

Plagiarism Policy and Process

Purpose & Legislative Background

As required Under Clause 1.8 to 1.12 of Standards for RTOs 2015, National Property College implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning):

- a) complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course
- b) is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment contained in Table 1.8-1 and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table 1.8-2.

This policy outlines the steps National Property College will take to ensure adherence to above and the process National Property College will follow to maintain the rules of evidence and will specifically address the third rule of evidence i.e., Authenticity.

Table 1.8-2: Rules of evidence

Validity	The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Sufficiency	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner's competency.
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.
Currency	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at National Property College.

Policy

National Property College is committed to ensuring a great learning experience for its students. It aims to provide a learning environment that fosters the qualities of independent learning and academic integrity.

This policy seeks to encourage ethical conduct and to inform staff and students about National Property College standards of academic behavior. Students have a responsibility to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in their work. Students must not cheat in assessment and must ensure that they do not plagiarise.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the act of misrepresenting as one's own original work the ideas, interpretations, words or creative works of another. These include published and unpublished documents, designs, music, sounds, images, photographs, computer codes and ideas gained through working in a group. These ideas, interpretations, words or works may be found in print and/or electronic media.

Academic integrity

One of the core functions of National Property College is to develop student's ability to apply critical reasoning to assessment activities through independent thought and to make decisions that reflect the student's considerations of the task or workplace requirement.

National Property College acknowledges that to develop this ability, the student will study the work of others via issued textbooks, learning material or through their own research. However, it is important that students in their learning acknowledge, through appropriate referencing, earlier work from which they have drawn information.

Referencing

Referencing demonstrates that the student has read the issued material or has undertaken their own research in other sources. Failure to reference appropriately is considered unethical academic behaviour and will result in a student's work not being accepted.

Students should understand that assignment and project work submitted for assessment 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. Work submitted by a student must have an original component.

The following are examples of plagiarism where a student intentionally does not acknowledge or reference an author or source:

- Direct copying of paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence or significant parts of a sentence;
- Direct copying of paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence or significant parts of a sentence with an end reference but without quotation marks around the copied text;
- Copying ideas, concepts, research results, computer codes, statistical tables, designs, images, sounds or text or any combination of these;
- Paraphrasing, summarizing or simply rearranging another person's words, ideas, etc., without reference or explanation;
- Offering an idea or interpretation that is not one's own without identifying whose idea or interpretation it is;
- A 'cut and paste' of statements from multiple sources;
- Presenting as independent, work done in collaboration with others;
- Copying or adapting another student's original work into a submitted assessment item;

- Copying or adapting a student's own work submitted in a previous essay or assessment.

Alternatively, there will be instances when a student unintentionally fails to cite sources or to do so adequately.

Careless or inadequate referencing or failure to reference will be considered poor practice. Where careless referencing is identified, the student will be required to correct the error and resubmit an assignment.

How to reference

At National Property College, students are to be encouraged to apply the Harvard Referencing System in-text citation. This approach requires three pieces of information about a source within the text of the students work. This information is:

- the name of the author or authors;
- the year of publication;
- the page numbers.

Examples

Citations may be placed at the end of a sentence (before the concluding punctuation) in brackets, e.g.:

To succeed, the team will rely on both task process and group process (Dwyer, Hopwood 2010, p. 239)

A reference may be placed in the text to integrate the author's surname into the sentence, followed by the year of publication and page number, in brackets, e.g.:

Dwyer and Hopwood (2010, p. 239) identify that to succeed, the team will rely on both task process and group process.

Reference List

At the end of the student's work, a List of References must be included. This should include all the books, journal articles and other sources of information you have used to research your assignment.

The reference list should be laid out alphabetically and the title of the source should be italicized.

Each reference must include:

- the name of the author or authors;
- the year of publication;
- the title of the publication;
- the edition of publication;
- the publisher;
- place of publication.

Example

Dwyer, J and Hopwood, N, 2010, *Management Strategies and Skills*, Sydney, McGraw Hill Australia

Common Knowledge

In every field, there is a body of knowledge and material that has become part of the public domain and which can be drawn on without specific acknowledgment. Common knowledge includes facts that are generally known, such as common facts of history, common sense information, accepted folklore and aphorisms that have been adopted as part of common English language.

As examples, it would not be necessary to reference the following:

That John Howard was the Prime Minister of Australia (common fact of history)

That humans need food and water for survival (common sense observation)

That the “Bunyip” is a man-eating Australian animal that lives in water-holes, swamps and creeks (accepted folklore)

Cheating

Cheating is defined as “a form of deceit with a view to gaining an advantage for the cheat.” At National Property College, cheating is usually related to taking unauthorized material into assessments. National Property College Trainers have a responsibility to explain clearly expectations related to any assessment, what constitutes cheating, and to promote a climate of honesty in students.

