

RECAO

# Policy Document

## Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Policy

**And Declaration of Authenticity Statement**

## RECAO Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Policy

### Regulatory Requirements -General Conditions of Recognition:

#### Scope

This policy applies to prospective and existing RECAO providers who deliver RECAO assessments. This policy provides:

- Definition and examples of plagiarism, collusion and cheating that might occur in connection with centres, providers or learners
- The process for preventing, investigating and dealing with plagiarism, collusion and cheating along with the need for a formal declaration of authenticity by the learner

#### Definitions

##### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which applies to all assessments/examinations. There are a lot of definitions of plagiarism but all share the common idea of taking someone else's intellectual work and presenting it as your own.

RECAO views plagiarism to be the unacknowledged incorporation into a learner's work any materials which are derived from published or unpublished work by another person which is presented as if it were the learner's own work.

This can include the original ideas as well as the actual words produced by another. This also includes an extensive and unacknowledged paraphrase of another person's writings. RECAO does not include acknowledged paraphrasing under the definition of plagiarism.

Published work includes books, articles and any materials to be found on the internet. Examples of unpublished work could be course notes, a piece of work which has been previously submitted by a learner or copied from a colleague.

It is essential that any written work submitted for assessment is ratified as being the learner's own work.

#### Examples of plagiarism include:

- Copying extracts or word for word from another person's work, published or unpublished without acknowledgement
- Paraphrasing/summarising extensively the work of other people without acknowledgement
- Copying or using the work of another learner
- Purchasing work to submit as your own work
- Downloading content from the internet without acknowledging the source

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

### **Collusion and Cheating**

The RECAO considers collusion to be when two or more learners use content they have not created themselves. We expect learners to write up assignments individually and reflect on their own learning. Any shared materials must be acknowledged in order to avoid plagiarism, and where possible content should be independently created to avoid this from occurring

### **Cheating**

Cheating is an attempt to deceive assessors, examiners, external verifiers etc, and includes:

- Providing or receiving information about the content of an examination before an examination takes place
- Centres giving excessive help to learners to create an assessment
- Impersonating or trying to impersonate a learner or attempting to procure a third party to impersonate oneself
- Learners using books, notes, instruments, mobile phones or other 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 another learners work
- Offering a bribe of any kind to an invigilator, examiner, end point assessor or other person involved in assessment
- Any attempt to tamper with assignment/examination scripts, end point assessments after they have been submitted by learners.
- Disruptive, violent or offensive behaviour
- Any form of communication with other learners during an examination
- Failure to abide with the instruction of an invigilator
- Copying others/using mobile phones/apple/smart watch during an examination

Because of the nature of cheating this mainly applies to examinations. Centres should bear in mind that cheating may involve a member of staff (e.g. tampering with assessment assignment, examination scripts, end point assessment).

### **RECAO expect centres to do**

All centres need to check assessments before submission as final version to confirm that there is no suspected plagiarism, collusion or cheating present, and that all learners have signed a declaration of authenticity.

Centres should have their own policies and guidance on how to mitigate plagiarism, collusion and cheating and what action is to be taken.

**Each RECAO centre must have:**

- Current robust policies outlining how they intend to mitigate plagiarism, collusion and cheating
- Clear guidance for learners, deliverers, assessors and internal verifiers
- Methods to identify plagiarism, collusion and or/cheating
- Induction programmes and tutorial support that include plagiarism, collusion and cheating prevention
- Whistleblowing policies

**If a learners final submission is submitted without a signed authenticity declaration RECAO will commence a malpractice investigation**

**If learners are investigated due to a course for concern, any other enrolments must be suspended until the situation is investigated and resolved.**

**Process**

Of plagiarism, collusion, or cheating detected by RECAO or reported by others.

Plagiarism, collusion or cheating may be detected in a number of ways including:

- Identification by an external verifier, examiner or end point assessor, or RECAO staff through Q A and C processes, monitoring and visits to centre
- Verbal or written allegations that are reported openly or anonymously by a learner/staff member/ 3<sup>rd</sup> party/ interested party to a centre or RECAO
- All suspected or alleged cases of plagiarism collusion or cheating must be reported to RECAO at [centres@rec.uk.com](mailto:centres@rec.uk.com). All details of the alleged activity and source of the allegation and any supporting evidence. RECAO will conduct an investigation (see RECAO Investigation Policy)
- Where a plagiarism, collusion or cheating incident is likely to cause an Adverse Effect, e.g. have implications for another Awarding Organisations, RECAO will inform all relevant regulators and warding Organisations.



## Process

### Cheating detected during a paper-based examination

If cheating is suspected during an examination, the invigilator has a duty to inform RECAO at [centres@rec.uk.com](mailto:centres@rec.uk.com). If cheating is evident (RECAO will communicate this to the pertinent centre/learner) and NO marks will be attributed to any piece of work under suspicion.



## Action following the outcome of an investigation

In most investigations into suspected plagiarism, collusion or cheating, decisions will be made by RECAO Quality Assurance and Compliance Manager, but in cases of serious incidents the decision may be made by a team of independent members of RECAO Senior Staff.

