

13. Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure

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Policy

Minda Inc t/a South Australian Learning Centre (SALC) upholds the highest standards of academic integrity and expects all students to submit work that is their own. Academic integrity is essential to ensuring the authenticity of assessment evidence, maintaining fairness across all students and protecting the integrity of the qualifications we issue.

Assessment evidence must reflect a student's own knowledge, skills and competencies, without unauthorised assistance. Plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, falsification of evidence or any attempt to gain an unfair academic advantage will be investigated and may lead to disciplinary action, including re-assessment or withdrawal from the course.

Trainers and assessors are responsible for validating the authenticity of submitted work and are supported by procedures, technology, and professional judgment in identifying potential breaches. All students are educated on academic integrity expectations during orientation and throughout their studies.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in assessment is considered a form of assistance and must be explicitly authorised by the trainer or assessor. Where AI tools are permitted, students must clearly disclose how the tool was used and ensure that the final submission reflects their own understanding and competency. Undisclosed or inappropriate use of AI tools, including generating full responses or assessment evidence, is considered a breach of academic integrity.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic Integrity	The ethical principle that assessment and learning should be conducted honestly and that all submitted work is the student's own.
Authenticity	One of the rules of evidence – confirming that the assessment evidence is the original and genuine work of the student being assessed.
Plagiarism	Using someone else's work, words, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment.
Collusion	Working with others on an individual task and presenting the outcome as one's own work.
Contract Cheating	Engaging someone else (paid or unpaid) to complete assessment tasks on the student's behalf.
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools	Software or systems that generate text, images, code, or other content using machine learning or automated processes (e.g. generative AI tools such as ChatGPT or similar platforms). Use of AI tools may be permitted where explicitly authorised but must be appropriately disclosed and must not replace the student's own demonstration of competency.

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Levels of Plagiarism

SALC categorises plagiarism into two (2) levels as defined below:

Level 1 Plagiarism is unintentional plagiarism that may arise from:

- Not understanding how to reference and failing to adequately reference the work of others.
- Not understanding that copying work of others is plagiarism.
- Paraphrasing or summarising information from a source without providing a reference.
- Submitting exactly the same answers as another student.

Level 2 Plagiarism is intentional plagiarism where the student knowingly submits work that is not their own, in direct violation of SALC Policy and common academic and professional standards.

- Recurring Level 1 Plagiarism, following academic counselling.
- Using artificial intelligence (AI) tools to generate assessment responses without authorisation or failing to disclose the use of such tools.
- Failing to adequately reference the work of others.
- Submitting work that in part or in its entirety has been copied from written material or electronic material including the internet.
- Copying words from a source such as a textbook or website
- Having someone else write an assessment for the student.
- Cheating means wilfully and deliberately using or gaining an unfair advantage over fellow students by flouting the rules and guidelines set down for assessments.
- Providing your work to another student who copies it, with or without your consent.

Procedure

1. Informing Students

1.1. All students are advised of SALC's academic integrity expectations during orientation and in the Student Handbook.

1.2. Trainers discuss academic integrity prior to assessment and reinforce that assessment evidence submitted must be the student's own.

1.3. Examples of plagiarism, collusion and contract cheating are explained, along with consequences for breaches.

1.4. For written assessments, students sign a declaration that the work is their own.

1.5. Students are informed of the acceptable and unacceptable use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in assessment, including requirements for disclosure where permitted.

2. Submission and Declaration

2.1. All students must sign or digitally acknowledge a declaration of authenticity when submitting assessment tasks.

2.2. If submitting work online (e.g. via LMS), the declaration is included in the submission process.

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2.3. Group work must be explicitly authorised by the trainer and responsibilities must be clearly divided and documented.

2.4. Where AI tools have been used in the preparation of an assessment, students must declare:

- The tool used
- How it was used
- Which parts of the submission were assisted by AI

3. Authenticity Checking

3.1. Assessors may use one or more of the following to confirm authenticity:

- Oral questioning
- Observation or demonstration tasks
- Similarity-checking software
- Cross-referencing evidence with prior work

3.2. Where doubts arise about authenticity, the assessor discusses concerns with the student and documents their observations.

3.3. Assessors may use strategies to identify potential use of AI-generated content, including inconsistencies in writing style, knowledge gaps during questioning or AI-detection tools where appropriate.

4. Management of Breaches – Suspected or Confirmed

4.1. If academic misconduct is suspected:

- The assessor collects any relevant evidence (e.g. submission files, similarity reports, communication logs).
- The Lead Trainer is notified, and the student is invited to an interview to respond to the concern.

4.2. If the breach is confirmed, the consequences as stipulated:

Level 1 Plagiarism can and will include some or all of the following outcomes:

- The student will be issued with a verbal or written warning
- The student will be issued a “Not Yet Competent” and will need to resubmit.
- The student will undergo additional training or counselling about plagiarism and academic misconduct and how to avoid it in future.

Level 2 Plagiarism can and will include some or all of the following outcomes:

- The student will be issued with a written warning.
- The student will be issued a “Not Yet Competent” or “Failure to Submit” and will need to either resubmit or re-enrol in the unit of competency, depending on the severity of the plagiarism investigation outcome.
- The student may be excluded from SALC and not allowed to re-enrol for a period of 6 -36 months, depending on the severity of the plagiarism investigation outcome.

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- The student will need to meet at SALC and be part of the investigation process.

5. Appeals and Complaints

5.1. Students who disagree with a decision regarding academic integrity may appeal under SALC's Complaints and Appeals Policy.

5.2. All appeals are reviewed by a staff member not involved in the original decision.

6. Recordkeeping and Improvement

6.1. All academic integrity breaches and actions taken are recorded in the student's file.

6.2. Trends or recurring issues are reviewed annually as part of SALC's quality improvement and validation processes.

6.3. Staff are supported with professional development in academic integrity and assessment validation practices.

6.4. SALC monitors emerging risks associated with AI tools and updates practices to maintain assessment integrity.

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Extracts from Standards

Standard 1.4 The assessment system ensures assessment is conducted in a way that is fair and appropriate and enables accurate assessment judgement of VET student competency.

P.I.(b) assessors make individual assessment judgements that are justified based on the following rules of evidence:

iii authenticity – the assessor is assured that a VET student’s assessment evidence is the original and genuine work of that VET student; and