

Royal Borough of Greenwich Apprenticeships^{PLUS}

Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Policy

Version control

Version number	Date	Comments
1.1	January 2021	Review
1.2	October 2022	Transfer to new template

The lead person for this plan/policy is *Caroline Banin-Taylor, Head of Direct Services to Schools*.

Contents

Section number	Title
1	Scope
2	Plagiarism
3	Collusion
4	Cheating
5	Continuous Improvement
	Appendix 1

1. Scope

This policy applies to Apprenticeships^{PLUS} as a centre and provider offering a range of qualifications and programmes, working with different examining bodies as a registered centre for examinations.

The policy provides definitions and examples of plagiarism, collusion, and cheating which may occur in connection with centres, providers or learners and describes the process for preventing, investigating and dealing with plagiarism, collusion, and cheating.

This policy applies to assignments submitted for apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications and programmes, whether regulated or unregulated and whether assessed by the centre or by an examining body. The policy also applies to examinations and online tests, as well as assignment tasks that are completed independently by the learner in their own time, and submitted for assessment via their e-portfolio.

2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which applies to assignments completed by learners independently. It is the substantial, unacknowledged incorporation into a learner's work of materials derived from published or unpublished work by another person.

Apprenticeships^{PLUS} take all incidents of plagiarism seriously, especially those incidents which are a determined and deliberate attempt by the learner to gain marks for an assignment without having done a substantial portion of the work themselves.

Published work includes books, articles and materials found on the internet while examples of unpublished work could be a piece of work previously submitted by another learner or work about to be submitted by another learner.

Some assignments require learners to work together at the planning stage, however group assessment is not allowed so the resulting assignments must be submitted individually, and it is essential that each is then ratified as being the learner's own work.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- Extracts from another person's work without using quotation marks and/or an acknowledgement of the source
- Summarising the work of another or using their ideas without an acknowledgement of the source

- Copying or using the work of another learner (past or present) with or without that person's knowledge or agreement
- Purchasing essays or downloading them from the internet to submit them as your own work

Preventing Plagiarism

To avoid the possibility that learners are unwittingly suspected of plagiarism, Apprenticeships^{PLUS} will take a number of steps:

- Plagiarism will be explained during programme induction and reinforced in assignment briefings and/or in tutorial support
- The centre will undertake formal identification of learners to avoid the possibility of a substitute. This ensures that the person eventually named on the certificate is the person who did the work
- Every learner will be required to make a formal declaration of authenticity (i.e., the work is their own) for each assessment. An example of a Statement of Confirmation of Authenticity is provided in [Appendix I](#)
- When using their e-portfolio to upload assignments and other work, students will need to tick a statement to confirm it is their own work

The following guidelines are also useful for learners:

- > The large majority of every assignment must be your original work. Substantial copying of course notes or other published or unpublished work is unacceptable as this does not demonstrate your knowledge, let alone your application. Even if acknowledged and properly referenced, excessive use of other people's work is unacceptable
- > If you use someone else's exact words in your work, they must be in quotation marks. Use quotations sparingly and only when you feel the author has expressed something so well and so concisely that the words cannot be improved
- > Even if you give your own explanation of somebody else's work without quoting word for-word, you must reference your source
- > When referencing a source, you must provide the name of the author, the date of their work that you have referred to and the page number where you got the quotation from immediately after the quotation (e.g., Hill, 2004, p. 42) and also provide full details of the reference in the bibliography

- > You must provide a bibliography - a list of books, articles and any other sources you have quoted - at the end of your assignments.

The Harvard system for referencing sources is well-established and you can find guidance on how to use it on the internet when making a reference to a book. If you need to use Harvard referencing for your work, you will receive training on how to do this from your trainer.

3. Collusion

Collusion is a form of plagiarism that involves unauthorised co-operation between at least two people with the intent to deliberately mislead or deceive. Collusion can take the following forms:

- Two or more learners conspiring to produce a piece work together with the intention that it is submitted as his/her own, individual work. Or with the intention of at least one learner submitting it as his/her own, individual work
- A learner submitting the work of another learner (with their consent) as his/her own, individual work. In such cases, both learners would be deemed to be guilty of collusion
- Although also an example of plagiarism, the submission of a piece of work that is not the learners own individual work that has been purchased from a third party. For example, from an essay or assignment writing service or by soliciting another individual to produce a piece or work on their behalf
- Unauthorised co-operation between a learner and a third party in the production of a piece of work that will be submitted as the learner's own work

Preventing collusion

It is acceptable to discuss ideas, talk about books, articles, online material, and strategies for example with other learners. However, it is not acceptable to help a fellow learner to produce work that will be submitted as their own and an individual piece of work.

