



The Royal Australasian  
College of Physicians

POLICY DOCUMENT

## ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM POLICY

<b>Policy Number:</b>	EDU-Assessment-1
<b>Policy Area:</b>	Education: Teaching and Learning; Assessment
<b>Recommending Committee:</b>	Expert Advisory Group, Assessment
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Senior Executive Officer, Assessment
<b>Approval Details:</b>	College Education Committee – August 2008 Amended April 2010
<b>Date Effective:</b>	January 2010
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	January 2013
<b>Policy Status:</b>	Revised policy
<b>Related Policies:</b>	Independent Review of Training Appeals

### 1. Overview:

- 1.1 This policy defines the responsibilities of trainees (in Australia and New Zealand) enrolled in College education programs (Divisions, Faculties, and Chapters) in relation to academic honesty and plagiarism, and describes a process for dealing with identified cases of plagiarism (intentional and unintentional).
- 1.2 Proficiency in referencing and acknowledgement of sources is a crucial part of academic and scholarly work. In order to promote academic honesty the College requires trainees to sign a declaration of compliance with this policy each time they submit an assignment to the College for assessment, presentation or publication.

### 2. Background and Purpose:

- 2.1 '*Academic Honesty*' is to submit work which is entirely one's own and correctly references others' thoughts and work. Quoting the thoughts or work (written or spoken) of another person, with the appropriate attribution is not plagiarism. '*Plagiarism*' is the act of representing as one's own work the original work of another, without appropriate acknowledgement of the author or source.
- 2.2 The role of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians is to create, preserve, transmit and apply knowledge through education, research and other forms of scholarship. The College is committed to high standards of ethical scholarship as one of the cornerstones of preparing to practice as a Physician.
- 2.3 The maintaining of academic honesty and integrity by trainees is regarded by the College as being an integral part of their Physician training and is at the heart of their fitness to practice as a Physician.
- 2.4 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all trainees are aware of their responsibilities in relation to academic honesty and plagiarism, and that all cases of identified plagiarism are dealt with consistently, openly and fairly using an appropriate investigatory and disciplinary process.

### 3. Policy:

#### 3.1 The College Position on Plagiarism

- 3.1.1 To intentionally or unintentionally plagiarise is a violation of the College's ethos of professional conduct and is deemed a form of misconduct. The College will not tolerate academic dishonesty or plagiarism.
- 3.1.2 Plagiarism may refer to presentation of material in either oral or written mode, or of copying material in one mode, being presented in another mode, including for example:
- The direct copying of the work or thoughts of another person without appropriate quotation or acknowledgement. This may be by copying ideas, concepts or written material from a written hard copy document (whether it has been published or not) or a soft copy electronic document on a web-site, Internet page or some other electronic resource.
  - The paraphrasing of another person's work that keeps its meaning or progressive thread of ideas intact, with very minor changes from the original.
  - The electronic 'cutting and pasting' of others' work into a document that is passed off as their own work.
  - The re-presentation of a colleague's assignment that has already been submitted for assessment of an academic task, whether within the College or in another setting and presented as their own work.
  - The presentation of a piece of work as if it were their own individual independent piece of work, when in fact it has been produced together with other persons, for example as a group assignment, or together with a tutor.
  - Claiming to have done a greater percentage of work in a group assignment than is actually the case.

#### 3.2 Trainee Responsibilities

- 3.2.1 To act honestly, ethically, and with integrity in their dealings with the College, its Fellows, its employees, other trainees and members of the public.
- 3.2.2 As an integral part of assignment preparation to ensure that all work is fully and correctly referenced, including cited materials (written text, diagrams and images) and sources, and that these are acknowledged.
- 3.2.3 To ensure that collusion with another person to commit plagiarism does not occur.
- 3.2.4 To report possible instances of plagiarism to an appropriate College representative.
- 3.2.5 To submit a signed statement of compliance with this policy with every item of written work submitted to the College for assessment, presentation or publication (refer item 4.1).

