



POLICY NUMBER: **MAT026**

NAME: **Plagiarism, Cheating & Collusion Policy and Procedure**

APPROVED BY: RTO Director

Date of Next Review: 4 July 2025

POLICY

PURPOSE

Introduction

Medical Administration Training (MAT) is committed to fostering a learning environment built on honesty, ethics, and integrity. This policy aims to guide students in upholding these values throughout their studies and outlines the expectations for maintaining academic integrity. It clarifies the responsibilities of both staff and students, defines prohibited behaviours, and establishes procedures for addressing potential violations.

SCOPE

This policy encompasses all MAT team members, including the RTO Director, RTO Manager, Trainers/Assessors, and the Administration and Support team. Its reach extends to all enrolled students and, in the case of traineeships, employers involved with the RTO.

POLICY STATEMENT

MAT is dedicated to upholding academic integrity, honesty, and ethical standards. As such, any form of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, or collusion, is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

To cultivate a culture of accountability among learners, MAT will:

- Offer opportunities for learners to understand plagiarism, cheating, and collusion.
- Provide clear guidance and feedback to learners during assessment processes regarding academic misconduct.
- Ensure that staff members adhere to this policy when investigating and addressing incidents of plagiarism, cheating, or collusion.

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY?

Academic dishonesty involves seeking or gaining an unfair advantage through deceptive means, either individually or by assisting others. This includes:

- **Plagiarism:** Using someone else's ideas, words, or work without proper citation, presenting it as your own. Plagiarism can be categorised as negligent, stemming from carelessness in acknowledging sources, or dishonest, involving knowingly presenting another's work as your own.

- **Cheating:** Utilising unauthorised materials or assistance during assessments, including the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate assessment responses.
- **Collusion:** Collaborating on assignments without proper authorisation or submitting identical or similar work as individual contributions.

Examples of academic dishonesty include:

- Copying and pasting text directly from external websites or other sources not provided by Medical Administration Training.
- Sharing assessment questions or answers with other students.
- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, to answer assessment questions.
- Submitting work completed by another person or copying directly from another student.
- Submitting work purchased from online sources or ghostwriters.
- Engaging with illegal cheating services.

HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

To prevent plagiarism, follow these guidelines:

- Utilise the learner resources provided by Medical Administration Training whenever possible.
- Avoid using cheating services and ensure that all assessments are completed solely by yourself.
- Instead of directly copying information, contribute your unique perspective or interpretation to the content.
- When referencing external ideas or information, include proper citations to acknowledge the source.
- Do not submit assessments generated by Artificial Intelligence, as plagiarism checkers will easily detect such content.

HOW TO AVOID COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

To respect copyright laws, follow these guidelines:

Refrain from sharing, publishing, uploading, or reproducing any materials provided by Medical Administration Training or MAT Health Clinic, as this may infringe on copyright laws.

HOW TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID ILLEGAL CHEATING SERVICES

Illegal cheating services threaten academic integrity, and they expose students to criminals. Research shows operators of these illegal cheating services will threaten to inform the RTO or the student's future employer about a student's cheating unless the student pays them a large sum of money.

Australia has banned commercial cheating services and promotion of these services to students. Laws against commercial cheating services include criminal penalties such as fines of up to \$100,000 for operators. People who provide cheating services for free also face civil prosecution. These laws do not penalise students who use these services to engage in cheating but institutional discipline policies will continue to apply.

Illegal commercial cheating services can include websites and individuals or groups that market or provide cheating services to students.

Illegal cheating services – sometimes also called contract cheating services – sell students essays or assignments, or accept payment for someone to sit exams on a student's behalf.

Often, these services market themselves as offering 'study support'. Many of these illegal operators will ask students to upload previous work or material from their course to access the advertised 'support'.

Some of these illegal services market aggressively via social media, email and on campus. They can also find you through your social media posts. For example, a student may post on social media about an essay they are writing and then receive numerous 'bot' messages offering illegal commercial cheating services.