- Learners should never lend their work to another learner under any circumstances as it may be copied or reproduced. This example would leave both learners vulnerable to an accusation of collusion
- Learners should leave themselves enough time to check their work thoroughly before submitting it for marking or evaluation. Keeping to strict deadlines will limit the temptation of colluding with another learner or third party or purchasing work with the intention of submitting it as their own
- Learners should make sure that if they use a shared or public computer that they protect their work by saving it to their own personal drive, USB or memory stick
- If a learner uses a shared or public printer to print hard copy versions of work, they should ensure that any work is collected promptly from the printer and that any additional copies are securely destroyed

4. Cheating

Cheating is an attempt to deceive assessors, examiners, and/or external verifiers and includes:

- Providing or receiving information about the content of an examination before it takes place, except when allowed (e.g., case study materials issued before an examination)
- Centres giving excessive help to a learner in writing an assignment, or writing any of it for them
- Impersonating or trying to impersonate a learner, or attempting to procure a third party to impersonate oneself
- Learners using books, notes, instruments, computer files or other materials or aids that are not permitted (usually relevant only to examinations and online tests)
- Assistance or the communication of information by one learner to another in an assessment where this is not permitted (usually relevant only to examinations and online tests)

- Copying or reading from the work of another learner or from another learner's books, notes, instruments, computer files or other materials or aids, unless expressly permitted
- Offering a bribe of any kind to an invigilator, examiner or other person connected with assessment
- Any attempt to tamper with assignment or examination scripts after they have been submitted by learners
- Fabricating or falsifying data or results by individual learners or groups of learners

Because of the nature of cheating, this mainly applies to examinations and online tests, however cheating may also involve a member of staff (e.g., tampering with assessment or examination scripts or results after learners have submitted them), which would be a case of centre malpractice.

Preventing cheating

Apprenticeships^{PLUS} will check the instructions examining bodies provides for assessments, tests or examinations and comply with them, especially regarding materials which can and cannot be used in the examination and invigilation arrangements. Apprenticeships^{PLUS} take all incidents of cheating seriously and learners and others connected with assessments must be made aware of the consequences of cheating.

Process - Plagiarism, collusion or cheating detected by the centre or provider

Apprenticeships^{PLUS} will conduct a formal internal investigation where:

- > a learner is suspected of plagiarism/collusion or has cheated by deliberately attempting to deceive and has not signed a formal declaration of authenticity for the work that has been submitted
- > plagiarism, collusion or cheating is detected in a learner's work where a formal declaration of authenticity has been signed but the work has not been submitted to the Assessment Service or externally verified, the Head of Centre, or delegated authority

The findings of this investigation will be submitted together with any supporting evidence to the Examining Body's Regulation and Quality Improvement Manager within 20 working days of the incident being identified. The investigation report and evidence will be reviewed by the examining body and the outcome communicated to the centre and other relevant parties no more than 10 working days after receipt of the final investigation report.

The report and any actions arising will be communicated to the Quality and Compliance Manager (QCM) and the External Verifier.

Process - Plagiarism, collusion or cheating detected by The Centre, or reported by others

Plagiarism, collusion, or cheating may be detected in a number of ways including:

- > Identification by an Apprenticeships^{PLUS} External Verifier, Quality and Compliance Manager (QCM), or another member of Apprenticeships^{PLUS} staff through quality assurance processes or invigilating examinations held at the centre
- > Verbal or written allegations that are reported openly or anonymously by a learner, third party, or other interested party to a centre/provider or Apprenticeships^{PLUS}. This could be by an individual who has been made aware by word of mouth through a third party that something has happened or is happening that has not been authorised and is inappropriate, or something they have identified or witnessed personally

Apprenticeships^{PLUS} will report all suspected or alleged cases of plagiarism, collusion or cheating to the Examining Body's Regulation and Quality Improvement Manager (RQIM). This will include details of the alleged activity and the source of the allegation and any supporting evidence. The RQIM may delegate the responsibility to The Head of Centre at Apprenticeships^{PLUS} to investigate the allegation or to a lead independent investigator.

When asked to conduct an investigation into allegations, the Head of Centre will ensure that it is conducted in line with the Examining Body's guidance. Centre staff and learners will be informed of their rights unless, due to specific circumstances, the RQIM notifies the Head of Centre that this is not appropriate. All findings will be reported to the RQIM by the date specified or within 20 working days of the allegation being received. Where an investigation is undertaken by the awarding body, the outcome will be communicated to the centre and other relevant parties no more than 10 working days after the conclusion of the investigation. The report and any actions arising will be communicated to the QCM and the External Verifier.

