# VET – Academic Integrity Policy

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## Purpose

- To acknowledge that integrity is key to all aspects of education and training and that academic honesty is the responsibility of individual learners and all members of Pines Learning
- To identify behaviours and standards of conduct required to encourage a learning environment of academic integrity.
- To ensure that VET students and staff are fully informed of the procedures regarding academic integrity and plagiarism. The policy outlines the principles and responsibilities for promoting, supporting and upholding student academic integrity.
- Ensures compliance by Pines Learning with Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations, Instrument 2025, **Standard 1.4- Fair and Appropriate Assessment**

## Definitions

1.1 **Academic integrity** is a commitment to act with honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect in all academic work.

1.2 **Academic misconduct** is conduct that contravenes the act of academic integrity. Academic misconduct whether intentional or not includes but is not limited to contract cheating, collusion, examination non-compliance, fraud, impersonation, plagiarism, promoting academic misconduct and self--plagiarism:

    a. **Contract cheating** is where a student engages a third--party to complete assignments. It occurs when someone other than the student completed an assignment and which the student then submits for assessment. This includes the utilisation of Artificial Intelligence systems for the purpose of deliberately falsifying students' work.

    b. **Collusion** is unauthorised collaboration where a student works with others on a task in which individual answers are required, unintentionally or intentionally for the purpose of submitting assessment tasks.

    c. **Fraud** is where a student seeks unfair academic advantage through dishonest behaviour, including but not limited to providing false or altered information such as fake or falsified or fabricated or invalid citations and referencing, medical certificate, academic transcripts, emails and assessment submission evidence.

    d. **Impersonation** is where a student pretends to be someone else, or allows someone else to pretend to be them, for an assessment task.

e. **Plagiarism** Defined as a student presenting someone else's work as their own which includes ideas, words, images, or opinions without proper citation as if they are their own. Plagiarism may take several forms:

    i. Direct copying of someone else's work such as "phrases, paragraphs, graphs, tables or ideas" without acknowledgment; this also includes downloading of internet materials without referencing or using AI system responses.

    ii. Minor paraphrasing of other people's work by changing words or altering phrases or paragraphs order without acknowledgment.

    iii. Submitting work which has been developed fully or partly by other people on the student's behalf as if it were the work of the student.

f. **Promoting academic misconduct** is where a student shares information with other students about ways to breach academic integrity or facilitates a breach of academic integrity.

## Policy

1.1 Pines Learning is committed to ensuring the highest standards of academic integrity in order that our learners achieve the highest standards of personal achievement. In order to achieve this, we are committed to:
   a. Ensuring, monitoring and upholding academic integrity, thus ensuring academic integrity remains integral to maintaining the academic quality and the academic standing of its qualifications.
   b. Honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in all academic work and the promotion of the culture of academic integrity; and
   c. Supporting a culture and environment that promotes and fosters ethical academic conduct.

1.2 The VET staff including all trainers are responsible for setting out key principles to guide the Pines Learning approach to upholding academic integrity and monitoring the implementation of the principles.

1.3 Pines Learning will uphold academic integrity and apply an andragogical and pedagogical approach that supports students to use, generate and communicate academic information in an ethical, honest and responsible manner.

1.4 Pines Learning will ensure that:
   a. Academic integrity is clearly understood by students, and supported through academic policies, course design and assessment standards;
   b. All trainers are appropriately trained in academic integrity and are familiar with relevant policies and support available for students;
   c. All students are to learn about and understand academic integrity as well as being encouraged to seek clarification from trainers and Pines Learning staff at any time ; and
   d. Opportunities for breaches of academic integrity are minimized.

1.5 Allegations that students have breached academic integrity will be responded to in a fair, consistent, transparent and timely manner. Students subject to any allegations will be given the opportunity to formally respond through a panel consisting of trainers and VET staff in order to ensure that is unfairly treated. Individuals who are making allegations against another student will be heard with the strictest confidentiality. Pines Learning staff who are responsible for investigation and determining an alleged breach of academic integrity shall respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties and reach conclusions based on available evidence.

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## 2.0 Responsibilities of VET Staff

a. To ensure that all students have a strong understanding of the meaning and application of academic integrity

b. To maintain currency of knowledge and skills to identify and respond to a breach of academic integrity

c. Continue to develop students' knowledge and skills in relation to academic integrity as part of their teaching activities

d. Ensure assessment design and processes support academic integrity; and

e. Be fair, consistent, transparent and timely in their dealings with students in managing academic integrity issues.

**Students shall**:

f. Be familiar with and apply the principles of academic integrity, including by:

  i. Being personally responsible for understanding academic integrity, and accessing available resources provided by Pines Learning for students during their studies for educational purposes

  ii. Complying with instructions regarding assessment tasks

  iii. Submitting their own original work, an online declaration is required while submitting assessment tasks on Moodle

  iv. Acknowledging all ideas, designs, words or works of others, including in group assessments, in accordance with expectations of the discipline and according to accepted standards of VET

  v. Taking reasonable steps to prevent their own work from being copied by other students; and

  vi. Providing accurate and truthful documentation to the training provider

  vii. In using artificial intelligence, students are required to comply with the principles of this Policy and use technologies ethically and responsibly. Students are welcome to use AI to assist them with their learning but must not use AI driven responses in place of their own work.

g. Support a culture of good practice and high standards of ethical academic conduct and encourage other students to act with academic integrity.

h. Complete any prescribed or compulsory academic integrity or ethics education or training units or materials.

i. Understand that a lack of understanding of the principles and application of proper academic standards will not excuse breaches of academic integrity

**The RTO Lead shall**:

j. Ensure that Pines learning requirements relating to student academic integrity are known and practiced by all trainers and these staff have the skills to enable them to support and teach students with the principles and application of academic integrity

k. Develop and maintain the skills of trainers to enable them to identify breach of academic integrity; and

l. Implement approaches in teaching, learning and assessment to enhance students' academic integrity and minimise opportunities for students to commit breaches of academic integrity and take appropriate action where potential breaches are identified.

**The RTO lead will supervise an Academic Integrity Unit to:**

    m.   Monitor, receive, investigate, hear and determine allegations of academic integrity breaches of students; and

    n.   Report the outcomes in relation to allegations of academic integrity breaches to the CEO.

**Document Control**

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