



## Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc

A0028764B

ABN 69 093 616 835

Melways Ref. 129 F8

RTO 3952

Phone: (03) 5996 9056 Deavour Drive, Cranbourne North 3977

Fax: (03) 5996 9434 P.O. Box 7144 Cranbourne North 3977

[admin@merindapark.com.au](mailto:admin@merindapark.com.au)

Web: [www.merindapark.com.au](http://www.merindapark.com.au)

<b>Written/Amended By:</b>	Steve Every	<b>Policy No:</b>	31/02
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## Cheating and Plagiarism Policy

### Policy background and purpose

Assessment is considered one of the most important aspects of a learners' development throughout their course, and any form of plagiarism or cheating will be considered a serious violation of the RTO's rules.

MPLCC is committed to ensuring that all learners adhere to the highest standards of integrity and honesty whilst enrolled with the RTO.

Cheating and Plagiarism, in any form, is unacceptable and will be treated with the utmost seriousness by MPLCC and its employees.

### Policy objectives

#### To ensure:

- learners and staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to work submitted or assessed.
- that all work submitted by a learner is the work of the learner and there is an appropriate acknowledgement of author or source where required.
- both learners and staff are supported in ensuring that evidence is valid and authentic.

### Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contracted trainers and learners of MPLCC.

MPLCC as an RTO, its trainers, assessors and learners, each share certain responsibilities in relation to ensuring that plagiarism and cheating does not occur.

## **Responsibilities are summarised as follows:**

### **MPLCC recognises its responsibility to:**

- advise learners and staff, including contracted trainers of its policy and procedures in respect to cheating and plagiarism – student handbook and induction.
- provide learners with advice and strategies for how to avoid unintentional plagiarism.
- provide processes through which learners can appeal outcomes of cheating or plagiarism investigations.
- provide all learners with the document “Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Written Assignments” (see attached)

### **MPLCC Trainers/Assessors have a responsibility to:**

- communicate MPLCC’s and their own expectations in terms of authenticity of work.
- provide guidance on the level of referencing and acknowledgement required.
- monitor learner work for evidence of plagiarism and/or cheating.
- ensure that learners understand the difference between ‘working together’ and collusion.
- set clear boundaries around the evidence required from group work.
- demonstrate awareness of cultural practices that may lead to plagiarism and/or cheating.
- demonstrate tact, sensitivity and respect when dealing with cultural differences.
- reinforce the notation that, in the VET sector in particular, a learner’s own work is the best form of evidence.

### **Learners have a responsibility to:**

- make every effort to understand and comply with MPLCC’s policy on plagiarism and cheating.
- ensure that all information is appropriately acknowledged as advised by their trainer/assessor.
- refrain from sharing their work with other learners/trainees unless it is part of a structured and approved group/team activity.
- MPLCC’s management team is committed to supporting learners and staff in identifying and acknowledging the difference between knowledge that is learned, acquired or found, and knowledge or information that is the creation or application of someone else.
- To assist in this process, learners are provided with an overview of cheating and plagiarism and examples of what constitutes both in their induction and via the Student Handbook.
- Learners are further required to sign a declaration on the Assessment Summary CoverSheet for each unit of competency that the work they have submitted is their own.
- Clear advice is given to learners that all assigned work/assessments must be completed independently, unless it is designed and presented as a group task, or group work is approved by the assessor.
- Where assessment evidence is duplicated as a result of a team-based assessment exercise, the assessor is to record that he/she has approved such a submission.
- Where assessment evidence is collected as part of a group brainstorming session, the assessor is to record this on the relevant assessment documentation.

- Greater emphasis is also placed on assessments that require observation of skills supported with oral questioning during the demonstration.
- Learner assessments are further checked for cheating/plagiarism as part of structured trainer moderation sessions.
- Trainer/Assessors consistently re-enforce the value of responses that are authentic and demonstrate a genuine understanding of key concepts and regularly inform learners/trainees of their obligations regarding the submission of assessments.
- Trainers/assessors are also required to carefully monitor learner work for duplication (learners with exactly the same answers) and to investigate any instances of suspected cheating/plagiarism.
- Where plagiarism is suspected in an assessment, the learner is asked to submit the assessment electronically, where it may be put through an electronic plagiarism detection and reporting system.

## **References**

- AQTF - Australian Quality Training Framework
- AQTF User's Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration - Standard 2:
- The RTO Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria <https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/>
- Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (VRQA)

## **Associated Documents**

- The MPLCC Student Handbook
- Acknowledgement of a Complaint or Appeal Letter
- Complaints & Appeals Outcome Notification
- Complaints & Appeals Register
- MPLCC Complaints and Appeals Policy
- MPLCC Complaints & Appeals Form
- MPLCC Feedback and Complaints Policy



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## **Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Written Assignments**

### Introduction

It is important that you submit written work of a good standard. The assessment requirement for some units is only completed once placement has been completed. The following guidelines will assist you in presenting work that will clearly show your level of learning, which will be easy for your trainer to mark and will follow academic conventions.

