

Copyright breach & plagiarism misconduct policy

1. Purpose

The purpose(s) of this policy and associated processes and procedures are to:

- Acknowledge that integrity is key to all aspects of education and training and academic honesty and respect for others' work is the responsibility PICAC staff and students.
- Ensure the PICAC community understands. And their work reflects. Academic integrity, including honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.
- Identify behaviors and standards of conduct to foster a learning environment of academic integrity.
- Ensure that students and staff are fully informed of the policy and procedures regarding academic integrity and plagiarism.
- Provide a systematic approach to academic integrity and breaches of academic integrity.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the PICAC learner code of conduct policy & procedures.

2. Scope

The Plumbing Industry Climate Action Center (PICAC) is a unique industry-led organization. PICAC is a partnership supported by the:

- Plumbing and pipe trades employees' union (PPTEU),
- Master plumbers and mechanical services association of Australia (MPMSAA),
- Master plumbers' association of Queensland (MPAQ),
- National fire industry association of Australia (NFIA); and,
- Air conditioning and mechanical contractors' association (AMCA).

PICAC operates to, what is essentially an "umbrella group of RTO entities" model that consists of PICAC RTO-ID 22556 and the following RTO's to which it provides "a suite of shared services management and administration" functions:

- FiT (Fire Industry Training Pty Ltd (TGA-ID 22101).
- STC (The Service Trades College Australia Pty Ltd (TGA-ID 31239).
- CEPUTEC ((Cepu Plumbing Division) Education & Training Center Ltd (TGA-ID 4612).

Thus, hereafter a reference to PICAC in all policies and procedures is a reference to the above RTOS group.

3. Standards Referenced

Standards for RTOS 2025:

Outcome standards

- **Standard 1.4(b)(iii)** – the assessor is assured that a VET student's assessment evidence is the original and genuine work of that vet student.

Compliance standards

- **Part 2 - Division 3 - Standard 20** - compliance with laws

4. Policy Statement

There is an expectation that PICAC students will prepare and submit assessment work which:

- It is their own,
- Acknowledges the work of others,
- It is authentic; and,
- Completed without access to generative artificial intelligence tools unless specific permission is given by the PICAC trainer/assessor with relevant referencing.

Acts of academic misconduct are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

5. Principles

PICAC will meet the SRT0 2025 and all other regulatory requirements relating to academic integrity.

PICAC is committed to ensuring high standards of academic behavior are reinforced, that students present thoughts, opinions, concepts, ideas and information in assessments that are independent, well researched and their own.

Noting: use of generative artificial intelligence tools (computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence) may be sanctioned by the PICAC trainer/assessor.

Notwithstanding reference to ai tools usage under certain circumstances it is critical that a clear standard is articulated by PICAC regarding submission of work for assessment and reinforcement of the principles of academic integrity – the fundamentals of which are defined at 4. Above.

All PICAC students and staff understand what constitutes academic integrity, cheating, plagiarism and collusion as these matters clearly referred to pre-enrolment and enrolment induction stages.

Academic misconduct, either intentional or unintentional, is a practice which runs counter to the very purpose of vocational education and training (vet).

Acts of academic misconduct are unacceptable and will not be tolerated by PICAC - it is a serious incident and disciplinary procedures apply. (refer to the PICAC student/learner code of conduct policy).

Support is available to students to improve identified writing skills issues including those referred to above.

This policy forms part of PICAC staff induction and information regarding cheating, plagiarism and copyright breach (i.e., academic integrity) is reference in this policy and procedure on the PICAC website.

To reinforce PICAC's commitment to "academic integrity" students are required to sign a declaration forming part of each assessment task completed by a student that the work submitted is their own work.

Consistent with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, any suspicion of such misconduct by a student/students will be handled in the first instance by the trainer/assessor. The process thereafter is as prescribed in the PICAC student/learner code of conduct policy.

In the lead up to, and during the conduct of, any inquiry into academic misconduct by a student they may seek assistance from PICAC student support for guidance, advice and counselling.

Consistent with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness students are entitled to appeal a decision regarding academic misconduct and request a review of the outcome of the decision as per the PICAC student/learner code of conduct policy.

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1.1 Students:

Students are responsible for:

- Becoming familiar with and developing good practices in maintaining academic and research integrity, knowing the standards of behavior expected from students, and the disciplinary procedures PICAC will take for academic and research misconduct, always acting with academic and research integrity during any kind of assessment activity, industry placement and collaborative activities,
- Completing declarations confirming assessments is the student's own work, ensuring that all sources of information are appropriately acknowledged, taking all reasonable precautions to ensure work cannot be copied by other students, and not providing a copy of assessments to other students.

5.1.2 Trainer/Assessors:

Trainers/assessors are responsible for:

- Explaining to students what academic misconduct is and guidance on how to avoid it.
- Ensuring students understand what is required for individual and group work.
- Creating a learning environment and assessment tasks that mitigate against any breach.
- Ensuring all students have access to consistent learning and assessment conditions.
- Ensuring processes are in place to maintain the security and confidentiality of records relating to allegations of academic misconduct on PICAC information systems.
- Reporting, in writing, to the employer and AASN provider of any disciplinary action, with due recognition and regard to privacy considerations.
- Ensuring assessment is accompanied by a completed copy of the student declaration.
- Vigilance in detection of cheating, plagiarism, using generative artificial intelligence tools to complete assessments, when educator permission has not been specifically granted.
- Reviewing submitted assessments to detect instances of academic misconduct
- Consistent feedback to students on referencing and academic integrity through their own teaching practice.

