

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is attempting to pass off other people's work and ideas as your own and can include:

- Copying from another learner.
- Copying from books or the internet.
- Paraphrasing.
- Subcontracting the work to someone else.
- Submitting the same piece of work for two different purposes.

Why is plagiarism wrong?

- It is fundamentally dishonest.
- Learners who commit plagiarism are seeking an unfair advantage over other learners.
- Learners who commit plagiarism are devaluing the value of the certification they seek.

What are the consequences of plagiarism?

- Learners who commit plagiarism learn far less than those who do not.
- Assessment procedures are compromised if the work submitted is not the learners own.
- It may result in legal action due to infringement of copyright laws.
- It may be penalised by failure in one or more components of a course.

What we do to help minimise the risk of plagiarism?

- Develop clear policies and procedures concerning plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct.
- Explain what is meant by 'plagiarism'.
- While not expected, it is advisable to acknowledge the sources of your information and to acknowledge any direct quotes you use in your assignments.

How we identify plagiarism?

We check learners work for:

- The use of unfamiliar words.
- Grammar and syntax of a standard far higher than that demonstrated previously.
- The use of familiar texts, but without appropriate referencing.

- If plagiarism is suspected, we can type a few selected phrases into a search engine such as Google.
- Any concerns will be shared with colleagues: if everyone has the same suspicions about a particular learner, it would seem appropriate to apply rigorous checks to all of his or her work.

Plagiarism procedures for investigation and considerations of allegations

- It is the role of the Blackford centre to consider all cases of suspected plagiarism identified in work submitted for assessment.
- Where we suspect plagiarism, we will gather the necessary learner evidence (original source that may have been used inappropriately) and review this for evidence of plagiarism.
- If after initial investigation we determine that there is no case to answer, we may dismiss the case.


If there is evidence of plagiarism we will write to the learner, presenting the evidence and provide them with an opportunity to make a written response to the allegation(s) of plagiarism.

Information relating to any mitigating circumstances should wherever possible be supported by documentary evidence. A deadline will be set for the submission of the written response which shall not be fewer than five working days from the date of notification of this request.

- When writing to the learner to present him/her with evidence, we may require the learner, in addition to providing a written submission, to take part in a telephone call to discuss matters relating to the allegations. The learner shall be given at least five working days written notice of a phone call.

If having been served due notice, a learner does not submit a written response to the allegations/take part in a telephone call, the Blackford centre may proceed to determine an outcome to the case without offering any further opportunity to the learner to make representations.

- Having reviewed the evidence and the response received from the learner, we shall determine one of the following regarding the allegation:
 - a) That there is no case to answer and dismiss the case.
 - b) That plagiarism is not proved, but that there is evidence of poor academic practice, the learner should be told how to avoid plagiarism in the future.

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- c) There is evidence of plagiarism and impose a penalty as permitted under these regulations.

We shall notify the learner concerned of the outcome of the case, including reasons for the judgement, normally no more than **10 working days** following the deadline for the learner's written response.

Two categories of plagiarism have been identified and a penalty will be applied for each of these. A lesser category of poor academic practice is also recognised, which will not attract a penalty.

Category	Characteristics	Action
Poor academic practice (PAP) This is not a disciplinary offence and does not count as a first offence.	PAP involves collaboration or poor citation where there is evidence that the learner did not appreciate the rules of academic writing or where the extent of copied material can be considered so slight that it does not justify disciplinary proceedings or a penalty. The work in question includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited amount of copied text expressing ideas or concepts taken from the work of others in the learners own words but without appropriate citation • A limited amount of copied text that has been subjected to minor linguistic changes with or without citation 	A formal warning but no penalty is issued. In cases of poor academic practice the mark will reflect the academic merit of the work; the mark is likely to be low. The learner may choose to resubmit their work if this is below a passing grade.
Category 1 Plagiarism and/or collusion	The work breaches the rules of academic integrity by presenting the material of others as the learner's original material. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blocks of copied text expressing ideas or concepts taken from the work of others without appropriate recognition in the work • Collaboration between learners as evidenced by structure, sources or short blocks of copied text or similar bibliographies. A short block of text may be as small as two continuing lines 	A fail grade is awarded for the assessment in which the plagiarism was found to occur. The learner is given one chance to re-submit the assessment when plagiarism is evident.
Category 2 Plagiarism	A category 2 offence will be committed if a category 1 penalty has been applied to a learners work on a	A fail grade should be awarded for the assessment in which the plagiarism was found to occur.



<i>and/or collusion – ‘repeat offence’</i>	previous occasion (i.e. a repeat offence).	The learner cannot re-submit this work, and must continue with the course. This fail grade will result in the learner only being able to complete the course, not pass. The learner can appeal this decision with the Blackford Centre directly, at which point investigative procedures will then be followed.
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