



# Plagiarism, Cheating and Collusion Policy and Procedure

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## Purpose

This policy aims to minimise instances of student plagiarism, cheating and collusion by providing information on how to act honestly, ethically and with integrity for the duration of your studies with Absolute Medical Response (often referred to as academic integrity). This policy outlines staff and student responsibilities in maintaining academic integrity, and defines the grounds for investigating allegations of plagiarism, cheating or collusion which are all forms of student misconduct.

## Scope

- All Absolute Medical Response Students
- All Absolute Medical Response Trainers, Assessors and Lecturers
- All Absolute Medical Response Student Liaison Officers

## Policy Statement

Absolute Medical Response is committed to academic integrity, honesty and high standards of ethical behaviour. Therefore, plagiarism, cheating or collusion (referred to as academic dishonesty) in any form are unacceptable and allegations of such will be treated seriously by the College in alignment with the Student Code of Conduct. Consequences that may apply to students caught plagiarising, cheating or colluding are set out below.

## College Responsibilities

For the purpose of fostering academic integrity and sustaining an ethical culture, Absolute Medical Response will:

- Make available to all students the accepted referencing style
- Make available on the student dashboards clearly written policies, procedures and guidelines aimed at informing students of their rights and responsibilities with regard to plagiarism, cheating and collusion, and aiming to guide them on ways to avoid academic dishonesty and plagiarism
- Ensure that staff adhere to this policy and the associated policies and procedures when taking action in relation to matters of academic dishonesty or plagiarism
- Ensure that staff are aware of and can direct students to the Student Code of Conduct
- Ensure students are provided with guidance and feedback regarding referencing when necessary as part of the assessment process
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that students, particularly commencing students, are aware of what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism, the policy and procedures that apply, and the repercussions that may occur.

## Student Responsibilities

In line with the values of the Student Code of Conduct, students are expected to:

- Make use of the resources provided by the college to educate themselves on their rights and responsibilities to maintain academic integrity, including but not limited to the Student Handbook
- Abide by the APA Referencing Guide in all assessments where referencing is required
- Avoid placing themselves in situations that could be construed as academic dishonesty or plagiarism in accordance with this policy

## What is Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty?

According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, to "plagiarise" means:

- To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- To use (another's production) without crediting the source
- To commit literary theft
- To present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

P.Org (2018). What is plagiarism? Retrieved April 4, 2018 from <https://www.plagiarism.org/article/what-is-plagiarism>

Academic dishonesty involves any attempt to gain academic advantage by doing something misleading or unfair. Academic dishonesty may include, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism
- Resubmitting work that has already been assessed and for which you have already received feedback
- Fabricating information, such as inventing sources of data, evidence or ideas by including citations to publications that are incorrect or do not exist
- Collusion or illegitimate cooperation with one or more students in the completion of assessable work
- Exam Cheating, such as writing cheat notes on your arms/legs/hands and/or taking prohibited materials into the exam room or using electronic devices
- Contract cheating where another person completes part or all of your work and then the student submits the work as their own

## Detection of Plagiarism

Absolute Medical Response uses plagiarism detection software (Quetext<sup>®</sup>) as one way of identifying instances of plagiarism. This software is used for marking of online theory assessments. It analyses the content of assessment items and generates an originality report that measures the originality of the material in relation to previously submitted assignments and published material, including Internet sources.

Absolute Medical Response trainers/assessors will have access to Quetext for each assessment item submitted by students. Staff may become aware of potential instances of plagiarism by means other than Quetext, including but not limited to, comparisons with other students' work and comparisons with published or non-published work not identified by Quetext.

In instances where Quetext returns a similarity score of 20% or more, the Trainer and Assessor for that unit of study will be required to investigate the Quetext report and determine whether the score is reflective of plagiarism or any other academic dishonesty, and if so, to report the matter to the National Training and Education Manager. This may result in an allegation of plagiarism being put forward to the student. Similarly, if a Trainer and Assessor identifies potential forms of plagiarism outside of the Quetext software, the same reporting lines will be followed

A Quetext similarity score of >20% is not required to substantiate an allegation of plagiarism, but only serves as a threshold to trigger investigation. Plagiarism, as defined in the last section of this policy, may be identified regardless of the Quetext score.

