PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION POLICY

Date Approved:	4 January 2023
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Policy Category:	Academic
Policy Owner:	National Training Manager

1. Context, Purpose & Key Principles

SEDA Group Pty Ltd ("SEDA") is committed to academic integrity, honesty, and high standards of ethical behaviour. Therefore, plagiarism, cheating or collusion (referred to as academic dishonesty) in any form is unacceptable and allegations of such will be treated seriously by the College in alignment with the Student Code of Conduct.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all training and assessment, within each training product on SEDA's scope of delivery as Registered Training Organisation (RTO). The policy applies to training products delivered by SEDA and third parties that deliver on behalf of SEDA through Auspice agreements (SEDA Colleges).

- Student Services/Student Support
- All Trainers and Assessors
- All VET and VETiS students

3. Policy Principles

Student Integrity Requirements

SEDA will make information available to all students and staff in relation to:

- the accepted referencing style (Harvard Referencing)
- what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it
- all policies and procedures relevant to student integrity and academic misconduct
- the process for submitting assessments using plagiarism detection software (where appropriate)
- where to seek further advice or support in relation to any of the above.

4. Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty includes cheating and collusion. Refer to the definitions at the end of this policy.

5. SEDA Responsibilities

To foster academic integrity and sustaining an ethical culture, SEDA will:

- provide students with formal opportunities to learn about plagiarism, cheating and collusion via mechanisms such as - orientation processes, feedback on work submitted, and other relevant workshops or learning tools put in place by SEDA.
- make available on the website clearly written policies, procedures and guidelines aimed at informing students of their rights and responsibilities with regard to plagiarism, cheating and collusion, and aiming to guide them on ways to avoid academic dishonesty and plagiarism.
- ensure that staff adhere to this policy and the associated policies and procedures when taking action in relation to matters of academic dishonesty or plagiarism.
- ensure that staff are aware of and can direct students to the ***Student Code of Conduct***
- ensure students are provided with guidance and feedback regarding referencing when necessary, as part of the assessment process
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that students, particularly commencing students, are aware of what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism, the policy and procedures that apply, and the repercussions that may occur.

6. Student Responsibilities

In line with the values of the Student Code of Conduct, students are expected to:

- make use of the resources provided by SEDA to educate themselves on their rights and responsibilities to maintain academic integrity.
- abide by the Harvard Referencing Guide in all assessments where referencing is required.
- avoid placing themselves in situations that could be construed as academic dishonesty or plagiarism in accordance with this policy.

Collaborative & Independent Learning

Unless collaboration/group work is specified in the assessment criteria, students will undertake and complete assessment work independently.

Areas of Study (AoS) that require group work expect legitimate collaborative learning to take place. Any specific collaborative arrangements will be specified in the assessment information available for the AoS on the Learning Management System – MySEDA VET.

Detection of Plagiarism

SEDA uses plagiarism detection software (Turnitin©) as one way of identifying instances of plagiarism.

This software is used for submission of assessment in VET Diploma courses at SEDA. It analyses the content of assessment items and generates an Originality Report that measures the originality of the material in relation to previously submitted assignments and published material, including Internet sources.

Students and staff will have access to the Turnitin Originality Report for each assessment item where Turnitin is in use. Students may also choose to submit a draft of their assessment via Turnitin as a means of checking their work for originality prior to final submission.

Staff may become aware of potential instances of plagiarism by means other than Turnitin including but not limited to, comparisons with other students' work, comparisons with published or non-published work not identified by Turnitin.

In instances where Turnitin returns a similarity score of 20% or more, the Trainer & Assessor for that area of study will be required to investigate the Turnitin report and determine whether the score is reflective of plagiarism or any other academic dishonesty, and if so, to report the matter to their respective Program Manager which may result in an allegation of plagiarism.

Similarly, if a Trainer & Assessor identifies potential forms of plagiarism outside of the Turnitin software, the same reporting lines will be followed. A Turnitin similarity score of >20% is not required to substantiate an allegation of plagiarism, but only serves as a threshold to trigger investigation.

Plagiarism, as defined in the last section of this policy, may be identified regardless of the Turnitin score.

For complete information regarding the handling of incidences of academic misconduct, please refer to the *Student Misconduct Policy.*

Responsibilities on Receipt of Plagiarism Allegation

On receipt of an allegation of plagiarism, it is the responsibility of the Program Manager or equivalent to review any evidence of plagiarism including any past incidence of plagiarism or academic dishonesty that may be on the student record. The Program Manager or equivalent will then discuss the matter with the Trainer & Assessor involved and decide as to whether it is an instance of negligent plagiarism or dishonest plagiarism (refer to definitions in this policy).

