

TSA Policy and Procedure for Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating

1. Policy Statement

The policy outlines TSA's commitment to upholding academic integrity. It has been developed to define the instances that constitute plagiarism, collusion and cheating within the organisation's context and to outline the procedures TSA will implement to respond to any such occurrence.

For the purposes of this policy, plagiarism, cheating, collaboration, or collusion may be termed academic misconduct.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all learners and TSA staff. It is relevant to all aspects of a learner's training and assessment with TSA, other than non-accredited courses.

3. Purpose

The document sets out procedures intended to assist TSA management and trainers and assessors in instances of suspected academic misconduct. The policy is available to students so that they are aware of what constitutes academic misconduct at TSA and the process and consequences that follow if there is a breach of the policy.

More broadly the policy, and the related communication that supports this policy, has been implemented to prevent incidents of academic misconduct from occurring at TSA wherever possible.

4. Definitions

Academic misconduct – Seeking to obtain academic advantage by dishonest or unfair means, or knowingly assisting another learner to do so.

Plagiarism – Taking and using another person's ideas or work and passing these off as one's own, by failing to give appropriate acknowledgement. This includes:

- submitting evidence copied from another student.
- presenting the work of another individual or group as the student's own work.
- cases where a person completes all or part of an assessment on behalf of a student.
- assembling parts from various works and submitting this as evidence which is purported to be the student's own creation.
- submitting documents developed by others in the student's workplace / organisation and claiming that they are the student's own work.

Collusion – Submitting an assignment or other piece of assessable work which was written in conjunction with another student and without the prior permission of the relevant trainer. It can also occur through assisting others in plagiarism activities.

Unintentional collusion can arise from group activities; study groups; and group-based assessments where learners are unsure about the boundary between what the trainer and assessor considers acceptable group work and collusion.

Cheating – All practices described in the aforementioned definitions are forms of cheating. Cheating can also occur if a student has:

- tampered or attempted to tamper with assessment items, results or academic records.
- submitted work that has been stolen, purchased or borrowed.
- fabricated assessment evidence.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Learner's roles and responsibilities include:

- understanding this policy and procedure and seeking assistance if unsure.
- taking necessary actions to minimise plagiarism such as ensuring that written assessment responses are in their own words.

5.2 Trainer and assessor roles and responsibilities include:

- informing learners of this policy and procedure, and TSA's commitment to academic integrity.
- educating learners on methods to avoid plagiarism, cheating and collusion. This can occur at any stage of the course but most particularly during the post course assessment briefing.
- being vigilant.
- reporting suspected breaches of this policy to the TSA Quality Manager or the TSA Operations Manager.

5.3 TSA Quality Manager roles and responsibilities include:

- updating the policy and making it available and accessible to learners, trainers and assessors.
- ensuring that TSA personnel adhere to this policy when investigating and actioning matters of plagiarism, cheating, and/or collusion.
- coordinating an investigation where there is an allegation of academic misconduct.
- deciding on TSA's response in cases where academic misconduct is confirmed.

6. Procedural response

TSA recognises that each situation of alleged academic misconduct must be analysed with impartiality and that all pertinent facts, including the intent behind the behaviour, are explored before determining an appropriate response.

The procedural steps that can take place when there is a belief that academic misconduct may have occurred include, but are not limited to:

- 6.1 Where a Trainer and/or Assessor believe that plagiarism, cheating or collusion may have occurred, they will refer the matter to the TSA Quality Manager and provide specific information related to the concerns.
- 6.2 A review of the student's assessment evidence will be completed, and the areas of concern noted.
- 6.3 Contact is made with the student, and/or the employer paying for the student's enrolment, to address the issue and explore any pertinent mitigating factors and/or gather relevant information.
- 6.4 After considering any information and explanation provided, the TSA Quality Manager, in consultation with TSA Management and the Trainer and Assessor, will determine the consequences of the academic misconduct behaviour.
- 6.5 The consequences will depend on the severity of the situation and the degree to which the misconduct was considered to be intentional or unintentional. The consequences could include but are not limited to one or more of the following:
 - a reprimand or warning
 - verbal assessment of relevant sections of the assessment
 - resubmission of part or all of the assessment
 - additional alternate assessment questions
 - withholding results
 - a Not Competent assessment decision being awarded for the unit
 - additional charges for time spent by TSA investigating and dealing with the matter
 - termination of the student's enrolment.
- 6.6 The consequences will be conveyed to the student and/or their employer in writing and will be recorded on the student's record.
- 6.7 The student will be made aware of TSA's Appeals process.

If a student's enrolment is terminated due to a breach of the Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating policy, then the student (or the employer who has paid for their enrolment) will not be eligible for a refund for the cost of the training and assessment.

7. Review and Continuous Improvement

TSA is committed to ongoing monitoring and improvement of its policies and procedures, and to this end has an integrated strategy including:

- Conducting reviews of specific elements of this Policy and Procedure when an issue is raised that has not been factored into the existing Policy and Procedure
- Staff at TSA with responsibilities relating to the managing of assessment are encouraged to submit any concerns about, and suggestions for making improvements to this Policy and Procedure to the TSA Quality Manager

8. Related forms and documents

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the:

- TSA Code of Practice
- TSA Student Information Pack
- TSA Learner Agreement
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures

9. Statutory and Regulatory Compliance

This policy and procedure reflects the following legislation, regulations, standards, and/or guidelines:

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) 2015; Standard 2.
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011