

U27

Plagiarism Policy

Policy owner	Head of Quality & Compliance
Policy approved by	Approved by Head of Quality & Compliance on behalf of the Senior Leadership Team / Governing Body
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Table of Contents

Revision History 2

Principles 3

Scope 3

Responsibilities..... 4

Definitions..... 5

What is plagiarism and the different types? 5

 Intentional plagiarism:..... 6

 Unintentional plagiarism may occur to: 6

What will FuturU do in regard to plagiarism?..... 7

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Assessment: 9

Revision History

Revision date	Version	Author	Revision Summary
April 2025	1.1	HoQ&C	New format
March 2026	1.2	HoQ&C	Amended the term EPA and aligned to regulatory bodies and FuturU governance structure

Principles

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the following:

That FuturU follows its obligation to learners, employers, training providers, and awarding organisations, to ensure that learners' work is their own and is a true reflection of their own knowledge and skills and there is no evidence of plagiarism.

This policy sets out the sanctions that will be implemented in cases of plagiarism, determined by the seriousness of the occurrence.

The management of plagiarism forms part of FuturU's wider governance and risk management arrangements. Oversight of plagiarism trends, incidents, and outcomes is maintained through the governance structure set out in U1 Governance Systems and Structures Policy & Procedure.

Significant or repeated incidents of plagiarism may be escalated to governance in line with organisational risk management and escalation procedures.

Plagiarism risks are monitored as part of FuturU's risk management arrangements, and control measures are reviewed periodically to ensure the continued integrity, validity, and reliability of assessment.

This aligns U27 with:

- governance
- risk management
- quality assurance

Confirmed cases of plagiarism, trends, and emerging risks will be reported through FuturU's governance structure in line with U1 Governance Systems and Structures Policy & Procedure. Reporting will occur through established quality assurance and risk management reporting cycles to ensure appropriate oversight and decision-making.

Plagiarism data and trends will be periodically reviewed to support continuous improvement, risk management, and effective governance oversight.

Scope

This policy has a scope of the following:

- For the purposes of this policy, the term 'assessment' includes Apprenticeship Assessment, examinations, professional discussions, written submissions, and any other summative assessment activity.

- Any learner/apprentice completing an Apprenticeship Assessment, qualification, or Qualifications Scotland qualification with FuturU.
- Any training provider or employer utilising FuturU as an Assessment Organisation or delivery centre.
- All assessors involved in the delivery of Apprenticeship Assessment and Qualification for FuturU.
- All Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) involved in the quality assurance of Apprenticeship Assessments and Qualifications for FuturU.
- Any External Quality Assurers (EQA) involved in the quality assurance of Qualifications delivered by FuturU.
- Any regulatory body that FuturU must maintain compliance with.

This policy must be used alongside the following policies:

- U1 Governance Systems and Structures Policy & Procedure
- U15 Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- U12 Appeals Policy
- U13 Complaints Policy and Procedure
- U26 Artificial Intelligence in Education Policy
- FuturU Referencing Guide

Responsibilities

- While all parties have a responsibility to uphold this policy, accountability for identification, reporting, and investigation of suspected plagiarism rests with assessors, IQAs, and the Head of Quality & Compliance.
- The Head of Quality & Compliance ensures this policy is current and up to date with professional and regulatory body requirements.
- The assessors/IQAs/Lead IQAs/Quality Leads are responsible for conducting the strategies created to uphold the principles of this policy.
- Learners/apprentices are responsible for ensuring that any work completed as part of their Apprenticeship Assessment or Qualification is their own and that any use of another source is clearly referenced, using Harvard Referencing. Any direct quotes taken should be supported by quotation marks and included in the list of references.
- All suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported and investigated in accordance with the procedures set out in U15 Malpractice and Maladministration Policy. Plagiarism is considered a form of malpractice where it compromises the integrity of the assessment process.
- Assessors and IQAs involved with the teaching, learning and assessment process are required to uphold all aspects of this policy.

All suspected cases of plagiarism will be managed in accordance with the investigation, evidence gathering, decision-making, and sanction processes defined in U15 Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

The Head of Quality & Compliance is responsible for ensuring plagiarism risks are monitored, recorded, and reviewed as part of FuturU's risk management processes in accordance with U1 Governance Systems and Structures Policy & Procedure.

Definitions

- **Qualification:** A programme of learning and assessments created by the awarding organisation, alongside professional bodies, which allows a learner to achieve a qualification and status for specific roles.
- **Apprenticeship Assessment:** This is where an apprentice undertakes the required assessment components to demonstrate their knowledge and skills during the apprenticeship.
- **Awarding Organisation:** The partner who created and monitors the qualifications.
- **Delivery Centres:** The partner who delivers the teaching and assessments for the qualification.
- **Training Providers:** The partner who delivers the teaching and assessments for the apprenticeship.
- **External Quality Assurer (EQA):** The designated quality assurer is assigned by the awarding organisation to ensure all assessment processes are conducted consistently, are valid, reliable and to the standards required.
- **Source:** This is anything that has been used by the learner/apprentice, produced by another person, and used to support the learner/apprentices' work.
- **Malpractice:** Any deliberate activity, neglect, default, or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process.
- **Plagiarism** is considered a form of malpractice where it compromises the authenticity, validity, or integrity of assessment evidence and will be managed in accordance with U15 Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

What is plagiarism and the different types?