Avoiding illegal cheating services

Identifying illegal cheating services can sometimes be difficult but you should always avoid any service that:

- promises to help write or improve your essay or assignment or sit an exam on your behalf in exchange for money.
- offers unsolicited 'study support' via social media, email or on-campus advertising
- asks you to upload a previous example of your work, or materials from your course, in order to receive help
- offers to sell you study notes, exams or other assessment materials.

Students experiencing study difficulties should always speak with their tutor or course coordinator. They can help you access study support options and also protect your academic integrity.

Tip: Blocking unsolicited messages received via social media or email offering study support, essay writing or other contract cheating services can help you avoid illegal cheating services and maintain your academic integrity.

Be aware of the information you share on social media networks and consider your privacy settings. This may help you avoid being targeted by illegal cheating service operators.

Source: <https://www.tegsa.gov.au/students/understanding-academic-integrity/identifying-avoiding-and-reporting-illegal-cheating-services>

HOW TO CITE YOUR SOURCES

To properly cite your sources, follow these guidelines:

- If assessment responses are drawn directly from provided learning resources, citing sources is not required.
- However, if external sources are used, include the following details for each source:
 - Author(s): First and Last name.
 - Title: Book title, article title, website title, etc.
 - Publication date: Year of publication.
 - Website URL: For online sources.
 - Volume and issue number (if applicable): For journal articles.

- Note: Information obtained from AI sources will not be accepted.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Students are expected to:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and understand its expectations.
- Adhere to the outlined procedures regarding academic integrity.
- Proactively seek clarification from appropriate RTO staff if they encounter any uncertainties or have questions about this policy.
- Complete their work with independence and integrity, including:
 - Writing assessment responses in their own words.
 - Properly referencing any external sources used.

Responsibilities of Trainers and support staff

Trainers and support staff play an essential role in upholding academic integrity by:

- Providing students with opportunities to understand plagiarism, cheating, and collusion through methods such as orientation information, feedback on assessments, and clear assessment instructions.
- Ensuring that students are informed about MAT's policies and stance on academic misconduct.
- Educating learners on effective strategies to prevent plagiarism, cheating, and collusion.
- Maintaining constant vigilance to identify any potential instances of academic misconduct, including plagiarism.
- Employing various methods, such as comparing students' work and utilising plagiarism detection tools like Turnitin®, to detect plagiarism.
- Conducting thorough investigations into suspected cases of academic misconduct.
- Promptly report any suspected academic misconduct to the RTO Manager for further action.

Responsibilities of the RTO Manager:

The RTO Manager is responsible for:

- Investigating allegations of suspected academic misconduct.
- Determining consequences for a learner's training and enrolment if academic misconduct is confirmed.

RECORDS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Records of alleged plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be maintained on the student's record in the Student Management system (SMS). The record must include any warnings, communications and the outcomes (if any) of an allegation of plagiarism or academic dishonesty including any documentary evidence.

CONSEQUENCES OF PLAGIARISM, CHEATING AND COLLUSION:

Engaging in intentional plagiarism, cheating, or collusion constitutes deliberate acts of academic dishonesty. The consequences may include:

- A warning for plagiarism, requiring re-enrolment and repeat of studies for the relevant unit/module, with a competency conversation with a trainer as part of the re-assessment process.
- A \$50 re-submission fee per assessment after the second submission, if returned due to plagiarism or marked as not yet competent because of plagiarised work. Assessments will remain unmarked until the fee is paid.
- If plagiarism persists after a warning, enrolment may be cancelled without a refund.
- Suspension of learner enrolment in any course offered by the RTO for a period of two years.

REVIEW AND APPEALS

Students will have access to the [Complaints and Appeals](#) process in regard to decisions made under this policy.

PROCEDURE

This procedure details the steps involved in identifying and responding to allegations of plagiarism, cheating, and collusion.

