

College Policy

Pearson Higher Nationals – Student Plagiarism Policy incorporating use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in assessment. 2025-26

25th July 2025



Senior Leadership Responsibility	Deputy Chief Executive - Curriculum and Quality- Adam Fahey
Policy Author	Executive Director Quality, Teaching and Learning) – Matthew Twitchett
Roles Responsible for Reviewing	Executive Director Quality, Teaching and Learning
Issue date of current version	25-26- V1
Date to be reviewed	August 26
Type of Policy	Public

Significant changes following review of policy – 25th July 2024

Page Number or Heading Name	Details of significant change	Changes made by
0	New Policy title to stress importance of use of AI in assessment	Matthew Twitchett
Page 4/5	Reference made to JCQ guidance	Matthew Twitchett
Page 7 – Section 1.9	Reference made to sanctions that could be applied if a student found to misuse AI	Matthew Twitchett
Page 8 – Section 2.7	Staff and students to be provided with latest JCQ information guidance documents	Matthew Twitchett
Page 8 - section 2.8	Staff only to accept work with the declaration of authenticity form signed by student	Matthew Twitchett
Page 9 - Section 3	New section added to comply with JCQ update	Matthew Twitchett

POLICY AVAILABILITY NOTICE

This policy is available in alternative formats upon request to accommodate different needs including word. To request an alternative format, please contact HE support at HEsupport@southessex.ac.uk

Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the college. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	27-8-25
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	Matthew Twitchett
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	Executive Director of Quality, Teaching and Learning
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change	Students and Staff employed
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.	This is a yearly review and update required by awarding organisations

You will need to consider whether it's possible that the proposed new policy / change in policy / procedure/practice etc could discriminate or unfairly discriminate or disadvantage people. You should consider:

Who gets to participate	Who does not, or who now does not due to the changes proposed / made.
Who is at an advantage	Who is at a disadvantage, and again has this changed?
Who will benefit	Who will not benefit (or who did and now doesn't due to the changes proposed in policy)
Who can access the policy	Who cannot, or now cannot.

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with one being lowest impact and 5 being the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age	1	None identified		
Disability	2	Some staff and students may need support in understanding the policy. Staff will be supported by the quality and compliance team. Students will be provided support by the academic and student support teams in the College.	Staff with an identified disability can seek support from the quality and compliance team. Students with an identified disability can seek support from the college from their programme or college student support team.	As and when required
Gender (Sex)	1	None identified		
Gender Reassignment	1	None identified		
Marriage or Civil Partnership	1	None identified		
Pregnancy / Maternity	1	None identified		
Race	1	None identified		
Religion or Religious Belief	1	None identified		
Sexual Orientation	1	None identified		
Any other element that needs to be considered.	1	None identified		

Note:

1. The terms stated under protected characteristics are the terminology used in the Equality Act 2010.
2. As part of the policy approval process Executive Board will consider the EIA assessment and any potential barriers which we may not be able to overcome and whether the action proposed will mitigate sufficiently within legislation or whether we decide to not implement the new policy if the risk are significant. If the policy is approved the EIA is also approved.

South Essex College Group
Executive summary

Student Plagiarism Policy incorporating use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in assessment

This policy applies to all students on Further and Higher Education programmes and students on BTEC Higher Nationals including Higher Technical Qualifications. A separate procedure is published providing more detail on what to do when plagiarism is suspected.

For the purposes of this policy, plagiarism is defined as:

“The reproduction of someone else’s work and presenting it as being your own, or taking your own work and submitting it more than once in different assignments”

Plagiarism is much more than simple copying from another student, or from books or the Internet, and can be taken to include paraphrasing, sub-contracting the work to someone else, submitting the same piece of work for two different purposes, etc. Ultimately, plagiarism is attempting to pass off other people’s work and ideas as your own.

Plagiarism may be of written and non- written form and covers all forms of assessment.

This Policy must be read in conjunction with any awarding organisation guidance relating to assessment and plagiarism which must be adhered to.

This policy has been reviewed to include guidance produced by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), ‘AI use in assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications’, revision two on the 30th April 2025. This guidance clearly states that teachers and assessors must only accept work for qualification assessment which is the students’ own.

Students must be able to demonstrate that the final submission of the assessment is the product of their own independent work and independent thinking

AI misuse constitutes malpractice as defined in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and procedures (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>)

Within this policy, the use of the term plagiarism will include the use of Artificial intelligence tools.

