Behaviour is given to every student during the Orientation process and can also be located on the College website.
7. This policy establishes a framework for the definition of and processes for preventing and dealing with instances of cheating and plagiarism with students. The purpose is to develop student awareness of cheating and plagiarism and list the preventative and corrective actions the College undertakes in dealing with plagiarism and cheating.
8. Students are expected to acknowledge the intellectual property of others used in the preparation their assessment related work.
9. The penalty will depend on the severity of the plagiarism, whether the student is a repeat offender, whether there is evidence of deliberate deceit and whether another student has been coerced into participating in the plagiarism or cheating.

10. Students can access the College's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures to appeal the decision made by the Director of Studies on the outcome of the plagiarism or cheating.
11. The Complaints and Appeals policy and procedures is available on the College website on the following link <https://www.melbournecitycollege.edu.au/pdfs/complaints-and-appeals.pdf>
12. The Complaints and Appeal Form is available on the College website on the following link <https://www.melbournecitycollege.edu.au/linkupload/complaints-and-appeals-Form.pdf> .
13. This policy applies to the College's students and staff.
14. The CEO is responsible for the implementation of the policy and procedures and to ensure that staff are aware of its application and implement its requirements.

## Procedures

### Prevention Procedures

1. All College staff involved in training and assessing will assist in providing a learning and teaching environment that upholds academic integrity. It is the trainer/assessor's responsibility to:
  - provide clear instructions regarding assessment requirements
  - provide appropriate training and support to assist students to learn the academic required for their assessment tasks
  - explain marking criteria and emphasise the requirements for each student to provide their signature declaring that the work submitted is the student's own, and has not been copied or plagiarised from any person or source.
  - take all reasonable steps to detect plagiarism and/or cheating.
  - explain the consequences of plagiarism to students of who are not aware that plagiarism is a serious academic offence
2. Trainers/ Assessors are provided with the Plagiarism Prevention Guidelines for Assessors to help in detecting plagiarism and preventing it from happening.
3. The college uses a plagiarism detection software called Turnitin for its VET students to maintain high quality standards in student work and assessments submissions. The procedure is as follows:
  - a. All students who submit assessments via Cloud Assess online assessment platform are to submit their assessment copy into the Turnitin platform by downloading the submitted assessment from Cloud Assess platform.
  - b. Students are to complete a "Plagiarism Declaration Form" in Cloud Asses for each assessment and attach a copy of their similarity report received by Turnitin as evidence.
  - c. Assessments need to achieve a Turnitin similarity report outcome 75% or less than 75% to be deemed as an acceptable submission. This is the college's "similarity report threshold" for students who completed assessment via Cloud Assess.
  - d. For students who submit assessments using Word/PDF documents, a Turnitin similarity report outcome must be 25% or less than 25% to be deemed as an acceptable submission. This is the college's "similarity report threshold" for students who submit assessments using Word/PDF documents.
  - e. In some cases, a similarity report outcome may be slightly above (up to 5%) each of the college's "similarity report thresholds". This can be acceptable on a case-by-case basis with trainers/assessors' discretion.
  - f. If an assessment is submitted with a similarity report outcome above 75% for submission via Cloud Assess or above 25% for submission using Word/PDF documents, the assessment will not be marked and will automatically be deemed as 'Not Satisfactory' and the relevant student will be notified.

- g. "Plagiarism Declaration" is excluded for observation tasks for all courses. Students do not need to check plagiarism rate for observation tasks for all units for all courses
  - h. The Student Administration Manager will send an email to the relevant student explaining the reason of unacceptable submission together with the similarity report attached as evidence.
  - i. The Student Administration Manager may conduct a meeting/interview with the student to investigate the suspected plagiarism after identifying plagiarism. The meeting outcome may be to re-submit the same assessment or an activation of the Academic Procedures.
  - j. If two or more students involved in a same plagiarism event, everyone will be notified and sent a warning.
4. Students are also made aware of the Plagiarism and Cheating Policy and Procedures during induction at an orientation day by the College's relevant Student Support Officer.
5. All students have a responsibility to prevent cheating and plagiarism by:
  - ensuring that they have a sound knowledge of what cheating and plagiarism is
  - produce original work with appropriate and correct citations of the work, information, ideas that are taken from any source
  - take careful notes of ideas or information are sourced
  - acknowledge others' work correctly (phrases, quotations, ideas, graphics, diagrams, charts, tables and figures)

#### **Academic Procedures**

1. If a student is suspected of plagiarism or cheating, the trainer or assessor will investigate to establish evidence to support the suspicion.
2. If there is evidence to support the suspicion, the trainer or assessor will report this to the ELICOS Coordinator for ELICOS students/ Director of Studies for VET students.
3. The Director of Studies/ ELICOS Coordinator will raise the concern in writing to the student concerned, requesting a time to discuss the matter. The student will have the opportunity to counter the allegations made against them.
4. The Director of Studies will decide if the matter amounts to plagiarism or cheating. In other words, the Director of Studies will determine if the plagiarism or cheating was done with the intention of gaining an unfair advantage.

#### **Decisions Made:**

- a. The Director of Studies decides there was no Plagiarism or Cheating.  
If the Director of Studies decides that it is a case of unsatisfactory assessment and not plagiarism or cheating, the Director of Studies will ask the trainer/ assessor to mark the work appropriately.
- b. The Director of Studies decides there is a possible case of Plagiarism or Cheating.  
If the Director of Studies concludes that there is evidence that the student intended to obtain an unfair advantage, the Director of Studies will inform the student in writing, and give the student an opportunity to respond before making a final decision.
- c. The Director of Studies decides that Plagiarism or Cheating has occurred  
If after giving the student an opportunity to respond, the Director of Studies decides that the student has acted with an intention to obtain an unfair advantage, the Director of Studies will reject a Competency for that unit (for VET students) or a mark for the relevant ELICOS assessment (for ELICOS students) and inform the student by email that the mark(s) has been rejected and advise the student that he/she has a right to appeal as per the College's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures; and ask the Student Support Officer to place a copy of the email in the student's personal file.

### **Penalties of Plagiarism/ Cheating**

1. Students who are found cheating or guilty of plagiarism on any form of assessment will be deemed Not Yet Competent for the relevant Unit of Competency (for VET students) and failed for the relevant ELICOS assessment (for ELICOS students). The students will then need to re-submit/ resit assessment. See Assessment of Competency Policy and Procedures for VET courses.
2. Students who are found cheating or guilty of plagiarism for a second time will need to re-enrol/ repeat the entire Unit of Competency for VET students and repeat the relevant ELICOS level and pay applicable fees.
3. Students who are found cheating or guilty of plagiarism for a third or subsequent time will be reported to the CEO.
4. Students will also be issued an official written warning which will be placed in the students' files.
5. After the official written warning letter, if the students are found cheating or guilty of plagiarism again, the students will be sent an intention to report letter and can be expelled from the College.
6. The students can access the College's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures to appeal the decision.

### **Maintaining Student Records**

1. The College will maintain secure and effective storage of records of confirmed incidents of plagiarism or cheating in the student's file and a note placed on the Student Management System, Wisenet.
2. If an accusation of cheating or plagiarism is dismissed, no details will be lodged on the students' files.