

# Student Plagiarism, Cheating and Academic Misconduct

## Purpose

This policy ensures that mechanisms are in place to avoid student plagiarism and cheating and outlines the strategies 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.

*Plagiarism* – to take and use the ideas and/or expressions and/or wording of another person or organisation and passing 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This includes material from any source such as staff, students, texts, resources and the internet, whether published or unpublished.

*Academic Misconduct* - falsifies or misrepresents workplace information, forges or falsifies documents

## Policy

### 1. Student integrity and honesty

- 1.1 SCM is committed to upholding standards of student integrity and honesty in regards to the assessment of their work and places value in the declarations of authenticity made by students.
- 1.2 Students are expected to act with integrity at all times and only submit work that is their own, or that has been appropriately referenced and includes acknowledgements of all texts and resource materials utilised in the development of the work.
- 1.3 Students and staff have a duty to ensure they gain the necessary understanding of how to correctly acknowledge and cite references and resources so as to minimise the incidence of plagiarism and cheating and the allegations of such.

### 2. Unacceptable behaviour

- 2.1 From time to time, there may be incidents of student plagiarism and cheating which SCM is required to act upon in order to uphold the value of assessment outcomes and the reputation of the nationally recognised training provided.
- 2.2 Student plagiarism and cheating in any form are unacceptable and will be treated seriously by SCM.

### 3. Avoiding and detecting

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 SCM 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
- 3.3 All staff has an obligation to identify and investigate any possibility of plagiarism, cheating and/or academic misconduct.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 If there is no source listed on assessments, then students will be given an opportunity to search for and cite their responses.
- 3.6 In relation to student work placement, SCM will take the necessary steps to minimise incidence of forged or falsified documents, including:
  - a) confirmation of workplace arrangements with host employers by SCM staff
  - b) regular contact with the host employer to confirm and verify the authenticity and accuracy of service periods documented

#### **4. Using plagiarism detection software**

- 4.1 The plagiarism detection software is to be installed on all trainers' computers in the college.
- 4.1 The plagiarism detection software licence must include sufficient numbers of users to enable all trainers to use it.
- 4.2 Trainers are required to use the software at the point of assessment of student assessment tasks.
- 4.3 Trainers are to apply the program as follows:
  - a) Where assessments require information to be typed, all responses must be submitted in a Word format
  - b) If responses to questions have been referenced - random checks are to be made to ascertain if references are correct
  - c) If sources are not referenced, then responses must have the program applied
  - d) If there is reason to believe it has been plagiarised e.g. there is a discrepancy between the usual style of writing of the student and that in a particular project, the material must be run through the program

#### **5 Responding to incidents**

- 5.1 Any student found to have plagiarised, cheated or been involved in academic misconduct will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- 5.2 Where, following discussion with the student, the trainer forms the view that the student has plagiarised, the trainer may take the following appropriate action, including:
  - a) explaining referencing guidelines,
  - b) explaining to the student that they would need to resubmit the assessment;
  - c) providing the student with another form of assessment;
  - d) issuing a failing grade in respect of the assessment in question;
  - e) issuing a failing grade to the student for the relevant unit of study; and
  - f) subject to clause 5.4 below, cancel the student's enrolment.

5.3 Where, following discussion with the student, the trainer forms the view that the student has been engaged in academic misconduct, the trainer may take the following appropriate action, including:

- a) explaining to the student that they would need to be re-assessed;
- b) issuing a failing result in respect of the assessment in question;
- c) issuing a failing result to the student for the relevant unit; and

5.4 Upon finding that plagiarism, cheating or academic misconduct has occurred, the student will be referred to the student Support Officer, to discuss the matter and a warning letter will be issued to the student.

5.5 SCM 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 plagiarised; or
- b) The student has committed multiple incidences of plagiarism in different items of assessment, the Compliance Manager may cancel the student's enrolment on the grounds of misconduct, or
- c) The student has committed another form of academic misconduct or falsified documentation in relation to his or her studies at SCM.