

1. Collusion / Plagiarism

Collusion is a form of plagiarism that involves unauthorised co-operation between at least two people with the intent to deliberately mislead or deceive.

Collusion can take the following forms:

- two or more candidates conspiring to produce a piece work together with the intention that it is submitted as his/her own, individual work. Or with the intention of at least one candidate submitting it as his/her own, individual work
- a candidate submitting the work of another candidate (with their consent) as his/her own, individual work. In such cases, both candidates would be deemed to be guilty of collusion
- although also an example of plagiarism, the submission of a piece of work that is not the candidates own individual work that has been purchased from a third party. For example, from an essay or assignment writing service or by soliciting another individual to produce a piece or work on their behalf
- unauthorised co-operation between a candidate and a third party in the production of a piece of work that will be submitted as the candidate's own

1.1. Preventing Collusion / Plagiarism

- It is acceptable to discuss ideas, talk about books, articles, online material and strategies for example with other candidates. However, it is not acceptable to help a fellow candidate to produce work that will be submitted as their own and an individual piece of work. Candidates should never lend their work to another candidate under any circumstances as it may be copied or reproduced. This example would leave both candidates vulnerable to an accusation of collusion.
- Candidates should leave themselves enough time to check their work thoroughly before submitting it for marking or evaluation. Keeping to strict deadlines will limit the temptation of colluding with another candidate or third party or purchasing work with the intention of submitting it as their own.
- Candidates should make sure that if they use a shared or public computer that they protect their work by saving it to their own personal drive, USB or memory stick. If a candidate uses a shared or public printer to print hard copy versions of work, they should ensure that any work is collected promptly from the printer and that any additional copies are securely destroyed.

2. Cheating

Cheating is an attempt to deceive ARCA/ATaC assessors, trainers, examiners and/or external verifiers and includes:

- providing or receiving information about the content of an examination before it takes place, except when allowed by ARCA (e.g. case study materials issued before an examination)
- assessors/trainers/examiners giving excessive help to a candidate in writing an assignment, or writing any of it for them
- impersonating or trying to impersonate a candidate, or attempting to procure a third party to impersonate oneself
- candidates using books, notes, instruments, computer files or other materials or aids that are not permitted (usually relevant only to examinations and online tests)
- assistance or the communication of information by one candidate to another in an assessment where this is not permitted (usually relevant only to examinations and online tests)
- copying or reading from the work of another candidate or from another candidate's books, notes, instruments, computer files or other materials or aids, unless expressly permitted
- offering a bribe of any kind to an assessor, trainer, invigilator, examiner or other person connected with assessment
- any attempt to tamper with assignment or examination scripts after they have been submitted by candidates
- fabricating or falsifying data or results by individual candidates or groups of candidates

Because of the nature of cheating, this mainly applies to examinations and online tests. ARCA/ATaC are mindful that cheating may involve a member of staff (e.g. tampering with assessment or examination scripts or results after candidates have submitted them).

2.1. Preventing Cheating

- ARCA/ATaC has a zero-tolerance approach to all incidents of plagiarism, collusion or cheating, especially those incidents that are an attempt by the candidate to gain marks without having completed the work themselves. Plagiarism, collusion or cheating can reflect badly on both the candidate and ARCA/ATaC both can be sanctioned.

3. Collusion / Plagiarism / Cheating – The Process

Plagiarism, collusion or cheating may be detected in a number of ways including:

- identification by an assessor, an internal quality assurer, awarding body (AB) external verifier, or another member of awarding body staff through AB's quality assurance processes or monitoring visits to a ARCA/ATaC.

- verbal or written allegations that are reported openly or anonymously by a candidate, third party or other interested party to a ARCA/ATaC or AB. This could be by an individual who has been made aware by word of mouth through a third party that something has happened or is happening that has not been authorised and is inappropriate, or something they have identified or witnessed personally

All suspected or alleged cases of plagiarism, collusion or cheating will be reported straight away to the appropriate contact below:

ARCA/ATaC Contact for Awarding bodies:

- RSPH & CITB: ARCA Training Manager: satish.patel@arca.org.uk

You should include details of the alleged activity and the source of the allegation and any supporting evidence.

The Quality Contact may delegate the responsibility to investigate the allegation to a lead independent investigator or request the ARCA Training Manager to undertake an investigation.

When asked to investigate allegations, the ARCA Training Manager must ensure that it is conducted in line with the guidance that can be found in **Appendix 1** of this document.

Any ARCA/ATaC staff and candidates must be informed of their rights unless, due to specific circumstances, the Quality Contact notifies the ARCA Training Manager that this is not appropriate.

All findings must be reported to the Quality Contact using the report format, Appendix 2 in the rear of this document, by the date specified or within 20 working days of the allegation being received by ARCA.

Where an investigation is undertaken by the Awarding Body, the outcome will be communicated to ARCA/ATaC and other relevant parties no more than 10 working days after the conclusion of the investigation. The report and any actions arising will be communicated to the Quality Contact and the External Verifier.

Where a plagiarism, collusion or cheating incident is likely to cause an Adverse Effect, for example invalidate the award of a qualification or have implications for another awarding organisation, the Quality Contact will inform the relevant regulator and the affected awarding organisation.

The rights of individuals with regard to anonymity and the avoidance of discrimination will be upheld. For example, Whistle-blowers are protected by legislation which confirms that they are protected from harassment and unfair or damaging treatment regardless of whether the allegations are unfounded.

For the avoidance of doubt the wrongdoing a whistle-blower discloses must be in the public interest i.e. it must affect others.

A whistle-blower is protected by law if they report any of the following:

- a criminal offence for example fraud
- someone's health and safety is in danger
- risk or actual damage to the environment
- a miscarriage of justice
- the company is breaking the law
- someone is covering up wrongdoing

Any individual alleged to be involved in malpractice must be informed of the allegation that has been made and the evidence that supports that allegation. The individual should be given the opportunity to submit a written statement to the investigating team whether the investigation is undertaken