### Submission Requirements

Assessments are to be submitted in a hardcopy, unless prior arrangements have been made with MPLCC VET Manager.

They are to be printed on standard A4 paper, securely fastened in the top left-hand corner with a staple. **Students are to keep a copy of all work submitted, as no work will be returned to students unless a resubmit is required.** Students will receive a copy of the Assessment Cover sheet with your result.

### How long should my answers be?

The length of your answers will be guided by the description in each assessment eg:

<b>Type of Answer</b>	<b>Answer Guidelines</b>
Short Answer	4 typed lines = 50 words, or 5 lines of handwritten text
Long Answer	8 typed lines = 100 words, or 10 lines of handwritten text = 1/3 of a foolscap page
Brief Report	500 words, = 1 page typed report or 50 lines of handwritten text = 1 ½ foolscap handwritten pages
Mid Report	1000 words, = 2 page typed report or 100 lines of handwritten text = 3 foolscap handwritten pages
Long Report	2000 words, = 4 page typed report or 200 lines of handwritten text = 6 of a foolscap handwritten pages

## Presentation

The main consideration in presenting written work is ease of reading for your trainer who has to mark a number of assessment tasks. The following layout conventions make your essay more accessible:

**The question you are answering must be written on your page before your answer so that trainers know exactly which question you have answered.**

1. Margins - use wide margins all around the page to allow for comments in case of work needing to be resubmitted.
2. Spacing - 1.0 is acceptable in Arial font of 10 -12 or spacing of 1.5 per line which makes your paper easier to read and allows for corrections and comments and write on one side of the page only
3. Cover page - your paper must be submitted with a cover page using the *Assessment Cover Sheet*, which you can get from your trainer, reception or can be down-loaded from the MPLCCs web site. Assessments will not be accepted unless accompanied by the Assessment Cover sheet. The bottom section of the coversheet needs to be signed by the person receiving your assessment and returned to the student as proof of submission. If work is lost and this tear off section cannot be produced by the student as evidence then you will be required to redo the assessment.
4. Section labels - clearly label each section of your response, using the numbers and subheadings provided in the assessment task.

## Editing and proofreading

Carefully edit and proofread your paper. Leave a few days after you have finished a final draft before you proofread and do a final edit. It is difficult to pick up mistakes when you have not had time to distance yourself from the assignment. If possible, ask someone else to read it. This will give you an idea of whether it is clearly written.

## Plagiarism

*Plagiarism is using the work of other people and not acknowledging it. Plagiarism is unacceptable and full acknowledgment of other people's work is an essential characteristic of writing. Plagiarism can lead to you being asked to resubmit your written work. Cutting and pasting sections of text from the internet or text book for each answer is not acceptable and needs to be converted to your own words to show your understanding of the test and answer. Taking a quote or small section and referencing is not plagiarism as long as it is referenced.*

## Referencing

There are three current straightforward conventions to show that you have used other people's ideas or words.

### **1. Referring to broad ideas**

Sometimes we refer to ideas in a broad way without direct quotations. We can do this in two ways:

- a) We can refer to the person directly within the sentence putting the year in parentheses after the name e.g:

Noble (1991) states that work which people are forced to do cannot be classified as volunteering.

- b) We can refer to the person in parentheses with the year after the idea has been presented eg:  
Work which people are forced to do cannot be classified as volunteering (Noble 1991).

## 2. Direct quotations

Sometimes we use direct quotations from other writers. We can do this in two ways:

- a) We can use an extended quote. In this case we insert the quote as an indented and separate paragraph with no inverted commas. We put the author's name, the year of publication and the page number after the quote in parentheses e.g:

It is important to clarify what we mean by the term voluntary sector:

The voluntary sector refers to non-government organisations. These organisations might or might not involve volunteers in service provision. (Noble 1991: 7).

- b) We can use a short quote which we insert into the middle of a sentence. In this case we put the quoted words inside inverted commas. We then put the author's name, the year of publication and the page number directly after the quote in parentheses eg:

Stereotypes of volunteers often depict them as "women (middle aged with too much time on their hands) working in the areas of health and welfare" (Noble 1991:7). This stereotype means that .....