Oxford Dictionary describes plagiarism as 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.'

There are a number of distinct types of plagiarism:

- Copying parts of a text word for word without the correct use of quotation marks
- Paraphrasing
- Giving incorrect information about the source
- Quoting so much from a source that it makes up the majority of your work.
- Reusing work you have used for a previous assignment, without referencing yourself. This is known as self-plagiarism.
- Submitting work that has been entirely written by someone else.

Plagiarism can be both intentional or unintentional, FuturU will determine, based on available evidence, whether plagiarism is deemed intentional or unintentional and reserve the right to apply sanctions based on this decision.

Intentional plagiarism:

- Deliberate copying or use of another person's work without acknowledgement
- Intentionally submitting work created by another individual or system
- Colluding with others to produce work presented as individual effort.
- Believing that it is ok to copy the work of others and the belief that it is an easy way to gain a qualification.
- Intentional cheating and deliberately claiming the work of another as your own.
- Working with another to produce work that is then passed off as their own.

Unintentional plagiarism may occur to:

- A lack of understanding of the referencing process, leading to the incorrect use of citation or referencing.
- A lack of studying and research skills
- Not understanding what plagiarism is and what this includes.
- Poor time management, leading to mistakes.
- Being overly dependent on the original source
- Poor language skills
- Use of a previously accepted referencing process that was not identified as incorrect.
- Using material that was completed as a group activity and claiming it as your own.
- A lack of understanding of intellectual property rights

Above are common reasons for plagiarism, however, this list is not exhaustive.

What will FuturU do in regard to plagiarism?

In order to support learners' understanding of plagiarism and to help them produce original work, FuturU will provide access to the Plagiarism Policy and relevant learner handbooks at the start of the Apprenticeship Assessment or Qualification.

Within our training division, learners will be provided with guidance on correct referencing, including the use of Harvard referencing, and assessors will provide instruction and support on how to reference sources appropriately. They will be required to read and sign a plagiarism declaration confirming that they understand what plagiarism is, the expectations for academic integrity, and that all work submitted will be their own. This declaration forms part of FuturU's preventative controls to ensure learners are fully informed of their responsibilities before undertaking assessment. Signed declarations will be retained as part of the learner record in accordance with FuturU's document retention and quality assurance requirements.

Assessors will inform learners about plagiarism, what this is and consequences if this is identified, during their induction. They will be reminded of this throughout the length of their qualification. There will be an emphasis on Training Providers to inform Apprentices that are completing their Apprenticeship Assessment with FuturU about cheating.

The assessor will remind apprentices during their assessment pre-call and at the beginning of the assessment. Before each assessment, apprentices will be required to complete a 360-degree room scan to check that there is nothing that could put the learner at an advantage (e.g. having someone in the room with them, or information on the walls).

If an assessor suspects plagiarism has occurred during the examination of a learner's work, they have a duty to report this following the process outlined in the Malpractice and Maladministration policy. For further details please see U15 - Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Depending on the type of plagiarism and whether it was intentional or unintentional, different sanctions may be applied. Sanctions will be applied proportionately based on the severity of the incident, level of intent, and risk to the integrity of the assessment process.

These may include but are not limited to:

1. Issuing a written warning that if the offence is repeated, further action may be necessary; additional training or support on good practice in assessments may be offered where this is deemed appropriate.

2. Loss of grading for the related work (with the opportunity to re-sit/retake)
3. Disqualification from the process (constituting an overall failure grade)
4. Placing a ban from undertaking any further activity with FuturU.
5. Reporting to regulatory bodies, awarding organisations, or other relevant authorities.

The sanctions listed above primarily relate to individual learners. Where plagiarism or related malpractice involves training providers, delivery centres, employers, or staff, additional organisational actions may be applied in accordance with U15 Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Plagiarism incidents will be escalated to governance where they:

- are high risk or severe.
- involve multiple learners or staff.
- indicate potential systemic failure.
- involve regulatory notification.
- present reputational risk to FuturU

Where plagiarism detection software or other review methods identify similarity levels exceeding organisational thresholds (25% or higher), including similarity arising from both plagiarism and the use of Artificial Intelligence, the work will be subject to review to determine whether malpractice has occurred in accordance with U15 Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

The similarity percentage alone does not automatically constitute malpractice; professional judgement will be applied to determine intent, context, and materiality.

Decisions will be made based on the balance of evidence and in accordance with FuturU's malpractice investigation procedures.

All confirmed cases of plagiarism will be recorded and monitored to identify trends, inform quality improvement activities, and support effective governance oversight in line with U1 Governance Systems and Structures Policy & Procedure.

Where plagiarism incidents are identified as significant, repeated, or indicative of systemic risk, the matter will be escalated to governance in accordance with the escalation and reporting arrangements defined in U1 Governance Systems and Structures Policy & Procedure.

Learners can appeal decisions under U12 Appeals Policy.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Assessment:

FuturU believes the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a positive experience for both learners and staff during the learner journey. However, there can be a number of ways in which AI can be misused leading to an unfair advantage and lowering the validity of assessments.

Please see U26 - Artificial Intelligence in Education Policy and the relevant Learner Handbook for details on the correct use of AI in assessment and the consequences for the misuse of AI.

The misuse of Artificial Intelligence tools in assessment may constitute plagiarism and/or malpractice and will be investigated and managed in accordance with U15 Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.