

POL-QA-06 Academic Integrity Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Ironwood Institute (Ironwood) follows a systematic approach to academic integrity, including plagiarism and collusion, in accordance with the student's rights and responsibilities as per our student handbooks.

SCOPE

Ironwood academic integrity policy applies to all assessment practices for all the courses within its scope of registration, and to any assessments conducted under the auspice of Ironwood through a partnering organisation.

DEFINITIONS

The words and expressions below are defined as follows:

Assessment means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.

Assessment system is a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensure assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment and the Rules of Evidence

Breach of academic integrity any form of plagiarism, collusion, copy pasting, or paying for assessments (contract cheating) which are not the student's own work or has not been properly referenced is defined as a breach of academic integrity.

Cheating includes engaging in dishonest practice or breaching the rules during an examination or submitting a piece of work written or answered for you by another person or which you have copied from another person; or completing an assessment task outside the conditions specified for the task.

Collusion is a form of cheating, and it occurs when a student presents work as their own but in fact it has been produced in whole or in part by other party. For example, giving or accepting assistance from a student in the production of an assessment task; or submitting work which is the same or substantially like another student's work for the same assessment task.

Contract cheating happens when a student commissions another party to produce academic work on their behalf, it can be paid or unpaid.

Plagiarism is where a student presents work for assessment that is not their own, without appropriate attribution or reference to the original source. It includes copy pasting, paraphrasing work without a reference, adopting the ideas or concepts of others without acknowledgement or reference to the original work.

POLICY STATEMENT

- a) Academic integrity is one of the key pillars of the assessment practices at Ironwood and it will be monitored in a systematic way.
 - a) Any breach of academic integrity will be taken seriously by Ironwood Management and may have an impact on the enrolment of the students involved in any of these practices.
 - b) Assessment practices conducted under Ironwood scope of registration meet the requirements as per the principles of assessment (SRTOs) in terms of fairness, flexibility, validity, and reliability.
 - c) This policy is publicly available from the Ironwood website.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

- a) All Trainers and Assessors are provided with adequate resources to monitor and detect academic dishonesty. This includes the use of software and ongoing support from management.
- b) All appointed and authorised Trainers and Assessors include academic integrity as part of their introductory presentations for each unit.
- c) Trainers and Assessors incorporate the principles of assessment including validity, reliability, flexibility, and fairness when conducting assessments.
- d) Trainers and Assessors apply the rules of evidence including validity, sufficiency, currency, and authenticity when conducting assessments.
- e) Assessment practices are to be conducted in an ethical and professional manner.
- f) Students are provided with information on academic integrity at orientation time prior to assessments being conducted.
- g) Due dates are clearly communicated, and extensions granted by the Trainer and Assessor when deemed necessary.
- h) Special considerations and reasonable adjustments are applied to assessments when necessary (e.g., students with special needs).
- i) The authenticity of submitted work is assessed by the Trainer and Assessor and if there is such event, penalties are enforced for academic misconduct.
- j) Re-submission of full assessments or assessment pieces is available when necessary.
- k) Appeal processes are in place for students who disagree with assessment outcomes.
- l) A breach of academic integrity, including plagiarism and collusion is a serious offence in Australia, some penalties apply which include but are not limited to an automatic failure of the unit, which may put the alleged parties' enrolment (or international student visa when applicable) in jeopardy.

Relevant principles of assessment

Assessments are conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment as prescribed by SRTOs.

Fairness	<p>The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>Where appropriate reasonable adjustments are applied by Ironwood to consider the individual learner's needs.</p> <p>Ironwood informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary</p>
Validity	Any assessment decision of Ironwood is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.

	<p>Validity requires:</p> <p>Assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirement covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance,</p> <p>Assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application,</p> <p>Assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations, and</p> <p>Judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessments requirements.</p>
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Relevant rules of evidence

Assessments are conducted ensuring compliance with the Rules of Evidence (ROE) as prescribed in the Standards for RTOs.

Validity	The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.

Academic integrity resources

- a) An assessment integrity checking software is used to identify similarity between work submitted by students and a database made of a repository containing one of the largest databases of all universities and online resources in Academia: Turnitin.
- b) All units delivered at Ironwood include at least one practical observation assessment of the student performing the tasks in front of the Trainer and Assessor. This is another way the resources are aligned with the academic integrity system as observations must be completed at a satisfactory level without cheating.

Assessor requirements

All assessments are undertaken by suitable qualified Trainers and Assessors who have been briefed about academic integrity and have received in-house training and granted access to similarity report tools to identify plagiarism in assessments: Turnitin.

Trainers and Assessors working on behalf of Ironwood

Trainers and Assessors conducting assessment on behalf of Ironwood Institute will:

- a) Ensure they have been briefed about academic integrity and have received in-house training and granted access to similarity report tools to identify plagiarism in assessments: Turnitin.
- b) assess and judge a student's skills and knowledge of competence against set standards, principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

Special considerations

- a) Plagiarism, cheating, contract cheating and collusion in assessment are expressly prohibited.
- b) Students cannot submit any piece of work for assessment that is not entirely their own work.
- c) Students cannot assist other Ironwood Institute students with assessed work.
- d) Students cannot accept assistance from other Ironwood Institute students with assessed work.
- e) Students cannot submit the same piece of work for assessment, as another student/student of Ironwood.
- f) All cases of plagiarism, cheating and collusion are treated as a serious matter and will be reviewed and treated on a case-by-case basis.
- g) Depending on severity and circumstances, penalties for a breach of academic integrity may include one or more of the following:
 - Verbal or written warning; and/or
 - Resubmission of a new assessment task; and/or
 - All parties receiving a “Not Yet Competent” result for the unit; and will have to re-enroll on the same unit and/or
 - Suspension or cancellation of the enrollment.
- h) Student records will be noted with all investigated and proven incidents.
- i) All incidents will be reviewed by the CEO of Ironwood Institute.
- j) Where a student appeals the decision, the Director of Academics will reassess the request and make a final decision. If the student deems the outcome to be unfair, they can appeal to a relevant independent body. Please refer to Ironwood complaints and appeals policy.
- k) All information and supporting statements provided as part of an application for reasonable adjustments in assessment will remain confidential.

APPEALS

Students have the right to appeal an assessment decision. (See Appeals Policy)

ACCESS AND EQUITY

Students have fair and equal rights to assessment. (See Access and Equity Policy)

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All completed assessment items for all students will be kept by Ironwood Institute for a minimum of six (6) months for domestic students and two (2) years for overseas students. All assessment outcomes will be recorded and kept for a period of 30 years. All documentation from Assessment practices are maintained in accordance with Records Management Policy. (See Records Management Policy)

MONITORING AND IMPROVEMENT

All Assessment practices are monitored by the Director of Academics at Ironwood and areas for improvement identified and acted upon. (See Continuous Improvement Policy).