Where a plagiarism, collusion or cheating incident is likely to cause an adverse effect, for example invalidate the award of a qualification or have implications for another awarding organisation, the RQIM will inform the relevant regulator and the affected awarding organisation. Defined by the qualification regulators for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, an adverse effect is an act, omission, event, incident, or circumstance has an adverse effect if it:

- Gives rise to prejudice to Learners or potential Learners, or
- Adversely affects:
 - the ability of the awarding organisation to undertake the development, delivery, or award of qualifications in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition
 - the standards of qualifications which the awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available
 - public confidence in qualifications

The rights of individuals with regard to anonymity and the avoidance of discrimination will be upheld. For example, Whistle-blowers are protected by legislation which confirms that they are protected from harassment and unfair or damaging treatment regardless of whether the allegations are unfounded. For the avoidance of doubt the wrongdoing a whistle-blower discloses must be in the public interest i.e. it must affect others. A whistle-blower is protected by law if they report any of the following:

- > A criminal offence for example fraud
- > Someone's health and safety is in danger
- > Risk or actual damage to the environment
- > A miscarriage of justice
- > The company is breaking the law
- > Someone is covering up wrongdoing

Any individual alleged to be involved in malpractice must be informed of the allegation that has been made and the evidence that supports that allegation. The individual should be given the opportunity to submit a written statement to the investigating team whether the investigation is undertaken by the centre or by the awarding body and informed of the consequences should the allegation be proven.

Process - Plagiarism, collusion or cheating detected by an Assessor

If a centre assessor suspects plagiarism, collusion or cheating in a learner's assignment or script, they will report the allegation to the Head of Centre. Once the findings have been verified the incident will be reported to the awarding body's Assessment Manager. They will review the information that has been discovered, evaluate the findings, and complete an internal investigation report.

If plagiarism, collusion, or cheating is evident the Assessment Manager will communicate this to the centre. No marks will be attributed to any piece of work under suspicion and the mark sheet that includes the Verifier or Assessment Manager's comments will be returned to the centre. The Assessment Manager will submit the internal report and a copy of the mark sheet to The Head of Centre and notify the centre's Quality and Compliance Manager and External Verifier. The RQIM may delegate the responsibility to investigate the allegation to a lead independent investigator or request a Head of Centre to undertake an investigation.

In most investigations into suspected plagiarism, collusion or cheating, decisions will be made by trained members of staff but in cases of serious incidents, the decision may be made by the centre's leadership team.

If the investigation confirms that plagiarism, collusion, or cheating has taken place, dependent on the gravity and scope, one or more of the following actions will be taken:

- Disallowing all or part of a learner/s assessment evidence or marks
- The learner/s certificates will not be issued, or previously issued invalid certificates for the learner/s will be withdrawn
- No further registrations will be accepted for the learner/s
- The centre risk rating will be reviewed which could lead to increased centre visits and/or the imposition of sanctions. These sanctions could include:
 - > suspension of registrations
 - > suspension of certification
 - > suspension of centre approval and/or qualification approval
 - > withdrawal of centre approval
 - > appointment of independent invigilators to observe an examination
 - > implementation of an agreed improvement action plan

A report will be made to the relevant regulatory bodies and may be shared with other awarding organisations and/or other agencies such as funding bodies or the police.

In addition to the above Apprenticeships^{PLUS} may decide to take specific action against a learner or a specific member of centre staff dependent on the gravity and scope of the investigation outcome. This could include:

- > Suspension of a centres' member of staff from any involvement in the delivery of qualifications or programmes for a set period of time
- > Imposition of special conditions for a centre member of staff involvement in the delivery of qualifications or programmes

If a learner wishes to appeal against a decision to take action as recommended in the investigation report, they can refer to the Appeals Policy.

5. Continuous Improvement

Apprenticeships^{PLUS} aims to continuously improve our processes and procedures and incorporate any feedback or learning we receive in relation to this policy. This policy shall be the subject of a 3 year review cycle, or as necessary.

Appendix I

Statement of Confirmation of Authenticity

It is a regulatory requirement that every assessment submission is authenticated as the work of the named learner whether submitted to Apprenticeships^{PLUS} or an awarding body. Therefore, this cover sheet, or an alternative form of formal declaration of authenticity if a centre uses electronic systems or e-portfolios, must be completed with each assessment that is submitted. Any submission that does not carry a cover sheet or a formal declaration of authenticity will not be verified.

By the act of making this submission I am declaring that this is all my own work and that:

- The work has not, in whole or in part, been knowingly submitted elsewhere for assessment
- Where the submission includes work from a previous assessment this has been identified
- Where materials have been used from other sources it has been properly acknowledged

If this statement is untrue, I acknowledge that an assessment offence has been committed. Attention is drawn to the plagiarism, collusion, and cheating policies of both the centre and the awarding body. Proven incidents of plagiarism, collusion or cheating can result in a learner being withdrawn from a qualification.

Centre name	
Centre number	
Learner name	
Learner registration number	
KSB(s) covered in this submission	
Date	
Learner signature	