Plagiarism Procedure

This procedure should be followed whenever plagiarism is suspected.

Definition

Plagiarism is a learner using another person's work or idea and presenting it as if it was his or her own. The work may be written work, music, computer program, dance, picture etc.

The source of that work may be:

- Published work e.g. book, magazine, play, photograph, painting, music etc.
- Unpublished work e.g. teacher's notes, class handouts, another learner's work (used with or without permission) and material from the Internet.
- Work generated by artificial intelligence (AI) - AI is the ability of a digital computer or computer-controlled robot to perform tasks commonly associated with intelligent beings and can be used for problem-solving. AI technology is available to everyone and can easily be accessed through a variety of low-cost or free tools and it can be used to write content in response to a user inputting basic information and/or questions. Policies and procedures need to consider that using AI can result in text generated from parameters set by the user and is not taken from another online source, therefore it is difficult to be flagged by a conventional plagiarism checker. The College's work related to malpractice and plagiarism need to be aware of and take account of this.

Learners must submit work for assessments which is their own. This means both ensuring that the final product is in their own words and is not copied or paraphrased from another source such as an AI tool, and that the content reflects their own independent work. Learners are expected to demonstrate their own knowledge, skills and understanding as required for the qualification in question and set out in the qualification specification. This includes demonstrating their performance in relation to the assessment objectives for the subject relevant to the question/s or other tasks learners have been set.

Using any work produced by someone else in any of these ways without giving them credit is plagiarism and is academic misconduct and malpractice. Sometimes this plagiarism is done unintentionally due to poor research skills and a lack of understanding of referencing conventions. Sometimes it is done deliberately. In either case plagiarism is not acceptable and should be addressed.

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Plagiarism primarily takes one of these forms:

i)   Learners' misuse of information from the web or other sources, where they 'cut and paste' sections of text from these resources directly into their assignments without acknowledging the original source; and

ii)   Learners working too closely with one or more individuals to help solve and/or answer an assessed task or question, resulting in the production of a joint answer or solution (whether intentionally or not) to gain an unfair advantage over others in their assignments. This form of plagiarism is called collusion.

iii)   Learners using work produced by someone else i.e. a company, from the web or from another learner.

iv)   Learners use AI to generate work in response to prompts and questions. Any use of AI which means learners have not independently demonstrated their own attainment is likely to be considered malpractice if a declaration of authentication has been signed. Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the learner's own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations.
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information.
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools
- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies.

Learners will be required to sign a declaration of authentication with all submission of work identifying that the work is their own.

Identifying Plagiarism

Turnitin

To check learners are working in a fair and academically appropriate manner, Cardiff & Vale College uses text comparison software to detect potential cases of plagiarism in work that is submitted for assessment by HE and Access learners. This is:

- Turnitin which carries out the equivalent of an internet search, looks for matches between the text included in a piece of work submitted by a learner with all forms of information and resources publicly available on the internet. Turnitin is used to check for cases of direct copying, and/or not properly referencing various types of source materials. It can also be used to compare each learner's assignments with the module materials and other commonly used or provided references. For each assignment

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submitted to Turnitin, an 'originality' report is produced showing the percentage of text that matches specific websites.

Depending on the questions being asked and the format of the submitted answer, some level of matching between scripts and with other sources is expected. For example, you may have used information obtained from other sites and/or scientific papers as a direct quote to support your answer or illustrate a particular point (making sure that you have referenced this in the appropriate and expected manner). Likewise, you will probably use terms and phrases, which can be described as 'common knowledge' within your particular subject area and level of study, which do not need to be referenced, but are likely to arise in a similar format on a number of sites and other learners' answers.

The course team will take all such matters into account when reviewing the reports from Turnitin and deciding whether a learner has plagiarised. If there are concerns:

- the course team may decide that some learners need further guidance or support to develop their academic writing skills; or
- the course team may decide that what the reports are showing is more serious, in which case they will refer the matter to the Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching and Learning, for consideration.