5.1.3 Senior Trainers &/Or State's (Training And) Administration Managers:

Senior trainers and/or state's (training and) administration managers are responsible for:

- Assisting trainer/assessor to thoroughly understand academic integrity and misconduct.
- Consistent student messaging on academic integrity and consequences of misconduct.
- Investigating all allegations of academic misconduct in their training delivery area.
- Deciding if academic misconduct has occurred and if any disciplinary action is required.
- Deciding if a student is given:
 - A re-sit of assessment,
 - Complete another assessment task or,
 - Be deemed not satisfactory without an opportunity for a re-sit.
- Sharing successful strategies for managing academic misconduct as part of regular teaching area team meetings.
- Communicating with relevant parties on disciplinary action where academic misconduct is substantiated.

5.1.4 PICAC CEO/Directors:

The PICAC CEO and/or directors are responsible for:

- Ensuring academic integrity is consistently maintained across the PICAC group of RTOs.
- Investigating and managing any such appeals against adverse finding of breaches of academic integrity, copyright and/or plagiarism as conducted consistently with the PICAC grievances, complaints and appeals policy processes and protocols; and,
- Maintaining a PICAC register of all instances of academic misconduct and providing regular reports to academic council (of the PICAC board).

5.1.5 States Operations Managers:

The state's Operations Managers may, on the decision of the PICAC CEO based on findings of academic misconduct arrived at by the senior trainers &/or state's administration managers, exclude a student from a subject or course, where there are more than one instance of academic misconduct.

- Assisting senior trainers and an administration manager to thoroughly understand academic integrity and associated misconduct,
- Providing guidance on intellectual property rights and responsibilities; and,
- Providing course examples of good practice to trainers, senior trainers and administration managers so they may explain and demonstrate students' academic integrity and referencing techniques'

6. Definitions

All terminology used in this policy is consistent with definitions in the PICAC glossary of terms & acronyms. Specific definitions relating to this policy include:

Academic integrity	Educators, students, and all members of the PICAC community act with honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Adapted from the SRTO's-2025 – 1.4(b)(i) to (iv)
Academic misconduct	Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cheating. - Plagiarism. - Collusion; and, - Improper collaboration During the preparation of any prescribed assessment tasks. Student academic misconduct is prohibited and any violations by students may result in ongoing course participation and/or class attendance penalties.
Cheating	The dishonest use of information or misleading or deceptive submission of work in any academic context may take the form of, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using and/or copying from electronic accessories (translators, diaries, dictionaries, programmable calculators, mobile phones, smart watches etc.) As observed during an assessment - Hiring or asking another person (or organization) to complete an assessment, prepare or produce content or any other material used for academic assessment purposes on their behalf - Submitting identical work (or a significant portion of) used in another subject or course by the student - Unauthorized communications with other students during the exam or assessment - Copying from someone else's test or assessment - Using unauthorised material, such as a textbook, notebook, cheat notes or any other written materials during an assessment - Communicating material to other students in an assessment leaving answers exposed for other students to copy - Copying another student's work and submitting it as their own.
Collusion	It means an agreement between a student and another person(s) to deceptively present academic work outside stipulated requirements, like when two people work together on an assignment/assessment, which is designed to be completed individually. It is acceptable to get help from or provide help to others. It is also acceptable to discuss ideas, strategies, and approaches to a particular piece of academic work.

	<p>However, it is not acceptable to submit work not undertaken independently.</p> <p>Group work must be undertaken according to instructions given in the same manner.</p>
Generative artificial intelligence	<p>Generative artificial intelligence (ai) is a series of tools that leverage vast amounts of information available on the internet to quickly generate text and code-based outputs in response to simple contextual prompts from a user.</p>
Group work	<p>Group work is the authorised act of a group of students producing either a common assessable work, or an individually assessed piece of work, as part of a larger project.</p>
Intentional plagiarism	<p>Plagiarism is associated with intent to deceive.</p>
Plagiarism	<p>A student that uses the ideas, words or work of another person, without acknowledging the sources of the ideas, words or work.</p> <p>Plagiarism may take several forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct copying of someone else's work such as phrases, paragraphs, graphs, tables or ideas without acknowledgment - Copying internet materials without referencing - Minor paraphrasing of other people's work, by changing words or altering phrases or paragraphs order without acknowledgment <p>Submitting work, which has been developed fully or partly by other people, on the student's behalf as if it were the work of the student.</p>
Poor academic practice	<p>Poor academic practice occurs when a student submits any type of assessment that does not properly acknowledge the origin of words, ideas, images, tables, diagrams, maps, code, sound and any other sources used in the assessment.</p>
Unintentional plagiarism	<p>Plagiarism is associated with a lack of understanding of plagiarism or a lack of skill in referencing /acknowledging others' work (this is a breach of this policy).</p>

7. Supporting Processes

Process name	Purpose
Learner Conduct	Investigates breaches of conduct and applies disciplinary action.

8. Supporting Documents

Document No	Name
Code of Conduct	Code of Conduct Agreement
Student Handbook	Student Handbook (contains policies and course details).
Learner Conduct Policy	S5 Learner Conduct Policy
Complaints and Appeals Policy	Complaints and Appeals Policy
Privacy policy	Privacy policy
Support & Progression Pillar Policies	Support & Progression Pillar Policies
Training & Assessment Pillar Policies	Training & Assessment Pillar Policies

9. Version Control

Version	Date	Changes
V1	01/09/2025	First Release