
Plagiarism and Collusion Policy

Plagiarism and collusion will not be tolerated. The Plagiarism and Collusion Policy applies to all electronic assessments submitted for any ABE qualification or unit, including Assignments and Timed-OBEs. Electronic assessments submitted to ABE may be subject to scrutiny using our plagiarism checking software.

Definitions

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's work.

It takes the form of the reproduction or quotation, without acknowledgement, of the work of others (including the work of fellow learners), published or unpublished, either verbatim or in close paraphrase, including material from computer files or downloaded from the internet. All work submitted for assessment is accepted on the understanding that it is by the learner's own effort without wrongful appropriation of any kind. Learners are expected to offer their own analysis and presentation of information gleaned from research. Any sources or quotations used should be acknowledged and/or referenced in accordance with the appropriate convention.

Collusion

Collusion is a form of plagiarism, involving unauthorized co-operation between at least two people, with the intent to deceive. It can take the following forms:

- (a) The conspiring by two or more learners to produce a piece of work together with the intention that at least one passes it off as their own work.
- (b) The submission by a learner of the work of another learner, in circumstances where the latter has willingly lent the former the work and where it should be evident to the learner lending the work that by so doing an advantage is conferred on the other learner. In this case, both learners are guilty of collusion.
- (c) In cases where there is unauthorized co-operation between a learner and another person in the preparation and production of work which is presented as the learner's own.
- (d) The commissioning and submission of work as the learner's own, where the learner has purchased work, or solicited another individual to produce work on the learner's behalf.

Obligations of Learners

All learners must be willing on each occasion to sign a declaration that the work they are submitting is their own work and that they have not knowingly let other learners copy it. Even when this is not required, the assumption is that all submitted work is the learner's own.

Where appropriate, learners are expected to familiarise themselves with and make use of the method(s) of citing other people's work in accordance with the appropriate conventions.

Plagiarism Checking Software

Assessments submitted to ABE may be put through a plagiarism checking software system called Turnitin. Unit assessments are loaded into Turnitin, and the software allocates each unit submission a 'score' based on its similarity to other publicly submitted assessments.

Any assessment whose Turnitin score is more than the threshold for the Level will be checked and some common sources (those associated with the assessment context and the referencing) will be excluded, lowering the overall score.

The software can determine if an assessment has been copied from another submission and will identify the learner(s) by name, ABE membership number and ABE registered centre, if a learner has passed off another ABE learner's work as their own.

If the assessment submission remains above the threshold for the Level, then that assessment will automatically fail.

Assessments whose scores are on the borderline of the Level threshold (or where the single source percentage threshold is higher than the stated maximum for the Level where the overall headline score is below the Level threshold), then the assessment may either be failed or capped at a pass (by reason of 'poor academic practice', or PAP).

Outcomes and Penalties

Plagiarism

Where a learner's assessment Turnitin score cannot be reduced below Level threshold for Turnitin, the Examiner will award the assessment the mark of **One***. The learner will need to submit a new assessment to ABE.

Collusion

ABE has a clear policy on collusion within assessments: please see the Malpractice Policy for further information.

Collusion will be investigated thoroughly with centres and learners, and the outcome of the investigation will determine the level of the sanction applied.

Learners whose assessment Turnitin analysis shows links between learner assessment submissions within the same unit between one (or more) other learner(s) will be awarded the mark of **One*** by the Examiner. The learner(s) will need to submit a new assessment to ABE.

ABE also maintains a 'watch list' of learners who have committed academic malpractice in each assessment session. Repeated attempts of collusion and/or plagiarism by learners may lead to a termination of membership of ABE according to the 'three strikes' rule. This rule states that where a learner is found to be committing acts of collusion and plagiarism in their submitted assessments three times, in one or more assessment sessions, their registered centre will be advised of the intention to terminate that learner's membership of ABE. This policy became active in the March 2023 session.

ABE will work with the centres to combat academic malpractice. ABE will alert centres at the end of each assessment session whether their learners are 'at risk' of reaching the threshold that triggers the loss of membership. Centres will be advised on the actions needed to reduce the incidence of such malpractice in subsequent assessment sessions. This approach is meant at all times to be collaborative and will include a number of agreed actions aimed at reducing the incidence of academic malpractice.

*The award of a mark of **One** by ABE is to indicate that the assessment has been assessed and run through the plagiarism software by ABE