

Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service Plagiarism and Cheating Policy (2026/27)

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1. Purpose of this Policy

Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service (WFALS) is committed to delivering outstanding teaching and learning and ensuring fairness, academic integrity and authenticity in all assessed work.

This policy outlines how WFALS manages suspected cases of plagiarism, cheating, collusion and misuse of artificial intelligence.

2. Definition of Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism includes copying work or using ideas from:

- The internet
- A course book
- Another learner

Cheating includes:

- Dishonest behaviour during exams
- Dishonest behaviour during assessments
- Submitting work that is not the learner's own

Learners may be asked to redo work and may fail the course where malpractice is confirmed.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Strategic Responsibility

Overall responsibility lies with the Deputy Head of Adult Learning.

3.2 Operational Responsibility

Programme and Curriculum Managers, along with tutors, are responsible for:

- Giving clear guidance to learners on academic integrity
- Reporting and managing suspected cases

3.3 Examination Misconduct

- Suspected cheating in an examination must be recorded by the Invigilator on an incident report and forwarded to the Accreditation Officer.
 - Misconduct during an externally assessed activity (e.g. workplace assessment) must be reported by the assessor to their Curriculum Manager.
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4. Investigation Procedures

WFALS will conduct a fair and objective investigation into any allegation of plagiarism or cheating.

The learner will be informed of:

- The allegation
- The investigation process
- The decision reached
- Their right to appeal

Programme/Curriculum Managers and the Deputy Head of Adult Learning will jointly review evidence and determine outcomes.

5. AI Misuse and Malpractice

5.1 Definition of AI Misuse

Any use of artificial intelligence (AI) that results in work not demonstrating the learner's own attainment is considered malpractice.

Examples include:

- Copying or paraphrasing AI-generated text
- Using AI to complete parts of an assessment
- Failing to acknowledge the use of AI tools
- Providing misleading or incomplete references
- Submitting AI-generated responses as one's own work

5.2 Malpractice Framework

AI misuse falls under JCQ "Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures". Misconduct may result in:

- Disqualification
 - Loss of marks
 - Restrictions on future assessments
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6. Timescales for Investigation and Appeal

- Investigation completed within 10 working days
- Outcome communicated within 5 working days
- Learner has 5 working days to appeal
- Appeal response issued within 5 working days

Total process timescale:

- No appeal: 20 working days
 - With appeal: 25 working days
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7. Learner Rights

WFALS ensures that learners:

- Have the right to explain their actions during investigations
 - Receive clear communication of decisions
 - Have the right to appeal internally
 - May appeal to the awarding body where applicable
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