The RECAO Standards Committee will oversee the process and ratify the outcome of each investigation.

If the investigation confirms that plagiarism, collusion or cheating has taken place, dependant on the gravity and scope, one or more of the following actions will be taken:

- Disallowing all or part of a learners assessment, examination, or marks
- The learners certificates will not be issued
- Capping of results for resubmission
- No further registrations will be accepted for the learner
- The centre risk rating will be reviewed which could lead to increased centre visits and/or imposition of sanctions. These sanctions could include the suspension of centre approval or withdrawal of centre approval
- Reporting to relevant regulatory bodies which may be shared with other awarding bodies and/or other agencies such as funding bodies or the police.

In addition to the above, RECAO may decide to take specific action against a learner or a specific member of centre staff/ invigilator, dependent on the gravity and scope of the investigation outcome. This could include:

- Barring a learner from registering on a RECAO qualification
- Suspension of a centre's member of staff from any involvement in the delivery of RECAO qualifications or invigilator
- Imposition of special conditions for a centre member of staff's involvement in the delivery of RECAO qualifications

If a centre wishes to appeal against an RECAO decision they need to refer to the RECAO appeals policy.

## GUIDANCE

The most common types of Plagiarism:

**Copying and pasting-** If a learner copies someone else's work word for word without acknowledging the source this is considered plagiarised. It is simple to prevent, all the learner needs to do is reference and quote the source of the work.

**Extensive paraphrasing/summarising-**Without acknowledgment of the source. Even changing the words a little, or using synonyms is still considered plagiarism. This can be prevented by acknowledging clearly.

**Copying or using the work of another learner-** Past or present with or without agreement, prevention involved getting permission and also acknowledging appropriately.

**Any use of course notes** without acknowledgement or internet downloads.

**Purchasing of essays** from the internet or any other source is also not allowed.

### **Collusion**

In the context of assessment, collusion is a form of plagiarism that involves collaboratively and or cooperation in producing assessments. Every part of the process should be their own individual work.

In addition another example would be learners intentionally conspiring to produce a piece of work together with the intention that it is submitted as their own individual work.

Or unauthorised cooperation between a learner and a third party in the production of a piece of work that is submitted as their own.

### **Cheating within examinations**

This would normally occur if the learner has taken content with them to sit the examination, or trying to see other learner's answers during the examination. The invigilator present will explain the requirements for the exam, if the learner is seen with content, or is seen to be watching other learners they will be deemed guilty of cheating.

### **Good Practice in Referencing**

If you use someone else's exact words in your work, they must be in quotation marks.

If you give your own explanation of somebody else's work you must reference your source.

Author, date of their work that you have referred to, and page number, e.g. (Charnock, 2007, p18) + full details in the reference list at the end.

Full reference list of books, articles and sources quoted at the end of assessments.

The Harvard system is well known and guidance is easy to find.

### **Harvard Format**

#### **BOOK**

Charnock, R. (2007) Recruitment Matters: From Army to Civvie Street. Penguin Books, Oxford

#### **ARTICLE**

Maillard, A. (2002) Never-ending: a perspective on the changes to qualification awarding. Journal of Qualification Management, 10 (2), pp.80-110

### **Ways to identify plagiarism**

- Clear changes in font/ in a paragraph or the entire assessment
- Changes from American to English Spelling
- Changes in writing styles or use of language in text

### **Continuous Improvement**

The RECAO Standards Committee reviews all outcomes of all plagiarism, collusion or cheating to identify improvements to RECAO processes, procedures training and development.

Where any failures in the assessment process are uncovered, the committee is also responsible for investigating whether other centres/ learners could be affected and any remedial actions to be taken.

It is a regulatory requirement that every assessment is authenticated as the work of the named learner. Therefore the Declaration of Authenticity Statement – (that follows) must be completed with each assessment that is submitted.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Use of this procedure will be monitored annually to ensure the procedure and its approach remains fit for purpose.



## DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY STATEMENT

Centre Name

Learner Name

ULN

Unit/Assessment covered in this submission

Date

Learner Statement of confirmation of authenticity:

I declare that this is all my own work and that the work has not in whole or in part been knowingly submitted elsewhere for assessment. Any work from previous assessment has been identified. Where materials have been used from other sources it has been properly acknowledged.

Learner Signature

## DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY STATEMENT- NVQ ASSESSMENT

Centre Name

Learner Name

ULN

Unit/Assessment covered in this submission

Date

Learner Statement of confirmation of authenticity:

I declare that this is all my own work and that the work has not in whole or in part been knowingly submitted elsewhere for assessment. Any work from previous assessment has been identified. Where materials have been used from other sources it has been properly acknowledged.

Centre Statement:

I declare the learner's submission has been reviewed for plagiarism, and advice has been provided to the learners on referencing sources. Also that learners are made aware of the Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Policy of the Centre and of RECAO

Learner Signature

Centre Signature

