

## LEARNING - POLICIES & PROCEDURES

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Policy Title      | <b>Academic Misconduct Policy &amp; Procedure</b> |
| Date              | June 2024   |
| Review Date       | June 2026   |
| Authority         | Head of Learning                                  |
| Responsibility    | Compliance Manager                                |
| Standards (SRTOs) | Clause 1.8  |

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline ASFA’s approach to academic misconduct which includes, but is not limited to:

- **Plagiarism** which is the presentation of the work of others as his/her own.
- **Cheating** which is defined as fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an assessment activity or task.
- **Collusion** which involves a learner inciting, assisting, facilitating, concealing or being involved in plagiarism, cheating or other academic misconduct by others.

Allegations of academic misconduct are regarded very seriously by ASFA and where proven, will be penalised accordingly. This policy and procedure ensures compliance with Standard 1 of the Standards for RTOs 2015.

### **SCOPE:**

This policy and procedure applies to all ASFA students enrolled in courses (including qualifications and workshops) or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) products with ASFA.

### **POLICY:**

#### **Plagiarism, Cheating and Collusion**

- ASFA has a zero tolerance policy towards plagiarism, cheating or collusion.
- Examples of plagiarism, cheating or collusion may include but are not limited to:
  - Copying and pasting directly from the course material, Internet and/or other external sources and presenting it as a student’s own work.
  - Acquiring or attempting to acquire, possessing or distributing assessment materials or information without the approval of the trainer or ASFA staff.
  - Logging in as another student or submitting work under the name of another student.
  - All forms of “Contract cheating” (where a student arranges for a third party to partially or fully write their assessment for them and submits it as their own work)
  - All instances of collusion (the submission of identical answers to any assessment question or task with another person, or instances where a student has plagiarised another student’s assignment with or without that person’s knowledge)
  - Submitting assessment material that has already been submitted by another student.

- Students must NOT copy the work of others and all questions must be answered in a student's own words.
- Students must appropriately reference any material from the internet and other external sources.
- When a student submits an assessment, they will be required to sign a declaration that the work provided is their own and that they have not plagiarised, cheated or colluded.

### **Referencing**

- Whilst it is not essential for students to use external sources in assessment tasks, if a student uses information or quotes text from another source in an assessment they must provide a reference for where the text or information came from.
- ASFA asks students to use Harvard referencing style when they need to acknowledge sources. To reference in short answer questions, students should place a citation next to the quote or sourced information and list the source/s directly below.
- Students will not be penalised for inconsistency in referencing style. A 'Not Yet Competent' result will only be applied if plagiarism is evident.

### **Collaboration**

- Students may study as a group and collaborate on assessment tasks; however, each student is still expected to answer the questions in their own words.
- It is expected that if collaboration is taking place that students conduct themselves in a manner that does not result in them inadvertently plagiarising, colluding or encouraging others to do the same.
- Whilst collaboration is acceptable, collusion (the submission of identical answers to any assessment question or task) is not acceptable.
- Students must not loan their assessment to another student for any reason – if another student plagiarises their assessment (even without their knowledge), both students will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Academic Misconduct Investigation and Disciplinary Action**

- Any student/s suspected of academic misconduct will be investigated.
- Students will be contacted as part of the investigation and given a chance to respond to any allegations of plagiarism, cheating or collusion.
- Students under investigation for allegations of plagiarism, cheating or collusion will remain enrolled in their course while the investigation is taking place. Assessments will not be marked, or certificates issued while the investigation is underway.
- Following the review of investigation outcomes, any student found to have plagiarised, cheated or colluded will be subject to a penalty dependent on the severity of the conduct and may include one or more of the following:
  - Their assessment attempt will be marked as "not yet competent," and the students involved will be required to re-submit with no further attempts available.
  - Have their overall course result(s) recorded as 'Not Yet Competent' and be required to pay the full course fee should they wish to re-enrol.
  - Be withdrawn from the course and ineligible to re-enrol.
- Where a student has repeated incidents of academic misconduct, they will be withdrawn from the course and be ineligible to re-enrol in the future.
- Students will be informed of any decision following an investigation and review in writing via email within 5 working days.
- No refund of fees will be possible if a student is found to have plagiarised, cheated or colluded and therefore in breach of this *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure*.
- If a student wishes to appeal the decision of an investigation and subsequent review, they can do so by following ASFA's *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

## Records of Academic Misconduct

- ASFA will securely store records of all Academic Misconduct cases within the appropriate secure folder in SharePoint.

## PROCEDURE

- Where a trainer/assessor/student advisor believes there to be an incident of academic misconduct involving plagiarism, cheating, and/or collusion, they should report this via email to the Compliance Manager along with reasons for the allegation. Reasons may include:
  - similarity between student responses
  - use of un-referenced source materials where the source can be identified
  - copying of other students work
  - copying of material from other sources (including the internet, course material or similar)
  - unusual behaviour within a student's work suggesting that a student has engaged in plagiarism
  - where there may be unusual behaviour suggesting a student has engaged in contract cheating or collusion (e.g. letting another student log in as themselves or deliberately using an older version of a written assignment).
- Upon receiving the allegation, the matter is to be investigated to ensure all relevant information is available and it is accurate and complete.
- The investigation will include:
  - reviewing assessments submitted
  - reviewing previous examples of the student's work (where applicable)
  - notifying the student and asking them to respond to the allegation and to provide an explanation.
  - reviewing students access to all ASFA material.
- Further details from the student/s, their employer (if they have paid for their training) or other involved parties may be requested during this stage. This may be in writing, over the phone, or face-to-face.
- Students will remain "Enrolled" while the allegations are being investigated.
- A written response will be provided to the student/s outlining:
  - the decisions made on the academic misconduct case, with reasons for the decisions made
  - action(s) that will be taken by ASFA / action(s) required by the student
  - the student/s right to access the appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the decision as per ASFA's *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.
- The decision will be recorded within the student/s record in ASFA's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
- A copy of the Academic Misconduct case and supporting documents will be saved within the appropriate folder.