

# Academic Integrity

## Purpose

Academic integrity is the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting. This is most relevant at a vocational level as it relates to unethical behaviours present in completing the assessments, the use of AI and providing credit to other people when using their ideas, where it requires the acknowledgement of other individuals' contributions. Failure to provide such an acknowledgement is considered plagiarism.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Trainers & Assessors and learners; and
- All of our training and assessment services.

## Responsibilities

- **RTO Manager**
  - Ensures compliance with legislation, regulations and Standards for RTOs.
  - The Chief Executive Officer has formally nominated the RTO Manager to assume responsibility for tasks delegated in accordance with the organisation's Delegation of Authority Policy.
  - Makes decisions relating to investigations of academic misconduct
- **Compliance Officer**
  - Conducts induction and refresher training for staff on relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
  - Implements compliance updates and improvements under the guidance of the RTO Manager.

- **Student Support Officer**

- Provides learners with information about ACTB's Academic Integrity Policy during orientation.
- Delivers workshops and guidance on plagiarism and the appropriate use of AI throughout a learner's enrolment.
- Supports student intervention processes where inappropriate academic conduct has been identified.

- **Trainers & Assessors**

- Informs learners about expectations regarding academic integrity during induction and throughout the delivery of our training and assessment services.
- Educates learners on proper referencing techniques and provides examples.
- Addresses breaches of academic integrity and guides learners toward compliance

## Definitions

1. **Plagiarism** is the act of using someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own work. It is a type of intellectual theft and can take on many forms:
2. **Collusion** is when learners submit the work of someone else and call it their own, with full knowledge and consent of the other person who has supplied the work, in order to give a false representation of one's effort or performance on the assessment item. The person supplying the work can also be deemed to have participated in collusion. Unintentional collusion can arise from study groups and from group-based assessment, where students are unsure about the boundaries between what is considered acceptable group work and collusion.
3. **Ghost writing** is when an assessment is purposely written by another person and represented by the student as his or her own work.
4. **Incorrect referencing** is when material is copied word for word and acknowledged as paraphrased but should have been in quotation marks, or material paraphrased without appropriate acknowledgement of its source.
5. **Purloining** is when material is copied from another learner's.
6. **Re-submission of material** is when the material has been submitted by another student.
7. **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to digital tools or systems capable of generating, modifying or analysing text, images, code or other content. In the context of assessment, inappropriate AI use occurs where AI tools are used to generate or substantially complete assessment work in a manner that is not permitted by the assessment instructions or is not appropriately acknowledged, resulting in a misrepresentation of the learner's own knowledge, skills or effort.

- 8. Referencing** enables learners to acknowledge the contribution of and provide credit to others in their work. This shows that the learners respect the intellectual property rights of others.

## General Principles

ACTB is committed to minimising instances of student plagiarism, cheating and collusion by:

- Providing staff with comprehensive guidance, training, and procedural support to promote ethical assessment practices, detect breaches of integrity, and respond to misconduct fairly and consistently. This policy reflects ACTB's broader commitment to the quality and credibility of its qualifications, the integrity of its assessment systems, and its obligations under the Standards for RTOs 2025.
- Providing a learning environment that fosters the qualities of independent learning and academic integrity.
- Developing our learners' ability to apply critical reasoning and knowledge to assessment activities through independent thought and to make decisions that reflect the learner's considerations of the task or workplace requirement.
- Advising all learners of the importance of academic integrity and the impact plagiarism, cheating and colluding have on not just the learners, but their classmates, the RTO and the wider vocational education reputation.
- Educating learners that their assessment submissions must consist of original effort. It is insufficient to simply copy work from other sources and submit it, even if those sources are appropriately acknowledged.
- Treating all forms of plagiarism, cheating and collusion seriously and applying appropriate consequences where learners are found to be plagiarising, cheating or colluding.
- Ensuring that learners understand how to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT responsibly and the extent of the scope, including in which instances they will not be allowed to do so.

## Plagiarism

### 1. Purpose and Commitment

ACTB is committed to fostering a culture of academic integrity, independent learning, and ethical assessment practices. Academic integrity supports the credibility of ACTB's qualifications, the fairness of assessment processes, and the development of genuine learner capability.

## 2. Expectations of Learners

Learners are expected to:

- Produce original work that reflects their own knowledge, skills, and understanding
- Acknowledge all sources of information using the referencing system required by ACTB
- Seek clarification when unsure about assessment conditions, group work boundaries, or referencing requirements
- Avoid sharing their work with others in ways that may enable plagiarism or collusion
- Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools only when permitted by assessment instructions and acknowledge their use when required

## 3. Expectations of Staff

ACTB staff are responsible for:

- Clearly explaining assessment requirements and academic integrity expectations
- Providing guidance on correct referencing and examples of acceptable practice
- Designing assessment tasks that minimise opportunities for plagiarism, cheating, or collusion
- Distinguishing between individual and group work requirements
- Supporting learners to develop academic skills and ethical learning behaviours

## 4. Referencing Requirements

Learners must use the referencing system specified by ACTB (e.g., Harvard in-text citation). All assessments must include:

- In-text citations for any ideas, words, or materials taken from other sources
- A reference list containing all sources used
- Clear differentiation between the learner's own work and the work of others
- Incorrect or missing referencing—whether intentional or unintentional—may be treated as a breach of academic integrity.

