



Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Policy

Document Control

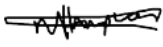
Version	Date	Author	Notes
v0.1	07.08.2023	Mike Hampton	First Draft
v1.0	21.09.2023	Mike Hampton	First issued

Review date
21.09.2024

Document Location

Location
Internal Link Only: Policies and Processes (JW and MH)

Approval

Name	Role	Date	Signature
Mike Hampton	Quality Improvement and Audit Manager	21/09/2023	

Distribution

Name	Role	Date	Signature

Contents

Introduction.....	4
Definitions	4
Plagiarism	4
Collusion	4
Cheating	4
Fraud and Anti-Bribery	4
Serco Skills and Learners Commitment	5
Process in the Event of an Incident	5
Further Guidance and References	5

Introduction

The term “learner,” within this policy, is used to describe all learners and apprentices involved with Serco Skills, this also includes those learners enrolled with subcontractors.

This policy outlines the definitions of plagiarism, collusion, cheating, fraud, and anti-bribery, as well as the process that must be followed in the case of an incident occurring.

Definitions

Plagiarism

The University of Oxford (2023) defines Plagiarism as:

Presenting work or ideas from another source as your own, with or without the consent of the original author, by incorporating it into your own work without full acknowledgment.

Sources of information, including images/graphics:

- Published books
- Published articles
- Content sourced from the internet
- Unpublished documents such as course notes and work from another Learner

Examples of plagiarism could include the following without correct referencing being used (for example [Harvard referencing](#)):

- Copying extracts from another person’s work, published or unpublished
- Use of diagrams, images, course notes
- Summarising the work of another or using their ideas
- Copying or using the work of another participant (past or present)

Plagiarism also includes the purchasing of essays or downloading them from the internet to submit them as your own work.

Collusion

According to the University of Oxford (2023), collusion involves “unauthorised collaboration between learners, failure to attribute assistance received, or failure to precisely follow regulations on group work projects”, and that “it is the responsibility of the learner to ensure that they are clear about the extent of the collaboration permitted”.

At times learners will be required to work together on projects, however the work submitted must that of their own (unless otherwise specified). It is acceptable to discuss ideas, talk about books, articles, online material, and strategies for example with other learners. It is not acceptable for learners to help each other to produce work that will be submitted as their own and an individual piece of work. Learners must never lend their work to another learner under any circumstances as it may be copied or reproduced. This example would leave both learners vulnerable to an accusation of collusion.

Cheating

Cambridge Dictionary (2023) defines cheating as behaving in a dishonest way to get what you want. Cheating is a form of plagiarism and collusion; examples of cheating may include:

- Gaining access to test papers/answers and using them to give the learner/s an advantage.
- Use of external sources of information, such as the internet, in assessments where this is not permitted.
- Receiving an excessive amount of support from the tutor giving the learner an unfair advantage.

Fraud and Anti-Bribery

Plagiarism can be seen as an act of fraud. Serco’s supplier code of conduct (2018), see link below, explains that

fraud is a criminal offence, and the definition varies across countries, however it always involves the acts of deception and dishonesty. It is an act of fraud to act dishonestly to deceive someone to gain an advantage.

Serco have a zero tolerance on bribery, no matter how small or harmless this may seem. Bribery can include the offer of financial incentive to turn a blind eye. Further information on Serco's stance on this can be found on Serco's [mycode website](#).

All Serco Skills subcontractors must read and agree to the contents within the [Serco's supplier code of conduct](#).

Serco [SpeakUp](#) process can be used if you believe someone is breaking the Serco mycode or the law.

Serco Skills and Learners Commitment

All learners will be provided information upon induction onto the programme, which will include the various policies they need to be aware of – which includes the Plagiarism and Cheating policy.

All learners will be provided information on how to correctly reference other people's/source's work, within their own. All learners will ensure that all work submitted is their own and correctly referenced.

All learners will be reminded of the content of this policy before undertaking any assessment or examination.

Upon submission of assignments Serco Skills staff will conduct various checks to ensure plagiarism is not present, this can include (not exhaustive):

- Identify any inconsistency in text formatting which may alert them to the potential of copy and paste taking place.
 - Identify any inconsistency with the overall structure/layout, language used and sentence structures.
 - Identify spelling inconsistencies such as the use of American and British spellings.
 - Lack of referencing.
 - Spot checking phrases/sentences using an online search engine, reviewing the results, and comparing similarity.
-

Process in the Event of an Incident

When a concern over plagiarism, cheating or collusion occurs the person raising the concern must inform the Programme Lead within three working days.

The Programme Lead will conduct a thorough investigation to establish the allegation, by reviewing the evidence available.

In all cases the awarding bodies' requirements must be followed, which may include reporting the incident to them.

Depending on the outcome of the investigation and severity the Programme Lead will do one of the following:

- Provide the learner/subcontractor the opportunity to resolve the issue, however keeping a clear audit trail for future reference, such as at EQA visits.
 - Provide a written warning (or final warning for reoccurrence) to the learner/staff member/subcontractor
 - Provide training and support to staff member/subcontractors
 - Further disciplinary action such as removal of the learner from the programme, or following the Serco standard disciplinary procedures for staff members
 - Check the learner's understanding via a question and answer/professional discussion activity.
-

Further Guidance and References

Serco My Code. (2023) Bribery and Corruption. Available at URL: [Bribery | mycode | Serco](#) (accessed 17/08/2023).

Serco Speak Up. (2023) Speak Up – help make it right. Available at URL: [EthicsPoint - Serco](#) (accessed 17/08/2023)

Awarding Body

ILM - [ILM policies and guidance – Information for centres \(i-l-m.com\)](#)

NCFE - [Mandatory policies and fees | NCFE](#)

C&G - [Centre document library | City & Guilds \(cityandguilds.com\)](#)

TQUK - [Policies - TQUK EPA](#)