Trainer and Assessor Responsibilities Regarding Suspected Academic Misconduct:

When a trainer suspects academic misconduct, they are expected to:

1. **Investigate their suspicions:** This involves gathering evidence to support their concerns, such as comparing student work to potential plagiarism sources, reviewing past performance, or consulting with colleagues or plagiarism detection tools.
2. **Document findings:** If the investigation confirms suspicions, the trainer should record the details in the student's file under the "comments" section of the Student Management System. This documentation should include a clear description of the suspected misconduct, specific details of the evidence collected, and dates and timestamps of relevant events.
3. **Report to RTO Manager:** The trainer should promptly inform the RTO Manager about the allegation of academic misconduct and provide them with a summary of their investigation and collected evidence.
4. **Maintain confidentiality:** The trainer must treat all information related to the allegation with sensitivity and discretion, avoiding discussions with unauthorised individuals.
5. **Ensure fairness and consistency:** Throughout the process, the trainer must follow established policies and procedures to guarantee a fair and unbiased outcome for both the student and the institution.

RTO Manager's Role in Addressing Plagiarism Allegations:

Upon receiving an allegation of plagiarism:

1. **Review the evidence:** This includes the submitted work, plagiarism detection reports, and any relevant student records, such as past instances of academic misconduct.

2. **Determine the nature of plagiarism:** Assess whether the plagiarism appears negligent (unintentional) or dishonest (intentional).
3. **Notification of Allegation:** If sufficient evidence of plagiarism is found, the student will be promptly notified of the allegation in writing. The notification will include details of the suspected plagiarism, the specific policy violated, and the potential consequences and provided with an opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing within five (5) business days.
4. **Decide on the course of action:** Based on their findings, choose the appropriate approach, which may involve:
 - **Dismissing the allegation:** If the evidence is insufficient or the plagiarism appears minor and unintentional.
 - **Issuing a warning:** For a first offence of negligent plagiarism.
 - **Initiating further investigation:** If the case involves potential dishonest plagiarism or requires additional information.
 - **Determine the course of action:** Based on the findings, select the suitable approach, which may include:
 1. Dismissing the allegation: If the evidence is insufficient or if the plagiarism seems minor and unintentional.
 2. Issuing a warning: For the first instance of negligent plagiarism.
 3. Initiating further investigation: In cases involving potential dishonest plagiarism or if additional information is needed.
 4. Implementing disciplinary action: This could entail restrictions on future assessments or enrolment, reassessment fees, or in severe cases, enrolment cancellation.

Collaboration:

- **Consult with the Trainer & Assessor:** Discuss the case and gather their insights into the student's performance and learning history.
- **Seek guidance from external resources:** If needed, consult with relevant authorities or plagiarism experts for support.

Confidentiality:

- **Maintain confidentiality:** Treat all information related to the allegation with sensitivity and discretion.
- **Ensure fair and consistent procedures:** Follow established policies and procedures to ensure a fair and unbiased outcome for all parties involved.

The student's responsibilities are:

The responsibilities of students regarding academic misconduct are as follows:

- Actively avoiding plagiarism in all academic work by understanding proper citation techniques, effective paraphrasing and summarising, and maintaining clear distinction between their own ideas and those of others.
- Ensuring timely response to allegations of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, cheating, or collusion, in accordance with policy requirements.
- Meeting with RTO advisors to discuss the incident and potential consequences.
- Being truthful and open in communication when responding to an allegation of plagiarism.
- Accepting the consequences of their actions and actively avoiding plagiarism, cheating, or collusion in the future if given the opportunity to continue with their course.



RELATED DOCUMENTATION

Name
Student Handbook
Refund & Cancellation Policy
Complaints and Appeals Policy

RELATED EXTERNAL REFERENCES

Name and Link
Australian Government Tertiary Education Quality Standards: https://www.teqsa.gov.au/students/understanding-academic-integrity/identifying-avoiding-and-reporting-illegal-cheating-services

RESPONSIBILITY

Policy administrator	RTO Manager
Approving Person	RTO Director

CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Review date	Approved by	Description of Modifications
1		A. McFillin	Original Document
2	23/02/2024	A. McFillin	Major wording changes