#### 3.3 Process for Identified Cases of Plagiarism (Intentional and Unintentional)

In common with university practice, plagiarism-detection software may be used. Where a trainee is suspected of plagiarism or collusion by an assessor, the following process will apply:

##### *First Offence*

- 3.3.1 The trainee will be invited to discuss the matter with the Fellow assessing the assignment or document, and another senior Fellow of the College (Division, Faculty or Chapter). The trainee may elect to have a support person accompany them to the meeting. The purpose of this meeting will be to establish the circumstances, nature and effects of the problem. The confidential meeting will be documented.
- 3.3.2 If the finding of plagiarism is upheld, the trainee will be considered to have failed to complete the requirements of the assignment in question and will be required to resubmit the assignment. The trainee will also be required to undertake an additional 12 months of accredited training (or full time equivalent) including formative assessments as a penalty for the offence. In cases where the trainee is enrolled in the six month Clinical Diploma in Palliative Medicine, the trainee will be required to resubmit the assignment with appropriate referencing. The trainee will further be required to complete an additional assignment which should be submitted within three months. In all cases the finding of plagiarism will be recorded on the trainee's academic file at the College.
- 3.3.3 If the finding of plagiarism is not upheld and is found to be an honest mistake, the trainee will be cautioned and counselled on academic honesty. A note of this warning will be recorded on his or her academic file at the College and the trainee will be required to resubmit the assignment with appropriate referencing and acknowledgement.

*Second Offence*

- 3.3.4 In the event of a second offence, the trainee will be required to attend a formal Independent Review of Training (refer Policy for Independent Review of Training).
- 3.3.5 If the finding of plagiarism is upheld, the trainee will be asked to show cause as to why his or her name should remain on the register of accredited trainees (Division, Faculty or Chapter).
- 3.3.6 If a trainee is found to have committed plagiarism on a second occasion failure to demonstrate cause to remain on the register of accredited trainees may result in removal from the training program (Division, Faculty or Chapter).
- 3.3.7 The reconsideration and review process and the College appeals process (refer Policy for Appeals) will be available to the trainee should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the review of the situation.

**4. Procedures, forms and supporting documentation:**

- 4.1 Assignment Cover Sheet – Draft Template (Appendix 1)
- 4.2 Information Sheet - Tips on Preventing Plagiarism (Appendix 2).



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## ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM - PROCEDURES

<b>Procedure number:</b>	EDU-Assessment-1-PR
<b>Policy this procedure is linked to (if appropriate):</b>	Academic Honesty and Plagiarism
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Senior Executive Officer, Assessment
<b>Approval Details:</b>	College Education Committee – August 2008 Amended April 2010
<b>Effective as of date:</b>	January 2009
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	January 2010
<b>Procedure Status:</b>	Revised Procedure
<b>Related Policies:</b>	Independent Review of Training Appeals

### 1. Purpose and scope:

- 1.1 College policy requires that all trainees (Division, Faculty and Chapter) are aware of their responsibilities in relation to academic honesty and plagiarism, and that all cases of identified plagiarism are dealt with consistently, openly and fairly using an appropriate investigatory and disciplinary process. This document provides a detailed outline of the steps involved for both Trainees and assessors in the event of an identified case of plagiarism or collusion (intentional and unintentional). It should be read in conjunction with the Policy for Academic Honesty and Plagiarism.

### 2. Definitions:

- 2.1 Academic Honesty: To submit work which is entirely your own and correctly references others' thoughts and work.
- 2.2 Plagiarism: The presentation of another person's thoughts or work as if they were your own.

