Plagiarism, Cheating and Collusion Policy

1. Purpose and Legislative Background

As required Under Part 1, Division 2, Standards 1.3 and 1.4 of RTOs 2025, Winslow College implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning):

- complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course.
- is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table as below.

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

Table: Rules of evidence

Validity	Assessment evidence is adequate, such that the assessor can be reasonably assured that the VET student possesses the skills and knowledge described in the training product;
Sufficiency	The quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables the assessor to make an informed judgement of the VET student's competency in the skills and knowledge described in the training product;
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that a VET student's assessment evidence is the original and genuine work of that VET student; and
Currency	The assessment evidence presented to the assessor documents and demonstrates the VET student's current skills and knowledge.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Winslow College.

3. Policy

Winslow 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 Winslow College standards of academic behaviour. 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 plagiarize.

Academic integrity

One of the core functions of Winslow College is to develop students' 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.

Students can support academic integrity by:

- acknowledging where the information they use comes from, clearly citing or referencing the source
- sitting their own exams and submitting your own work
- accurately reporting research findings and abiding by research policies
- using information appropriately, according to copyright and privacy laws
- acting ethically or doing the 'right thing', even when they are facing difficulties.

If students are having problems that could affect their academic performance, they should speak to their trainer or the Academic Coordinator.

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

What is cheating?

Cheating is defined as "a form of deceit to gain an advantage for the cheat." At Winslow College, cheating is usually related to taking unauthorized material into assessments. Winslow College Trainers have a responsibility to explain expectations related to any assessment, what constitutes cheating, and to promote a climate of honesty in students.

- writing 'cheat notes' on your body or materials you take into the exam room
- attempting to copy from other students
- communicating with other students or people outside the exam venue while the exam is in progress
- using electronic devices to access information related to the exam while it is in progress
- bringing prohibited items, such as unapproved calculators or textbooks into exams.

What is contract cheating and impersonation?

Contract cheating is a type of illegal commercial cheating. It involves getting someone else to complete part or all of your work and then submitting the work as if you had completed it yourself. This can include asking someone else to sit an exam for you or having them write an essay, report or some other kind of assignment, which is sometimes referred to as 'ghost-writing'.

Actions that support illegal contract cheating services are also considered breaches of academic integrity. This includes students uploading teaching materials such as practice exams, lecture slides and assignment questions to 'study notes'.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the act of misrepresenting as one's 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.

What is collusion?

Collusion involves engaging in **illegitimate cooperation** with one or more other students to complete assessable work. This is different to working on group assignments that are set by your teachers. Examples of illegitimate cooperation include working with a friend or group of friends to write an essay or report that is meant to be an individual piece of work. It can also include sharing quiz or test questions and answers with other students, as well as written assignments like reports and essays. Illegitimate cooperation can unfairly advantage a student or group of students over others. Students should also never share their work with others as there is a risk the person you share it with could upload it to an illegal commercial cheating service or circulate it to others.

Referencing

Referencing demonstrates that the student has read the issued material or has undertaken their 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 the 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 acknowledgement 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 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 Winslow 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 student's work. This information is:

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

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 the 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 waterholes, swamps, and creeks (accepted folklore)

Dealing with Plagiarism

Where there is a reasonable suspicion regarding the authenticity of a student’s assessment submission, Winslow College trainers/assessors may use approved plagiarism detection software or other appropriate academic integrity tools to review the submitted work. This process is used to support assessment decisions and verify the authenticity of evidence in accordance with the Rules of Evidence. Any findings identified through such tools will be reviewed by the trainer/assessor and discussed with the student where necessary before any formal action is taken.

In the case of suspected plagiarism, the trainer/assessor will report the incident to the RTO Manager (RTOM). The RTO Manager, 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 RTO Manager 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 RTO Manager 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 in.

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

4. Management Action & Responsibility

The policy must be approved by the CEO before it takes effect.

Trainers/Assessors are responsible for applying academic integrity checks, including the use of approved plagiarism detection tools where required.