Instances of negligent plagiarism will be dealt with directly by the Trainer & Assessor.

The Trainer & Assessor / Program Manager or equivalent will record details of the incident and all communications on the student record, and it will be considered as a warning.

Instances of dishonest plagiarism will be referred by the Program Manager or equivalent to the National Training Manager via entry of the details of the allegation into the student record.

The relevant supporting evidence will also be attached to the student record. It is the responsibility of the National Training Manager or equivalent to formally contact the student and make them aware of the allegation of plagiarism.

Detection and Reporting of Academic Dishonesty

As with plagiarism, any other forms of academic dishonesty are treated seriously by SEDA. Academic dishonesty is defined in the definitions section of this policy.

If a staff member becomes aware of a potential incidence of academic dishonesty, they should report the matter to their respective Trainer & Assessor / Program Manager or equivalent who then has the responsibility to complete the necessary communication in the student record within the Student Management System (VETtrak) and submit it to the National Training Manager or equivalent for further action, attaching all supporting evidence.

Records of Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Records of alleged plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be maintained on the student's record. The record must include any warnings, communications, and the outcomes (if any) of an allegation of plagiarism or academic dishonesty including any documentary evidence. Trainer & Assessors, the Program Manager or equivalent and the National Training Manager must have access to this information when considering any subsequent allegations. Responsibility for updating the student record rests with the staff member who is handling the respective portion of the allegation. For instance, a Trainer & Assessor will record any communications and actions that occur within the Student Support Feedback located on MySEDA which is flagged directly with Student Support Coordinators (VET) either prior or after forwarding the matter to the Program Manager or equivalent.

Definitions

Academic Dishonesty - seeking to obtain or obtaining academic advantage by dishonest or unfair means or knowingly assisting another student to do so. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not restricted to:

- The act of plagiarism or assisting another student to commit plagiarism.
- The act of cheating (e.g., copying the work of another student)
- The act of collusion (particularly in a work-based learning environment)
- Allowing one's work to be copied, utilised as a resource/ guide, or appropriated in some other form by another student.
- Submitting, as a new work, an assessment piece that has been previously submitted and assessed for another area of study or award, or for the same area of study previously failed, without appropriate acknowledgment and/or prior permission of trainer/assessor.
- Using experimental results or data obtained or gathered by another person without appropriate acknowledgement of the other person's contribution.
- Fabricating or falsifying information or data
- Failing to give accurate acknowledgement to other collaborators' contributions to an assessment piece.
- Tampering or attempting to tamper with assessment items, grades, or class records.
- Discussing practical workplace assessments already undertaken with another student, prior to them undertaking the same assessment

Collaboration - the legitimate joint work by two or more students in the completion of a project, such as an assignment. In certain circumstances, trainers may permit collaboration on all or part of an assessment piece for the purpose of facilitating peer learning and inquiry.

Plagiarism - the intentional or unintentional copying or presentation of any part of another person's ideas, words, or work without acknowledgement for the purpose of presenting the other person's work as one's own work. It is a subset of academic dishonesty and a form of misconduct.

Negligent Plagiarism means innocently or carelessly presenting another person's work as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement of the source. It may be due to failure to follow appropriate referencing practices and is often a result of a student's fear of paraphrasing or ignorance of policies and procedures.

Dishonest Plagiarism means knowingly presenting another person's work as one's own work without appropriate acknowledgement of the source. It may include instances where substantial portions of work have been copied from the work of another or from other sources including the internet and in a manner that cannot be explained as negligent plagiarism (this includes if the student already has an instance of negligent plagiarism on their record). It may also include instances where a student has engaged another person to produce the work and has claimed it as their own.

Possible forms of Plagiarism include:

- **Collusion** occurs when students use other students' work without adequately crediting the authors. It means submitting the work of someone else and calling it one's own, with full knowledge and consent of the other person who has supplied the work, 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 boundary between what the lecturer considers acceptable group work and collusion.
- **Ghost writing** occurs when an assignment is purposely written by another person and represented by the student as her or his own work.
- **Incorrect referencing** occurs 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.
- **Purloining** occurs when material is copied from another student's assignment or work without that person's knowledge. It also refers to the use by staff of another's work without that person's permission.
- **Resubmission of material** which has been previously submitted for another assessment.