### 3. The Procedure:

#### First Offence

- 3.1 **Step 1:** The Fellow assessing the assignment contacts the relevant Education Committee via the Education Deanery to alert the College to a suspicion of plagiarism in relation to work submitted by a College trainee (Division, Faculty, or Chapter).
- 3.2 **Step 2:** The Fellow is asked to provide a confidential account of the reasoning behind their suspicion of plagiarism.
- 3.3 **Step 3:** The Education Deanery reviews the trainee's academic record to ensure that there have been no previous cautions on academic honesty or findings of plagiarism. If there is a previous record the case is dealt with as a second offence (refer item 3.15).
- 3.4 **Step 4:** The trainee is sent a letter outlining the alleged offence and an invitation to attend a meeting with the Fellow assessing the assignment in question and another senior Fellow nominated by the relevant Education Committee. Details of the proposed date, time and place of the meeting are provided along with copies of the Policy for Academic Honesty and Plagiarism, and the assignment/item in question.
- 3.5 **Step 5:** If the trainee elects to have a support person accompany them to the meeting they should contact the support person to ascertain their availability and willingness to attend. The investigation is not a legal process and as such neither party has legal representation.

- 3.6 **Step 6:** The trainee may submit documentation in support of their case prior to the meeting for review by the Fellows involved in the meeting.
- 3.7 **Step 7:** The circumstances, nature and effects of the problem are discussed at the meeting and these are documented by the Fellows involved during the meeting. The trainee has an opportunity to present their case.
- 3.8 **Step 8:** At the conclusion of the meeting the Fellows will make one of two possible determinations:  
 Option 1: The finding of plagiarism is upheld and a recommendation is made to record the offence of plagiarism on the trainee's academic record, also that the trainee be required to complete an additional 12 months (or full time equivalent) of accredited training including formative assessments and resubmit the assignment in question. In cases where the trainee is enrolled in the six month Clinical Diploma in Palliative Medicine, the trainee will be required to resubmit the assignment with appropriate referencing. The trainee will further be required to complete an additional assignment which should be submitted within three months.  
 Option 2: The finding of plagiarism is not upheld and is found to be an honest mistake. A recommendation is made that the trainee be cautioned and counselled on academic honesty and that the caution for plagiarism be noted on the trainee's academic record. The trainee is required to resubmit the assignment with appropriate referencing and acknowledgement.
- 3.9 **Step 9:** The Fellow assessing the assignment submits a written recommendation to the Education Deanery within one week of the meeting.
- 3.10 **Step 10:** The recommendation is reviewed, approved and handed down by the relevant Education Committee or delegated representative(s) of that Committee.
- 3.11 **Step 11:** The trainee is notified of the outcome of the meeting in writing within two weeks of meeting.
- 3.12 **Step 12:** The reconsideration and review process and the College appeals process (refer Policy for Appeals) is available to the trainee should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the review of the situation.

## Second Offence

- 3.13 **Step 1:** The Fellow assessing the assignment contacts the relevant Education Committee via the Education Deanery to alert the College to a suspicion of plagiarism in relation to work submitted by a College trainee (Division, Faculty, or Chapter).
- 3.14 **Step 2:** The Fellow is asked to provide a confidential account of the reasoning behind their suspicion of plagiarism.
- 3.15 **Step 3:** The Education Deanery reviews the trainee's academic record and discovers there has been a previous caution on academic honesty or a finding of plagiarism.
- 3.16 **Step 4:** The trainee is sent a letter outlining the alleged offence and an invitation to attend a formal Independent Review of Training with two senior Fellows of the College (Division, Faculty, or Chapter). Details of the proposed date, time and place of the meeting are provided along with copies of the Policy of Academic Honesty and Plagiarism, and the assignment in question.
- 3.17 **Step 5:** If the trainee elects to have a support person accompany them to the meeting they should contact the support person to ascertain their availability and willingness to attend. As the process is not a legal process the support person should not be legal representation.
- 3.18 **Step 6:** The trainee may submit documentation in support of their case prior to the meeting for review by the Fellows involved in the meeting.
- 3.19 **Step 7:** The circumstances, nature and effects of the problem are discussed at the meeting and these are documented by the Fellows involved during the meeting. The trainee has an opportunity to present their case.
- 3.20 **Step 8:** At the conclusion of the meeting the Fellows will make one of two possible determinations:  
 Option 1: The finding of plagiarism is upheld and a recommendation is made that the trainee be asked to show cause as to why his or her name should remain on the register of accredited trainees.  
 Option 2: The finding of plagiarism is not upheld and is found to be an honest mistake. A recommendation is made that the trainee be cautioned and counselled on academic honesty and that the caution for plagiarism be noted on the trainee's academic record. The trainee is required to resubmit the assignment with appropriate referencing and acknowledgement.
- 3.21 **Step 9:** The Fellow assessing the assignment submits a written recommendation to the relevant Education Committee within two weeks of the meeting.