## 5. Examples of Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying text, ideas, images, data, or code without proper acknowledgement
- Paraphrasing without citation
- Submitting work generated substantially by AI tools without permission
- Reusing one's own previously submitted work without approval
- Presenting group work as individual work
- Using unauthorised materials or assistance during assessments

## 6. Investigation and Outcomes

When academic misconduct is suspected:

- ACTB will review the matter to determine whether the behaviour was intentional or due to poor academic practice
- Learners may be interviewed to clarify circumstances
- Minor breaches arising from poor practice may require resubmission with corrections
- Intentional misconduct may result in the assessment being invalidated, a formal warning, or an alternative assessment
- Repeated or serious breaches may lead to withdrawal from the program in accordance with ACTB policy

### Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of AI tools such as ChatGPT and other generative AI platforms has become increasingly common in academic and vocational settings. While AI can be a useful tool for research, idea generation, and improving writing clarity, it must be used responsibly.

At ACTB, learners and staff are expected to adhere to the following AI usage guidelines:

- AI-generated content must be properly acknowledged and referenced when used in any submitted work.
- AI tools should not be used to replace a learner's independent effort, and all assessment submissions reflect their own original work, knowledge and skills.
- Using AI to write assessments (e.g., answers, projects, reports, reflective tasks, workplace evidence, knowledge questions, case studies or competency-based tasks, unless expressly permitted by the Trainer and Assessor) is considered a breach of academic integrity and will result in a learner's work not being accepted.
- Failure to comply with these guidelines, including submitting AI-generated or AI-assisted content as one's own work or failing to appropriately acknowledge the use of AI, constitutes a breach of academic integrity and may result in the assessment being deemed Not Satisfactory and/or other appropriate disciplinary action.

ACTB recognises that artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including generative AI platforms, may support learning when used appropriately, transparently, and within defined limits. The use of AI must not compromise the integrity, validity, or reliability of assessment, replace a learner's independent effort, or undermine competency judgements.

## Disclosure Requirements

Learners must confirm that the assessment submitted represents their own original work. False, misleading or incomplete declarations may constitute academic misconduct.

## Trainer and Assessor Responsibilities

Trainers and Assessors are responsible for ensuring learners understand the limits of acceptable AI use and reviewing assessment submissions for indicators of AI misuse. Where concerns arise, Trainers and Assessors must escalate any suspected or confirmed breaches in accordance with the ACTB Academic Integrity SOP.

## Management of AI-Related Breaches

In line with the Standards for RTOs 2025, ACTB safeguards the integrity, validity, and fairness of assessment. Where the misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is suspected or identified, ACTB may deem the assessment outcome Not Satisfactory, require re-assessment or additional evidence, or conduct validation activities or targeted questioning to confirm learner competence. Repeated or serious breaches may result in formal warnings or disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, in accordance with ACTB's disciplinary procedures. All AI-related breaches and actions taken are documented, monitored, and reviewed through ACTB's quality assurance and continuous improvement processes.

## Student Notification and Appeal Rights

Students will be formally notified of any findings related to plagiarism and advised of any penalties, opportunities for resubmission, or re-enrolment requirements. All students have the right to appeal decisions under the ACTB Feedback, Complaint and Appeal Policy, which is available via the ACTB website and student handbook.

## Compliance

This policy aligns with:

- Standards for RTOs 2025:
  - **Standard 1.4** – The assessment system ensures assessment is conducted in a fair and appropriate way and enables accurate judgments of VET student competency.
  - **Standard 4.2** – Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood.
  - **Standard 4.3** – Risks to VET students, staff, and the RTO are identified and managed.
  - **Standard 4.4** – The RTO undertakes systematic monitoring and evaluation to support the delivery of quality services and continuous improvement.

Failure to comply with this policy can have serious consequences, including but not limited to:

- **For the RTO** – breaches of legislation or regulatory requirements may result in financial penalties, loss of registration, reputation damage, or regulatory enforcement actions.
- **For Staff Members** – staff found to have knowingly or negligently failed to comply with this policy and any associated legislative or regulatory requirements may face disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment.
- **For Learners and Clients** – non-compliance could lead to disruptions in training and assessment services, formal warnings issued, or even suspensions or expulsion.

## Continuous Improvement

- Feedback from staff, learners, clients and industry stakeholders will be used to inform improvements to compliance processes and the effectiveness of our operations.
- An internal audit is to be conducted at least once per year to assess our compliance with this policy and the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. The audit schedule is outlined in our *Continuous Improvement Schedule*, and areas for improvement are documented in our *Continuous Improvement Register*.
- Internal audit review questions for self-assurance purposes should include:
  - Is our policy clearly communicated to students in a manner that is easily understood?
  - How many breaches of this policy were uncovered? What were the trends?
  - Are assessments designed in a way that encourages original thought and reduces opportunities for copying or AI misuse?

## Related Documents

- Continuous Improvement Register
- Continuous Improvement Schedule
- Student Handbook