For all other levels, staff are vigilant for plagiarism and use online search engines to check work. Moderation across course teams also identifies plagiarism.

AI detection will shortly be added to the existing tool Turnitin Originality (https://www.turnitin.com/ products/originality). This tool features an AI review of a learner's work, reviewing a portfolio of evidence and, we understand, will indicate the likelihood of AI use. These tools could be used as a check on learner work and/or to verify concerns about the authenticity of learner work.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Identifying the misuse of AI by learners requires the same skills and observation techniques that teachers are probably already using to assure themselves learner work is authentically their own. There are also some tools that can be used.

Comparison with previous work

When reviewing a given piece of work to ensure its authenticity, it is useful to compare it against other work created by the learner. Where the work is made up of writing, one can make note of the following characteristics:
- Spelling and punctuation
- Grammatical usage
- Writing style and tone

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- Vocabulary
- Complexity and coherency
- General understanding and working level
- The mode of production (i.e. whether handwritten or word-processed)

Teachers could consider comparing newly submitted work with work completed by the learner in the classroom, or under supervised conditions.

Potential indicators of AI use

If you see the following in learner work, it may be an indication that they have misused AI:
- A default use of American spelling, currency, terms, and other localisations.*
- A default use of language or vocabulary which might not appropriate to the qualification level.*
- A lack of direct quotations and/or use of references where these are required/ expected.~
- Inclusion of references which cannot be found or verified (some AI tools have provided false references to books or articles by real authors).
- A lack of reference to events occurring after a certain date (reflecting when an AI tool's data source was compiled), which might be notable for some subjects.
- Instances of incorrect/inconsistent use of first-person and third-person perspective where generated text is left unaltered.
- A difference in the language style used when compared to that used by a learner in the classroom or in other previously submitted work.
- A variation in the style of language evidenced in a piece of work, if a learner has taken significant portions of text from AI and then amended this.
- A lack of graphs/data tables/visual aids where these would normally be expected.
- A lack of specific local or topical knowledge
- Content being more generic in nature rather than relating to the learner themself, or a specialised task or scenario, if this is required or expected.
- The inadvertent inclusion by learners of warnings or provisos produced by AI to highlight the limits of its ability, or the hypothetical nature of its output.
- The submission of learner work in a typed format, where their normal output is handwritten.
- The unusual use of several concluding statements throughout the text, or several repetitions of an overarching essay structure within a single lengthy essay, which can be a result of AI being asked to produce an essay several times to add depth, variety or to overcome its output limit.
- The inclusion of strongly stated non-sequiturs or confidently incorrect statements within otherwise cohesive content.
- Overly verbose or hyperbolic language that may not be in keeping with the candidate's usual style.

*Please be aware, though, that AI tools can be instructed to employ different languages and levels of proficiency when generating content.

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~However, some AI tools will produce quotations and references.

Automated detection

AI chatbots, as large language models, produce content by 'guessing' the most likely next word in a sequence. This means that AI-generated content uses the most common combinations of words, unlike humans who use a variety of words in their normal writing. Several programs and services use this difference to statistically analyse written content and determine the likelihood that it was produced by AI:

OpenAI Classifier (https://openai.com/blog/new-ai-classifier-for-indicating-ai-written-text)
GPTZero (https://gptzero.me/)
The Giant Language Model Test Room (GLTR) (http://gltr.io/dist/)

However, it should be noted that the above tools, as they base their scores on the predictability of words, will give lower scores for AI-generated content which has been subsequently amended by learners. The quality of these detection tools can vary, and AI and detection tools will continue to evolve. The use of detection tools should form part of a holistic approach to considering the authenticity of learners' work; all available information should be considered when reviewing any malpractice concerns.

Data Protection

When using these systems, Cardiff & Vale College will not submit any personal details about you, although it is likely your work will have your PI number on it from which you can be identified. Furthermore, your work will not be stored on any external system and so will not be accessible to anyone outside Cardiff & Vale College.

