

6.3 Academic Integrity in the Assessment Process

6.3.1 Plagiarism Policy

PLAGIARISM POLICY OPEN TRAINING COLLEGE

1. Introduction

The Open Training College believes that the policy and procedures relating to suspected acts of plagiarism must be clearly understood by all stakeholders and must be applied consistently, taking into account the responsibility to be fair and equitable to all learners.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide students and staff with a clear definition of what plagiarism is; give guidelines as to how it can be avoided; inform students and staff about the steps that will be taken should the student be found to have plagiarised material in their assessments; and the resulting sanctions and penalties that may be applied.

3. Scope

This policy and the associated procedures apply to all individuals at Open Training College engaged in academic work, including all registered students of OTC and academic staff engaged in assessment of academic work which contributes to an award or credits.

4. Policy Statement

Consistent with best academic practice, plagiarism is viewed seriously by the Open Training College and can, following a rigorous investigation process, result in expulsion of the student concerned. All investigations into suspected plagiarism, including initial discussions, are recorded and maintained on a student's permanent file. Students are informed that under Freedom of Information a student has the right to request access to all documentation and reports arising from investigation into suspected plagiarism in their work.

Key steps in the prevention of plagiarism in College include providing students with a clear definition of what plagiarism entails, giving guidelines as to how it can be avoided and informing students about the penalties that will be applied should they be found to have plagiarised material

in their assignments. Information on how to avoid plagiarism and how to reference correctly in assignments is covered with students during tutorials, in MyOTC learning materials and as a virtual tutorial in the online Study Skills module.

The increased inclusion of E-learning methodologies by the College and the consequential result of students using the Internet as a learning resource encourage students to access textual material in electronic format. This widens the potential for the plagiarism of electronic materials. 'Turnitin' is an online plagiarism detection resource utilised by both students and Colleges as a plagiarism prevention and detection resource. In order to highlight any unoriginal work, the software compares uploaded documents (i.e. student assessments) to:

1. A database of journals/books
2. A database of assignments submitted by other students
3. Articles published directly on the Internet

All Open Training College students are required to submit their assessments through the Turnitin website.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The College Director has ultimate executive responsibility for the effective development and implementation of academic policies. The Head of Quality & Academic Affairs has overall delegated responsibility for coordinating the day to day operation of the policies and the development, maintenance and monitoring of supporting procedures. Programme Directors and Tutors are responsible for pursuing the implementation of these policies in relation to the activities of their programmes.

6. Sanctions

Sanctions are outlined in the linked document: *Procedures to be taken by the College if a student's work is suspected of plagiarism.*

7. Definitions

Plagiarism is the act of submitting another person's work as one's own. Plagiarism comes in many shapes and forms ranging from the copying, without acknowledging the source, of whole sections of published works, to the un-acknowledged use of text, diagrams, illustrations or formulae taken from unpublished works e.g. other students work. Plagiarism may also arise from cheating in exam situations, fabrication of evidence, collusion or collaboration. When a student submits any piece of

work for academic assessment, that act makes the implicit statement that the work is his or her own and that it is being presented specifically and uniquely for the purpose of credit towards their final result. When a student submits work as their own, without adequately acknowledging its source, they are in breach of professional and academic good practice and ethics.

Policy Title:		Plagiarism Policy
OTC Policy No		1701
Version		2
Date approved: Sept 2018	Date policy will take effect: Sept 2018	Date of Next Review: Sept 2021
Approving Authority:		Academic Council
Document Owner/Contact:		Head of Quality & Academic Affairs
Related documents, procedures & forms of this policy:		Procedures to be taken by the College if a students' work is suspected of plagiarism
Audience:		Public – accessible to anyone
Reference(s)		QQI – Core Statutory QA Policies and Criteria QQI – Core Validation Policies and Criteria