- 3.22 **Step 10:** The recommendation is reviewed/approved/handed down by the relevant Education Committee or delegated representative(s) of that Committee.
- 3.23 **Step 11:** The trainee is notified of the outcome of the meeting in writing within two weeks of meeting. If the trainee has been asked to show cause as to why his or her name should remain on the register of accredited trainees the trainee will have two weeks to submit their case in writing for further investigation.
- 3.24 **Step 12:** The reconsideration and review process and the College appeals process (refer Policy for Appeals) is available to the trainee should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the review of the situation.

**4 Review:**

- 4.1 This procedures document will be reviewed annually by the Assessment Expert Advisory Group.

Version	Date	Author	Approved by	Sections Modified	Details of Amendments
1	14/08/08	Rebecca Udemans	<b>CEC</b>		
2	29/4/10	Briony Bounds	<b>Dean</b>	Policy 3.3.2 Procedures 3.8	Add details specific to the Clinical Diploma in Palliative Medicine

## Appendix 1:

Sample assignment cover sheet including trainee declaration



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### Assignment Cover Sheet

#### Section 1: Administrative Details

Trainee's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Trainee's Identification Number \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment/Project Title \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor's/Supervisor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Submission \_\_\_\_\_

NB. This form must be attached to all submitted written work with all sections completed. An incomplete form may result in the delayed return of your assignment or of your marks. Keep a copy of your assignment before submitting it for assessment.

#### Section 2: Compulsory Student Declaration Details

##### *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is the act of representing as one's own work the original work of another, without appropriate acknowledgement of the author or source.

##### *Collusion*

Collusion is the presentation by a student of an assignment as his or her own which is in fact the result in whole or in part of unauthorised collaboration with another person or persons. Collusion involves the cooperation of two or more students in plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct.

Both collusion and plagiarism can occur in group work.

##### **Student declaration**

Please tick to indicate that you understand the following statements.

I declare that:

This assignment is my own original work, except where I have appropriately cited the original source.

This assignment has not previously been submitted for assessment in this or any other context.

I have read and understood the College's Policy in respect of Academic Honesty and Plagiarism.

For the purposes of assessment, I give the assessor of this assignment the permission to:

Reproduce this assignment for marking purposes; and

Take steps to authenticate the assignment, including communicating a copy of this assignment to a checking service (which may retain a copy of the assignment on its database for future plagiarism checking).

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

NB. This cover sheet could be adapted to suit existing cover sheets such as the Palliative Medicine Chapter Trainee Project Cover Sheet.

## Appendix 2:

### Tips on Preventing Plagiarism

#### PREVENTING PLAGIARISM

Learning how to reference correctly and acknowledge all sources is a crucial part of academic and scholarly work. It is not merely an add-on but an integral part of the assignment preparation process. The more proficient a trainee becomes in referencing, he or she will develop a more critical mind and be able to evaluate more rigorously their sources.

All trainees will need to consider the following to avoid unintentional plagiarism:

- master correct referencing practices (most Universities have a range of resources on good referencing techniques — for example, The University of Melbourne and Monash University have developed *Acknowledgement*, an online resource to educate both staff and students on academic honesty and plagiarism issues — <http://calt.monash.edu.au/staff-teaching/plagiarism/acknowledgement/about/index.html>)
- attribute appropriately all cited materials (including written text, diagrams and images) where citations occur
- avoid taking short cuts when preparing assignments
- manage time efficiently and effectively when preparing assignments
- write out more than one draft of an assignment
- take the time to check carefully all quoted material used in assignments and ensure quotes/references are fully and correctly referenced.