

Plagiarism and Cheating Policy

Introduction

This policy is aimed at our customers, assessors, others involved in the delivery and assessment of portfolios of evidence or the administration of tests and examinations, in which learners may commit plagiarism, cheat or induce others to do so. It is also for use by our staff to ensure that all suspected incidents of plagiarism or cheating are investigated in a consistent manner.

This policy should be read in conjunction with SBC's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and the Bullying and Harassment Policy which set out the steps our centre, learners and other personnel must follow when reporting suspected or actual cases of plagiarism and cheating and our responsibilities in dealing with such cases. It sets out the procedural steps we will follow when reviewing such cases.

Centre's responsibility

It is important that our staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications, and our learners, are fully aware of the contents of the policy and that our centre has arrangements in place to prevent and investigate instances of plagiarism and cheating.

A failure to report suspected or actual plagiarism/cheating cases, or has in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may lead to sanctions being imposed on our centre.

Review arrangements

We will review the policy annually as part of our annual self-assessment arrangements and quality plan. The policy will be revised as and when necessary in response to customer and learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies or changes in legislation or trends identified from previous allegations. In addition, this policy may be updated in light of operational feedback to ensure our arrangements for dealing with suspected cases of plagiarism/cheating remain effective.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which applies to all assessment. Your assessor takes plagiarism very seriously and cheating in general is not tolerated by SBC.

There are many definitions of plagiarism – in a nutshell/(in essence) it means that someone's work, their 'intellectual effort' has been taken or stolen by someone else who presents it as their own.

The Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) recognises plagiarism as being;

“... the substantial, unacknowledged incorporation into a learner's work of material derived from published or unpublished work by another person...”

Published work includes books, magazines and the internet. Unpublished works may be something previously submitted for assessment by another learner or about to be submitted for assessment.

Learners sometimes need to work together to prepare written work such as assignments, but the written work you submit for assessment must be entirely your own (original).

Reading and researching is good, in fact assessors will actively encourage learners to find influential, important and relevant academic material however the authors must be clearly acknowledged.

Examples of Plagiarism:

- Examples from another person's work, published or unpublished, without using quotation marks and/or an acknowledgment 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 from the internet to submit as your own work.

Safely Referencing Your Research:

- 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 (eg 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 the Harvard format is:
Hill, P. (2004) **Concepts of coaching: a guide for managers**. ILM, London.
- and for a reference to an article the Harvard format is:

Grant, A.M. (2010) It takes time: a 'stages of change' perspective on the adoption of workplace coaching skills. **Journal of Change Management**, 10(1), pp.66-77.

You will also be asked to sign any written work to authenticate it as your own.

Cheating

Never be tempted by anyone to cheat in a test, an assessment or an exam or in providing evidence for your portfolio.

Say no if ...

- anyone from SBC or Awarding Organisations gives you information about an examination on how to pass by offering you a copy of your test-paper in advance or reading the actual questions to you
- your assessor, line manager or a colleague offers to write your assignments for you
- an assessor or other SBC employee or a colleague offer to take a test for you

- when you take an on-line assessment, test or examination you are told that you can use textbooks, notes or other materials which your guidelines say must not be used.
- another learner tries to talk to you during an examination
- someone allows you to copy their work, note, instruments, computer files or other equipment or tries to copy your work without your permission
- someone says they will allow you to 'pass' for any kind of bribe , financial or otherwise
- someone offers to change your assignments or examination answers after they have been 'signed-off', logged or marked
- someone offers to falsify or change your marks or assessment results or other types of data or information on your behalf

You must not offer to help anyone cheat by allowing them to copy your original work or steal work from other learners (this is called Collusion), despite their intentions to re-organise or transcribe the material in order to disguise it and minimise the chance of getting caught. Do not be tempted to collude in such activities even if you are offered special favours or payment.

Bullying, Plagiarism and Cheating

SBC has a rigid zero-tolerance policy and if you are bullied in anyway by someone who puts pressure on you to collude please tell your assessor immediately. Your assessor will take action according to the SBC Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Authenticating your Work

It is your responsibility to ensure that your work can be clearly seen as original (this is called authentication). There are a number of ways in which your work can be authenticated including being signed by you and your assessor; cross-referenced to other pieces or confirmed as genuine by other people in your programme. You may also be required to sign specific declarations when submitting essays or assignments.

SBC Quality Systems

The quality and authenticity of evidence is reviewed throughout your programme and regular checks are performed by Internal and External Quality Assessors.

If Plagiarism or Cheating is discovered

Awarding Organisations may choose to support centres in different ways dependent upon whether the Centre has Direct Claims status for the qualification in question.

In all cases SBC will undertake a detailed and robust investigation as detailed in our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy which ensures a fair, well documented and unbiased investigation which will be carried out by an Independent Investigator who will also maintain stringently auditable records from the outset to the conclusion of the investigation.

SBC will at all times keep the Awarding Organisation informed of progress. Awarding Organisations will intervene as necessary.

Process for making an allegation of Plagiarism or Cheating

Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of plagiarism or cheating at any time must immediately report their findings to SBC. In doing so they should put them in writing/email and enclose appropriate supporting evidence.

All allegations must include (where possible) the:

- Centre's name, address and number
- Learner's name and awarding organisation number
- Centre/SBC personnel's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case
- Title and number of the SBC course/qualification affected or nature of the service affected
- Date(s) suspected or actual malpractice occurred
- Full nature of the suspected or actual malpractice
- Contents and outcome of any investigation carried out by the centre or anybody else involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances
- Written statements from those informant's name, position and signature

If a centre conducts an investigation before submitting it formally, the centre should:

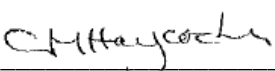
- Ensure that staff leading the investigation are independent of the staff/learners/function being investigated
- Inform those who are suspected of malpractice that they are entitled to know the necessary details of the case and possible outcomes
- Submit the findings of the investigation to us with your report

In all cases we'll protect the identity of the 'informant' in accordance with our duty of confidentiality and/or and other legal duty.

Actions if a case of Plagiarism or Cheating is proved

Whether decided by an Awarding Organisation or SBC, sanctions for the learner may include:

- adjusting the marks given for the assessment, test or examination
- require the learner to redo one or more assignments and re-submit for assessment, with the award of a minimum mark in the event of a pass
- requiring the learner to re-sit the test or examination
- withholding full or unit certification
- withdrawing membership
- withholding certification and withdrawing membership
- disqualification from the qualification and refusing to accept further test or examination entries
- debarment from further certification and/or registration

Signed: 

Date: 11 August 2015

Christine Haycocks

Director of Quality