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The College expects all of its students to act honestly when completing academic work, and our policy on plagiarism makes clear what sort of behaviour relating to assessment is unacceptable. It sets out rules about how students are expected to behave when they do written and other forms of academic assessment.
- 1.2 For the purposes of this policy, plagiarism is defined as: a form of academic misconduct or, put more simply, a form of cheating. Plagiarism is much more than simple copying from another student, or from books or the Internet, including artificial intelligence and can be taken to include paraphrasing, sub-contracting the work to someone else, submitting the same piece of work for two different purposes.
- 1.3 Ultimately, plagiarism is attempting to pass off other people's work and ideas as yours without the correct referencing.
- 1.4 Other potential indicators of plagiarism include
 - Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated evidence within assessments without the correct referencing
 - changes in font/font size
 - inconsistencies/changes in topic/subject (e.g. change of company under discussion)
 - presence of foreign language accents, marks or numerals where not expected
 - changes in topic/flow of text/tone
 - text having passages which read oddly (potentially indicative of use of rewording tools to avoid plagiarism detection)
 - changes in writing style across assignments
 - Copying another students piece of work
 - Copying text from books/journals/internet/AI sources without referencing correctly

1.5 Examples of Artificial intelligence misuse are:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content (including use of AI Chatbots) so that the work is no longer the student's own.
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content.
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the student's own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations.
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information.
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools.
- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies.

1.6 Plagiarism may be of written and non- written form and covers all forms of assessment.

1.7 All learners work must be referenced appropriately using the Harvard referencing style including the acknowledgment of any Artificial intelligence used according to the level of course and as stipulated by the requirements of the awarding organisation.

1.8 Students will be provided with appropriate guidance on how to reference for their programme of study at the start of their programme.

1.9 Students must be informed that being found guilty of misuse of AI can result in sanctions including lost marks or being disqualified from the qualification.

1.10 Assessments work must be submitted in accordance to the assessment, verification and moderation policy.

1.11 Learner work is to be submitted through Turnitin (anti-plagiarism software) for assessment.

1.12 Each student (or group of students) will be required to sign a declaration of authenticity statement for the submission of any formal assessment that indicates that the work submitted is their own and does not include the use of any artificial intelligence unless referenced. This must be completed prior to the submission of any assessments.

1.13 Staff will be provided with appropriate guidance and training to help prevent and detect acts of plagiarism.

- 1.14 In the event of plagiarism or cheating, the student will be dealt with under the College procedures and/or in some cases the stipulated requirements of the awarding organisation.
- 1.15 Students must reference the use of any Artificial Intelligence software when producing any work for assessment. Failure to do so could result in the work not being accepted for assessment or resulting in a fail grade.
- 1.16 South Essex College Group will follow the guidance provided by awarding organisations and JCQ on the penalties that can be issued when a student uses Artificial Intelligence without proper referencing.

2. Preventing acts of Plagiarism

- 2.1 By working with students to understand plagiarism and malpractice the College hopes to prevent acts of plagiarism occurring including the use of artificial intelligence software .
- 2.2 Learners will be provided with appropriate guidance on how to reference for their programme of study. This will normally happen during the course induction. A scheme of work for the course will show evidence of this taking place.
- 2.3 Guidance provided to learners will detail the procedures of proven cases of plagiarism
- 2.4 When submitting work learners will be required to sign a declaration of authenticity stating that the work is their own.
- 2.5 Tutors must ensure learners produce a reference section which is appropriate to their programme of study.
- 2.6 The College will ensure that programmes adhere to the awarding organisation requirements for plagiarism.
- 2.7 Students and tutors to be provided with JCQ information sheets
- 2.8 Staff to only accept work for assessment marking when the student has signed the declaration of authenticity form.
- 2.9 Refer to the plagiarism procedure for more detailed guidance

3. Compliance with awarding organisations and JCQ requirements.

South Essex Colleges groups will:

- 3.1 regularly review the use of AI in qualification assessments and agree the approach to managing use of AI by students in the college including the examination centres.
- 3.2 make students aware of the appropriate and inappropriate use of AI, the risks of using AI, and the possible consequences of using AI inappropriately in a qualification assessment.
- 3.3 make students aware of the South Essex Colleges approach to plagiarism and the consequences of malpractice.
- 3.4 consider how to best communicate with parents/carers to make them aware of the risks and issues and ensure they support the centre's approach
- 3.5 Update South Essex College Policies and Procedures relating to plagiarism and Artificial intelligence use in assessments when provided with updates from awarding organisations and JCQ.

Policy End