- 3. Broken quotes** Sometimes we do not want to use all the words of the author but selections from across one quote. Sometimes we do not want to finish the quote. In these cases we need to insert a series of dots to mark the omitted words eg:

*The Hillary Commission in New Zealand, whose interests cover recreation and sport decided to continue to use the word 'volunteer' following a survey in 1990 ..... It was found the word 'volunteer' best described the overall nature of those engaged in a variety of activities. (Noble 1991: 7)*

*The Hillary Commission in New Zealand, whose interests cover recreation and sport decided to continue to use the word 'volunteer' ..... (Noble 1991:7)*

**Inserting your own words into a quote** Sometimes we need to insert words into a quote for it to make sense to the reader. In this case we need to insert the words in square brackets eg:  
*He [Governor Phillip] dealt with it several times during his career (Terita 1960 : 150).*

**Referring to the author's name** When you use the author's name you only use their surname eg:

Noble (1991) describes volunteering as ...

**4. Referencing** The contemporary approach to referencing is to follow the Harvard convention which means that we reference every time we quote someone directly or use their ideas. This is done directly after the reference in parentheses in this way:

(Noble 1991 : 150)

If you quote across pages you need to show this in this way:

(Noble 1991 : 150-151) **Two or more authors** If the book or article has been written by two authors then you need to list both eg:

(Burns and Jones 1997)

If the book or article has been written by more than two authors then you need to list the first one in your reference and add *et al* eg: (Burns et al 1997)

**Using two books by same author written in the same year** If you reference two books by the same author which were written in the same year then you need to label one *a* and the other *b* eg: (Noble 1991a) and (Noble 1991b) 1

### Footnotes

The current approach to footnoting is to keep it to a minimum within essays. References to people's ideas and referencing of direct quotes is now done after the item in the body of the paper.

Footnotes are now used primarily to add extra information that you feel would be intrusive within the body of the essay. If you use footnotes frequently then they should be numbered consecutively on the page.

### Bibliography

A bibliography is a list of all the reference materials you have used to write your paper. It is an essential part of your writing and failure to include a bibliography means that your paper is incomplete. The references are listed in the alphabetical order of authors' surnames.

The conventions for presenting source information have been simplified over the past few years and the current accepted approach by most institutions is the author-date system. This means presenting the entry in this sequence:

- 1 Author's or editor's surname followed by a comma
- 2 Author's or editor's initials followed by full stops
- 3 The year of publication followed by a full stop
- 4 The title of the book or article in italics or underlined followed by a full stop
- 5 The place of publication followed by a colon
- 6 The publishers name followed by a full stop

Noble, J. 1991. *Volunteering - a current perspective*. Adelaide SA : Volunteer Centre of South Australia.

**Use of capital letters** The titles of books and articles are given in sentence case with one capital letter at the beginning unless they contain words which would normally have a capital letter eg:

*A concise history of Russian art.*

**5. Multiple authors** If the book or article has been written by multiple authors then you must list them all in you bibliography. You must:

- put the authors' names in the order they appear on the book or article
- put the first author's surname followed by initials
- put subsequent authors initials first followed by surname

- put full stops after initial and a comma between authors but put *and* before the final author

eg: Luke, G., C. Cameron, H. Tomlinson and K. Greenbaum. 1998.

**Sourcing two books by same author written in the same year.** If you have used references from two books by the same author which were written in the same year, then you will have labelled them *a* and *b* in your paper. The entry in your bibliography should use the same numbering eg:

(Noble 1991a) or (Noble 1995b)

**Sourcing an article** If you need to source an article in your bibliography then you must:

- put the name of the author and initials of author as above
- year of publication followed by a full stop
- title of article in normal type followed by a full stop
- title of journal in italics followed by a comma
- details of journal volume number followed by a comma
- details of journal issue number followed by a colon
- page numbers on which the article appears in the journal eg: Willing, K. 1996. Form and function in the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright. *The architecture review*, 7, 3 : 57-97.

**Internet** If you need to source an item from the internet, include as much identifying information as possible as set out for a book. Always include the web address. Website Name – Page or Document Name, Retrieved insert the dated, webpage link.

Eg: [www.merindapark.com.au](http://www.merindapark.com.au) 2015 and then the actual link (hyperlink).

### **Consequences of plagiarism**

Failure to comply may lead to failing the unit being submitted and requiring a re-enrolment into the same unit in the next course offered and paying a re-enrolment fee to do so. If in doubt consult your trainer or VET Manager as to what we consider acceptable and if your referencing is correct.

Refer to the Student Handbook and Cheating and Plagiarism Policy. This is a serious offence and may carry harsh penalties including being removed permanently from the course.

If you are unsure how to reference anything you include in your assessment that is to be handed into your trainer please speak to them before handing it in as it may be deemed plagiarism if not done correctly and a failed assessment
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