Expected Practice

In order to avoid plagiarism:

- Learners should follow good practice in referencing. Appropriate referencing is a means of demonstrating academic integrity and is key to maintaining the integrity of assessments. All learners will have access to Study Skills sessions on referencing.

- Any quotation from the published or unpublished works of other persons must be clearly identified as such by being placed inside quotation marks, and learners should identify their sources as accurately and fully as possible.

- A series of short quotations from several different sources should be clearly identified as such, or it will constitute plagiarism, just as much as does a single unacknowledged long quotation from a single source.

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- If a learner summarises another person's ideas, judgements, figures, software or diagrams, a reference to that person in the text must be made and the work referred to must be included in the bibliography.

In order to avoid plagiarism when using AI:

- If a learner uses an AI tool which provides details of the sources it has used in generating content, these sources must be verified by the learner and referenced in their work in the normal way.

- Where an AI tool does not provide such details, learners should ensure that they independently verify the AI-generated content – and then reference the sources they have used.

- In addition to the above, where learners use AI, they must acknowledge its use and show clearly how they have used it. This allows teachers and assessors to review how AI has been used and whether that use was appropriate in the context of the particular assessment. This is particularly important given that AI-generated content is not subject to the same academic scrutiny as other published sources.

- Where AI tools have been used as a source of information, a learner's acknowledgement must show the name of the AI source used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2023. The learner must, retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes, in a noneditable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how it has been used. This must be submitted with the work so the teacher/assessor is able to review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used. Where this is not submitted, and the teacher/assessor suspects that the learner has used AI tools, the teacher/assessor will need to consult the centre's malpractice policy for appropriate next steps and should take action to assure themselves that the work is the learner's own.

Dealing with suspected plagiarism where the source cannot be identified

Occasionally, a marker may be faced with a piece of work that is suspected to be substantially plagiarised, but where the source cannot be identified. In such circumstances, there may be a suspicion that someone else has written the essay.

The recommended course is that the learner be given notice that they will be asked academic questions on the submitted work.

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The questions should be prepared in advance and the answers to the questions should be recorded in writing. These answers may provide simple evidence that the learner has not written the work in question through the inability to answer questions on the substance of the work.

Managing Suspected Plagiarism

Work Submitted Formal Assessment

Please note for work that is submitted as part of the formal assessment of the qualification and linked to achievement and certification, the following rules apply:

If the learner has **not** signed the declaration of authentication, the incident can be dealt with under the **plagiarism procedure** and the College does not need to report the incident to the appropriate awarding organisation.

If plagiarism is detected or suspected by the centre and the declaration of authentication has been signed by the learner, the case must be reported to the relevant awarding organisation as **malpractice**.

Stage 1

Whoever suspects that a learner has committed an act of plagiarism should contact the relevant Head of Department.

The Head of Department will then carry out an initial interview with the learner.

If the learner maintains that he/she has not engaged in an act of plagiarism, then in conjunction with his/her teacher, the Head of Department may require the following:

- The learner to participate in oral questioning on the work where plagiarism is suspected.
- The learner's work being submitted to an electronic plagiarism detection tool administrated by the Head of Department.
- Other as suggested by the awarding body.

Stage 2

If, as a result of investigation, the Head of Department is satisfied that on the balance of probabilities the learner has committed an act of plagiarism, then the Head of Quality/Assistant Principal Quality shall consider whether the plagiarism constitutes a minor, intermediate or major act of plagiarism and apply an appropriate sanction.

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This procedure will link to the Learner Relationship Management procedure. Any awarding body sanctions will supersede those outlined below.

Possible Outcomes

Minor acts of plagiarism can be dealt with by the Head of Department and are considered to be:
- Sloppy referencing.
- Mixing up references.
- Changing a few words from a copied passage of work and passing it off as original work.

