

Plagiarism and Malpractice Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Approved / reviewed by:	
WSL SLT	
Date of last review:	September 2024
Date of next review:	September 2025

Introduction

Work Skills Learning has an obligation to awarding organisations, learners, members, funders and society in general to ensure that the qualifications its learners receive are a fair and accurate representation of their work, and of the knowledge and skills attained. Plagiarism and other forms of malpractice undermine the value and credibility of qualifications for all concerned. If a learner passes an assessment, or gets a qualification, by unfair means then this affects those who achieved the same qualification fairly. Work Skills Learning will therefore take appropriate measures to ensure that learners work is their own and that plagiarism and/or malpractice has not taken place. Where plagiarism and/or malpractice is detected appropriate action will be taken in line with Work Skills Learning procedures and awarding organisation requirements.

Plagiarism relates to learners claiming work to be their own when it is not. It is acknowledged that in practice, it can be difficult to distinguish between deliberate plagiarism and failure to acknowledge sources appropriately.

It is important therefore to appropriately reference and acknowledge the author of any information used from books, the internet, articles, journals etc.

Plagiarism comes in many forms:

- Copying text from a book or any other source word for word and using it as your own. You may legitimately use any such information providing it is clearly acknowledged in the body of your work and appropriately referenced in your bibliography. In this case you have recognised that the work is not your own and plagiarism is avoided.
- Paraphrasing work – this is using words from a text to make it simpler. This is a form of plagiarism as it simply restates the point made by the original writer.
- Copying diagrams and charts or any such document is also plagiarism – again you must reference at the foot of the diagram or chart and acknowledge in your bibliography.

Work Skills Learning is committed to the detection of plagiarism and malpractice and will take appropriate measures where it is detected including:

- updating relevant staff on preventing, detecting and procedures relating to plagiarism and malpractice
- providing learners with information regarding the Work Skills Learning plagiarism and malpractice policy
- ensuring students are properly instructed in fair practice and how to reference appropriately
- taking appropriate action where plagiarism or malpractice is detected.

Malpractice is that act of endeavouring to or actually carrying out any malpractice activity that is not permitted by Work Skills Learning. The following are examples of malpractice by

learners; this list is not exhaustive and other instance of malpractice may be considered.

- Collusion by preparing or producing work for an individual assessment jointly with another person or persons unless explicitly permitted by the assessment brief. Actively assisting others or allowing others to access completed assessments prior to submission and submitting this work as your own.
- Impersonation by taking on an identity of another for the purpose of producing the work for that individual or arranging to take that person's place in an assessment.

Keeping Staff Informed

Staff will be informed and supported to prevent and detect plagiarism and malpractice. It is the responsibility of Work Skills Learning:

- To make the plagiarism and malpractice policy available to all staff
- To ensure all tutors, assessors and internal quality assurers are provided with a copy of the policy.
- To provide updates through regular meetings
- To provide information, support and guidance on preventing plagiarism and malpractice and supporting referencing through standardisation.

It is the responsibility of Work Skills Learning tutors and assessors

- To explain what plagiarism and malpractice is to learners and explain to them the Work Skills Learning policy on plagiarism and the implications if detected.
- To ensure learners have been made aware of the resources provided to support them to reference correctly.

Information for Learners

Learners can request a copy of this policy from the office. It is the responsibility of learners:

- To ensure that work submitted for assessment is their own.
- To ensure that the words and arguments of others are appropriately cited and referenced.

Learners must not copy materials from written sources, from the Internet, or from any other source whether this is through cutting and pasting, rewriting or by any other means. Changing a few words within a copied piece of text does not render it original and still counts as plagiarism.

It is the responsibility of Work Skills Learning:

- To ensure learners have access to the plagiarism and malpractice policy.

- To ensure learners have access to resources to support them to reference sources. Guidance on Referencing your Work is available to learners in the Resources for your Courses section of the HBCA.

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Procedure to follow when plagiarism and/or malpractice is detected

All cases of plagiarism and/or malpractice must be reported to the management

evidence is discovered that a learner has copied work from elsewhere and the plagiarism and/or malpractice would have altered the result obtained by the learner if it had been undetected then the assessment must be referred.

The learner will be advised by the management of this decision within five days of the decision being made.

If it is clear that the plagiarism was minor and did not constitute intentional cheating, then guidance and support should be provided.

In cases of plagiarism the assessor should provide feedback (in consultation with management) explaining the issue and signposting to support so the learner can resubmit evidence.

The learner will be given further guidance on how to correctly reference and be given a verbal warning.

The management will write a letter to the learner explaining why they have referred, reinforcing the unacceptability of plagiarism, reminding the learner of appropriate referencing practice and offering support and guidance if required. The learner will also be redirected to the plagiarism policy. If a second case of plagiarism and/or malpractice occurs from the same learner the management will advise the learner in writing that all previous work will be called back for detailed scrutiny. This will be done by a panel to include:

- The Management Department
- The Assessor involved in the original assessment
- An Independent Assessor

The awarding organisation will be informed of cases of plagiarism where appropriate.

A third case of plagiarism will result in a learner being withdrawn from the course. No refund of course fee will be given and the learner will have to complete any outstanding payments owed to Work Skills Learning.