Dealing with Plagiarism

In the case of suspected plagiarism, the trainer / assessor will report the incident to the Academic Manager (AM). The AM, in consultation with the trainer / assessor will determine if the plagiarism has resulted from poor academic practice or was intentional. This preliminary step may involve an informal interview with the student.

The AM and trainer/assessor will:

- consider the extent of the plagiarism (noting that the more extensive the plagiarism, the more likely it was intentional);
- review the course profile and other information provided to students by the Trainer to determine if adequate information had been given;
- identify if the student has been previously warned of plagiarism;
- determine whether the student is new to adult vocational education and training (it would be expected that continuing students would be more likely to understand plagiarism and its consequences).

If the above factors have been considered and it has been determined that the plagiarism has arisen from poor academic practice, the student is to be requested to revise the work and resubmit it for the assessment.

If, after consideration of the above factors it is determined that the plagiarism was intentional, the student’s work is not to be accepted and the student is to be issued with an alternative assessment assignment to complete. The student is to be given a formal warning (in writing) by the AM explaining the seriousness of the incident and the consequences if the student is found to plagiarize again.

Students who commit plagiarism after being formally warned are to be cancelled on Academic Misconduct from the program they are enrolled.

Appeals against decisions regarding plagiarism will be managed as per the compliant and appeals policy of National Property College.

Management Action & Responsibility

Staff responsibilities

National Property College staff are responsible to:

- Inform all students of expectations related to assessment;
- Inform all students of referencing techniques and provide clear examples of what is acceptable;
- Explain to students what constitutes plagiarism;
- Set realistic assessment activities and vary assignments and questions;
- Assist students to understand and apply correct referencing techniques;
- Set appropriate conditions for group activities and make clear the distinction between group work and individual work;
- Cultivate a climate of mutual respect for original work.

Student responsibilities

Students are responsible to:

- Submit only work that is their own or that properly acknowledges the ideas, interpretations, words or creative works of others;
- Avoid lending original work to others for any reason;
- Be clear about assessment conditions and seek clarification if in doubt;
- Be clear about what is appropriate referencing and the consequences of inappropriate referencing;
- Discourage others from plagiarising by observing the practices above.

Definitions

Plagiarism: In academic work, ideas and words belong to the person who first created or wrote them. Plagiarism is when you copy someone else's work and don't acknowledge the author or the source. Plagiarising someone's work equates to failing to comply with the basic standards of academic integrity.

Plagiarism occurs when students do not acknowledge that they have used the ideas and/or work of others in the completion of a task/s that are submitted as their own for assessment. This includes submitting work and claiming authorship when:

- Other people's work and/or ideas are paraphrased and presented as the student's own without the appropriate referencing of the source of work/idea that has been used;
- Another student's work is copied or partly copied;
- Other people's designs, or images are presented as the student's own work;
- Phrases or passages are used verbatim without the appropriate quotation marks, and/or without a reference to the original author, and publication details (for a book) or a web page (for an internet source);

- Trainer/Mentor notes are reproduced without acknowledgement;
- A student has contracted another person to do the work;
- A student is purchasing work from another source.

A claim from students that the rules are different in their country of origin and that they didn't know the rules regarding plagiarism in Australia will not be regarded as an acceptable excuse.

Collusion: Collusion is deemed to be when two or more people make an agreement to act with the intention to deceive an assessor as to who is responsible for producing the submitted work.

Equal Liability: The sharing of assignments or other form of work over the internet by social media or other means of networking between students may be viewed as collusion and equal liability will apply. Students are responsible for their own work and not sharing it with others.

Group Assessment: In group assessments ALL members of the group are responsible for an equal contribution in the group assignment and for signing the assessment coversheets. Doing someone else's work for them means that you have agreed to collude and as such you are equally liable. In this instance ALL members will be penalised.

Self- Plagiarism: Repeating students are not permitted to re-submit pieces of assessment that have already been submitted and marked for a previous instance of a Unit. Re-submitting work without referencing is deemed to be self-plagiarism as recycling work in this manner involves an element of deception.

Referencing: Referencing means indicating which information or ideas are derived from an 'outside' source and providing details about that source. Students must reference the following types of information:

- Ideas, theories or definitions;
- Research.

Legislative Context

The legislative base for this policy is as follows:

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth)
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015

Plagiarism Process