## Responsibilities on Receipt of Plagiarism Allegation

On receipt of an allegation of plagiarism, it is the responsibility of the Trainer and Assessor involved in the marking of the assessment and National Training and Education Manager to review any evidence of plagiarism including any past incidence of plagiarism or academic dishonesty that may be on the student record.

The Trainer and Assessor and the National Training and Education Manager will then make a decision as to whether it is an instance of negligent plagiarism or dishonest plagiarism. *Negligent plagiarism refers to innocently or carelessly presenting another person's work as one's own without appropriate acknowledge of the source, while dishonest plagiarism refers to knowingly presenting another person's work as one's own work without appropriate acknowledgement of the source.*

- Instances of negligent plagiarism will be dealt with directly by the Trainer and Assessor under the advice from the National Training and Education Manager. The details of the incident and all communications will be recorded on the student record and it will be considered as a warning.
- Instances of dishonest plagiarism will be referred by the Trainer and Assessor to the National Training and Education Manager. The relevant supporting evidence will also be presented. It is then the responsibility of the National Training and Educational Manager to formally contact the student via written and verbal means to make them aware of the allegation of plagiarism and to follow the relevant procedures outlined below.

## Detection and Reporting of Academic Dishonesty

As with plagiarism, any other forms of academic dishonesty are treated seriously by Absolute Medical Response.

If a staff member becomes aware of a potential incidence of academic dishonesty, they should report the matter to the National Training and Education Manager immediately for further action, attaching all supporting evidence.

The information and supporting evidence will be recorded on the student record and the National Training and Education Manager must then investigate the allegations in accordance with the relevant procedures outlined below.

## Records of Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

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

Trainer and Assessors, Student Liaison Officers, the National Training and Education Manager, and the Director of Education must have access to this information when considering any subsequent allegations. Responsibility for updating the student record is the responsibility of the National Training and Education Manager.

## Addressing Allegations of Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Within 24 hours of receipt of the referral from the trainer and/or assessor, the National Training and Education Manager will review the supporting evidence and access the student's record to identify any previous incidences of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. A judgement about whether the matter is negligent or dishonest plagiarism will then be determined based around the evidence presented and the student's history. A definition of these terms can be found above in the 'Responsibilities on Receipt of Plagiarism Allegation' section.

If the trainer and/or assessor and the National Training and Education Manager determine that an allegation of plagiarism will be pursued, the trainer/assessor will advise the student in writing that they have failed the module and that they are required to resubmit the assessment questions that have been flagged as being plagiarised. The trainer and/or assessor will then unlock the student's module to allow the student to reattempt the questions.

The National Training and Education Manager will also advise the student in writing that they are in breach of Absolute Medical Response Policies and that the incident has been recorded on their file as a warning and that any further instances regarding plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be referred to the Director of Education.

Within two (2) working days the National Training and Education Manager will then follow up this written communication with a phone call to confirm the student's receipt of the email and to offer a meeting to discuss the matter and provide additional support. The National Training and Education Manager will document this phone call in the student record.

In most instances, the student will be required to resubmit their work. The student's first resubmission will be without penalty, however if the resubmitted work is once again identified as still containing plagiarised work, it will be considered a breach of student integrity and plagiarism.

Any further breach of student integrity and plagiarism will be escalated to the Director of Education, Dr Peter Mangles within twenty four (24) hours along with the supporting evidence and Quetext reports. The Director of Education will review the allegations and supporting evidence and will take one of the following actions within two (2) working days:

- Dismiss the allegations and/or
- Meet with the student in regard to the allegations

If a meeting is required by the Director of Education the possible outcomes that could result may include, but are not limited to:

- A mark of 'not yet competent' for the relevant unit of study
- A probationary enrolment for a period up to a maximum of 12 months, subject to the student's ongoing good behaviour
- Suspension of the student's enrolment from the College for a specified period of time, not exceeding twelve (12) months
- Cancellation of the student's enrolment in the course
- Withholding of results
- Exclusion of the student from the College permanently
- A combination of the above



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All of the above actions and communications with the student in regards to plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty will be recorded against the student's record.

## **Student Appeal**

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome determined by the National Training and Education Manager and/or the Director of Education, they must respond to the written notification of the outcome within 10 working days requesting an investigation by the next most senior officer within the relevant area.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the review, they must lodge a grievance in accordance with Complaints and Appeals Policy.

## **Related Policy Documents**

- Student Handbook
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure