Policy & Procedure

PLAGIARISM and ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy number:	17	Version:	5
Responsible Person:	CEO	Reviewed by:	CEO
NRCHI Area:	Operational / RTO	Review Date:	November 2026
Approved and adopted by:	Board of Governance	Next Review Date:	November 2029

Scope

This policy applies to all staff involved in the delivery, assessment and administration of courses at North Ringwood Community House Inc. (NRCHI).

It also applies to all course applicants and students undertaking accredited, pre-accredited and community programs at NRCHI, whether they are receiving government-funded training or paying a fee for the training service.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote academic integrity and ensure that plagiarism, collusion and other forms of cheating are managed consistently, fairly and appropriately. NRCHI is committed to ensuring that students demonstrate their own knowledge and skills and that assessment outcomes are valid, reliable and reflect each student's actual achievement.

Policy Statement

NRCHI is committed to upholding standards of academic integrity, honesty and fairness across all its courses and programs.

Plagiarism, collusion and cheating are unacceptable. Students are expected to submit work that is their own and to demonstrate their own knowledge and skills in accordance with the requirements of their course and assessment tasks.

NRCHI recognises that students may require guidance and support to understand academic integrity requirements. Students will be informed of their responsibilities, including the appropriate acknowledgement of sources, requirements for individual and group work, and the permitted use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in assessment.

The use of AI must be consistent with the assessment instructions provided by the Trainer or Assessor. Students must not submit AI-generated work as their own where this misrepresents their knowledge or skills or is inconsistent with assessment requirements.

NRCHI recognises that students may use learning materials provided by the organisation, including Learner Guides, to support their learning and completion of assessment tasks. Students may refer to and use information from these materials where permitted by the assessment instructions. The use of these resources does not, in itself, constitute plagiarism. Trainers and Assessors will consider the nature of the assessment and the student's ability to demonstrate their understanding and competence when determining whether academic misconduct has occurred.

NRCHI will manage suspected incidents of plagiarism, collusion and cheating fairly and consistently. Students will be informed of allegations and given a reasonable opportunity to respond before decisions are made.

Any action taken will be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the incident, taking into account the circumstances and the student's response. Assessment decisions will continue to be based on valid evidence of the student's own knowledge and skills.

NRCHI will maintain appropriate records of reported incidents and their outcomes in accordance with its recordkeeping, privacy and regulatory obligations.

Definitions

Plagiarism occurs when a student presents another person's work, ideas or intellectual property as their own without appropriate acknowledgement or permission. This does not include using NRCHI learning materials, including Learner Guides, to develop answers to assessment questions where this is consistent with the assessment instructions.

Collusion occurs when students collaborate or share assessment work without authorisation, particularly where an assessment is intended to demonstrate an individual's own knowledge and skills.

Cheating refers to any dishonest or unauthorised action intended to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment. This may include plagiarism, collusion, copying another student's work, falsifying assessment evidence or submitting work completed by another person.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to digital tools that generate text, images, answers or other content in response to user instructions. Examples include AI writing assistants and chatbots.

Unauthorised use of AI occurs when a student uses AI tools to generate or substantially complete assessment responses where this has not been permitted by the trainer or assessor or is inconsistent with the assessment requirements.

Responsibilities

CEO
Provides oversight of serious or repeated incidents of academic misconduct and is responsible for decisions involving withdrawal of a student from a course, in consultation with the Training Coordinator.

Training Coordinator
Oversees the implementation of this policy, ensures students are informed of academic integrity requirements, coordinates the investigation of suspected incidents and determines appropriate action in consultation with the CEO where necessary.

Trainers and Assessors
Explain assessment integrity requirements to students, identify and report suspected incidents, provide supporting evidence and ensure assessment decisions are based on valid evidence of the student's own knowledge and skills.

Students
Are responsible for submitting their own work, following assessment instructions, appropriately acknowledging sources, complying with requirements for collaboration and AI use, and seeking clarification from their Trainer or Assessor when unsure of assessment expectations.

Procedure

Student Information and Prevention

Students will be informed of this policy during course orientation. Information about academic integrity will be included on the student orientation checklist.

Trainers and Assessors will explain relevant assessment expectations before assessment commences, including requirements for individual work, referencing sources, permitted collaboration and the use of AI tools.

NRCHI will take reasonable steps to ensure students understand how to complete and submit their own work, acknowledge sources appropriately and avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct.

Requirements for Assessment Work

Students are expected to complete assessment tasks in accordance with the instructions provided by their Trainer or Assessor.

Students may use NRCHI Learner Guides, course materials and other resources provided by their Trainer or Assessor to assist them in completing assessment tasks. Where assessment questions are designed to assess knowledge contained in the Learner Guide, students may refer to these materials and use relevant information when preparing their answers.

Students are expected to develop an understanding of the information they submit and be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in accordance with the assessment requirements. Where necessary, Trainers and Assessors may use additional questioning or other appropriate assessment methods to confirm a student's understanding.

Assessment methods may include written responses, verbal questioning, class presentations, practical demonstrations, workplace assessments and direct observation. These methods may be used to support students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, taking into account the requirements of the training product and individual learning needs.

Students must not copy another student's completed assessment, submit work completed by another person or use unauthorised assistance in a way that misrepresents their own knowledge and skills.

Where students are permitted to work together, each student must demonstrate their own knowledge and skills unless the assessment is specifically designed to assess group performance.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Students may only use generative AI tools in assessment where their use is permitted by the Trainer or Assessor and is consistent with the assessment requirements.

Where AI use is permitted, students must follow the instructions provided by the Trainer or Assessor and acknowledge AI-generated content where required.

Students must not submit AI-generated responses as their own work where this would misrepresent their knowledge, skills or ability to meet the assessment requirements.

Trainers and Assessors must provide clear instructions about whether AI tools may be used for particular assessment tasks and any conditions that apply.

The use of AI does not remove the student's responsibility to demonstrate their own competence.

Identification and Investigation of Suspected Incidents

Trainers and Assessors are responsible for taking reasonable steps to identify suspected plagiarism, collusion and cheating. This may include comparing submitted work with identified sources, other student submissions, electronic reference materials and publicly available information.

Similarities between a student's assessment answers and the NRCHI Learner Guide or other approved learning resources will not, on their own, be considered evidence of plagiarism. Trainers and Assessors must consider the assessment requirements, the resources provided to students and whether the student can demonstrate the required knowledge and skills before determining that academic misconduct may have occurred.

Similarities in writing style or concerns that work may have been generated using AI will not, on their own, be treated as conclusive evidence of academic misconduct. Trainers and Assessors must consider the assessment requirements, the student's ability to explain and demonstrate their work, and any other relevant evidence before determining whether academic misconduct may have occurred.

Where a Trainer or Assessor suspects plagiarism or other academic misconduct, they must provide supporting evidence to the Training Coordinator, including identifying the source or nature of the concern where possible. Any concerns must be considered alongside the assessment evidence, available information and the student's explanation.

The Training Coordinator will oversee the investigation and determine whether the incident is likely to involve an honest mistake, a misunderstanding of assessment requirements or deliberate misconduct. The CEO will be consulted where the matter is serious or repeated.

Student Right to Respond

A student suspected of plagiarism, collusion or cheating will be informed of the allegation and provided with sufficient information about the concerns and supporting evidence. The student will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond and explain the circumstances before a decision is made.

The matter will be considered fairly, taking into account the student's explanation, the available evidence, the nature of the assessment and any relevant circumstances.

The outcome and any action taken will be communicated to the student.

Outcomes and Consequences

Where a student has made an unintentional referencing error or demonstrated a misunderstanding of academic integrity requirements, the student may be provided with guidance, cautioned about the issue or asked to correct and resubmit their work.

Where the Training Coordinator is reasonably satisfied that plagiarism, collusion or cheating has occurred, appropriate action will be determined in consultation with the CEO where necessary.

Depending on the circumstances and seriousness of the incident, the student may be:

- Required to resubmit the assessment or complete an alternative assessment task.
- Where applicable, marked Not Yet Satisfactory and required to undertake further training and assessment in accordance with the relevant assessment requirements.
- Subject to further disciplinary action, including withdrawal from the course in serious or repeated cases.

In determining an appropriate response, NRCHI will consider the seriousness and circumstances of the incident, whether it is a first or subsequent offence, the student's explanation and response, the nature of the assessment and any previous incidents. Any decision to withdraw a student from a course will be made by the CEO in consultation with the Training Coordinator.

Any assessment decision must continue to be based on the relevant training product requirements and valid assessment evidence. Disciplinary action does not replace the assessment process.

Recordkeeping and Confidentiality

NRCHI will maintain records of reported incidents of plagiarism, collusion or cheating, including the supporting evidence, the student's response, the decision made and any action taken.

Records will be retained securely in accordance with *NRCHI's Records Management Policy*, applicable privacy requirements and relevant regulatory and funding recordkeeping obligations.

Access to these records will be restricted to staff who require the information for legitimate educational, assessment or compliance purposes.

Complaints and Appeals

Students who are dissatisfied with the way an allegation of plagiarism, collusion or cheating has been investigated, or with the outcome, may raise their concerns in accordance with *NRCHI's Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

Students will be informed of their right to access the complaints and appeals process and will not be disadvantaged for raising a concern or lodging an appeal in good faith.

Related Documents

Assessment Policy
Assessment Validation Policy
Complaints and Appeals Policy
Enrolment Policy
Records Management Policy

Document Locations

Website
Electronic file folders accessible by NRCH Administration staff
Policy and Procedure Manual

Related Legislation and Compliance

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) ***Guidelines - Standards for Vocational Education and Training Providers*****,** including the **2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)**

Skills First program requirements and applicable VET Funding Contract
Applicable Commonwealth and State Government Funding Agreements, Contracts and Guidelines
Applicable VET legislation, data reporting requirements and regulatory instruments.

Date reviewed	Version	Details of changes (if any)	Date of next review
November 2026	5	Revision of policy to improve clarity, comply with VRQA Guidelines and 2025 Standards for RTO's and reformat. Section on AI added. Renamed Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Policy	November 2029