Plagiarism	Sanction
The amount of plagiarism does not exceed 10% of the total assignment:	Discussion with the Head of Department, course tutor and/or tutor and learner. Learner resubmits plagiarised work for full marks and no formal record is kept. This should be recorded as a Notice of Concern
The learner has committed a previous act(s) of plagiarism, or the plagiarism exceeds 10% of the total assignment.	Discussion with Head of Department, course tutor and/or tutor and learner. Learner resubmits plagiarised work for full marks with a record being kept. OR Resubmission of work for full marks using either a different task or new work. OR Re-marking of the original plagiarised work with the plagiarised section removed and the marks reflecting the remaining work. This should be recorded as a First Behaviour Warning
The learner has committed numerous previous plagiarism offences over the period of their course of study.	Resubmission of new work for a reduced mark. OR Resubmission of new work for a pass grade only. OR Zero marks/fail grade for the piece of work with no resubmission.

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	This should be recorded as a First Behaviour Warning.

Although these offences may be described as minor, if an assignment has a significant percentage of this type of plagiarism, then the sanction given to the learner should reflect this.

Intermediate acts of plagiarism can be dealt with by the Head of Department and are considered to be:

- Two learners on the same course copying from each other.
- A learner copying from a past learner on the same course.
- Verbatim copying from a source(s) without acknowledgement i.e. cutting and pasting from the Internet.
- Using AI and poorly referencing usage.

As with minor acts of plagiarism, the sanction given to the learner within this category may vary taking into account the percentage of copying involved. A learner who has copied a paragraph or two should not receive the same sanction as a learner who has copied the whole or a significant amount of work from another learner or from the Internet.

Plagiarism	Sanction
The total amount of plagiarism does not exceed 10% of the total assignment, or the plagiarism advisor accepts that that there are mitigating circumstances in relation to a particular learner.	Discussion with Head of Department, course tutor and/or tutor and learner. Learner resubmits plagiarised work for full marks with a record being kept. OR Resubmission of work for full marks using either a different task or new work. OR Re-marking of the original plagiarised work with the plagiarised section removed and the marks reflecting the remaining work. This should be recorded as a First Behaviour Warning
The learner has committed a previous act(s) of plagiarism, or the plagiarism exceeds 10% of the total assignment.	Resubmission of new work for a reduced mark. OR Resubmission of new work for a pass grade only. OR

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	Zero marks/fail grade for the piece of work with no resubmission. This should be recorded as a Final Behaviour Warning
The learner has been found guilty of numerous previous plagiarism offences over the period of their course of study.	Failure of the whole unit (where applicable). OR Failure of the academic programme for that academic year.

Major acts of plagiarism are dealt with by the Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching and Learning, and are considered to be:

- Recycling of assignments from essay banks on the Internet (whether paid for or not)
- Purchasing 'custom-made assignments' from an Internet site or getting others (including parents) to write the assignment.
- 'Stealing' an assignment from another learner without permission.
- Using AI to generate the work and not referencing.

Plagiarism	Sanction
The Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching and Learning is satisfied that the learner has established mitigating circumstances in relation to this plagiarism.	Resubmission of new work for a reduced mark. OR Resubmission of new work for a pass grade only. OR Zero marks/fail grade for the piece of work with no resubmission. This should be recorded as a Final Behaviour Warning
There are no mitigating circumstances.	Failure of the whole unit (where applicable). OR Failure of the academic programme for that academic year. OR Permanent removal from the academic programme and/or college.

Note: With sanctions 1 and 2 the learner will be required to undertake verbal questioning if the plagiarised section includes a key part of an assessment criteria, in order to ensure that they have a full understanding.

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Stage 3 - Appeals

Appeals against the decision made by the Head of Department or Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching and Learning, will be subject to the normal college appeals procedures in relation to learner discipline.

Mitigation

Mitigating circumstances are circumstances presented by the learner which may have contributed in some way to the learner's behaviour. These circumstances do not acquit the learner but allow the reduction of the disciplinary sanction applied. Mitigating circumstances may include things such as ill health, family problems, work problems etc. The list is not exhaustive and the investigating manager may consider any factors he/she considers pertinent in relation to a particular case.

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Approved by: Quality Standards Board	**Executive Lead:** Vice Principal, Learner Journey and Quality
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