

<b>Company Policy Procedure</b>	COM-011	<b>Issue Number</b>	2
		<b>Issue Date</b>	April 2026
<b>Plagiarism and Artificial Intelligence (AI)</b>		<b>Originator</b>	Peter Hurlstone
		<b>Amended by</b>	Peter Hurlstone
		<b>Approved by</b>	Adam Pointer

### 1. Introduction

SETA is committed to maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity and ethical behaviour. This policy outlines the acceptable use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and the strict prohibition of plagiarism in all written work submitted by Learners.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Learners and Apprentices at SETA on BTEC, HNC, NVQ and SETA Foundation Training programs; it also applies to all SETA Staff.

### 3. Definitions

#### Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think and learn. With computers, AI tools can assist in various tasks such as data analysis, language translation, and content generation. While AI can be a valuable resource, it must be used responsibly and ethically.

#### Artificial Intelligence Misuse by Learners

The JCQ defines AI misuse as *'where a student inappropriately uses an AI tool such that the work submitted for assessment is not their own and/or fails to appropriately reference their use of AI'*.

#### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work, ideas, or expressions without proper acknowledgment. It includes copying text, images, or data from any source without giving credit, as well as presenting someone else's ideas as your own.

SETA recognises Plagiarism defined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) as *'unacknowledged copying from, or reproduction of, third party sources or incomplete referencing, including the internet and AI tools'*.

#### Tutor

A Tutor is a member of SETA Staff responsible for teaching and marking Learners produced work, either in the workshop or classroom environment. Tutors are often also referred to as Instructors and Teachers.

For this policy, SETA recognises all member of SETA's Teaching staff as a Tutor.

#### Learner

A Learner is any individual on a course at SETA, such as Apprentices, and those attending a Commercial course.

For this policy, SETA recognises Apprentices, School Children and other Students as Learners.

#### Assignment

An assignment is any piece of written work submitted to a Tutor for marking and assessment. It can be practical, written or a combination of both.

#### 4. AI use for Staff

Staff are encouraged to responsibly use AI tools for various tasks, including assignment writing, creating course materials and composing customer emails. The goal is to enhance productivity, creativity and efficiency, while ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the content produced.

##### Benefits of AI use

- **Enhanced Productivity** - AI tools can automate repetitive tasks, allowing staff to focus on more strategic and creative aspects of their work
- **Improved Quality** - AI can assist in generating high-quality content quickly, providing suggestions for improvement and ensuring consistency
- **Time Efficiency** - By using AI, staff can complete tasks faster, freeing up time for other important activities
- **Innovation and Creativity** - AI can offer new perspectives and ideas, developing innovation and creativity in content creation
- **Personalisation** - AI can help tailor content to meet the specific needs of different audiences, enhancing engagement and effectiveness

##### Examples of AI use

Staff can use AI for such tasks as follows:

- **Assignment Writing** - Staff are encouraged to use AI tools to draft and refine assignments. However, it is essential Staff review and edit the content to ensure it meets the required standards, is accurate and free from errors
- **Producing Course Materials** - AI can be used to create and update course materials. Staff must, however, verify the accuracy of the information and ensure it aligns with the curriculum and educational objectives
- **Policies, Processes and Procedures** - AI can help in drafting and updating policies and processes. It is however essential that Staff ensure the content generated by AI is accurate, compliant with regulations, and relevant to SETA's needs
- **Customer e-mails and Communication** - AI can be used to compose and personalise customer emails. Staff should however review the wording for accuracy, tone and appropriateness before sending

##### Accuracy and Verification

While AI tools offer numerous benefits, it is crucial to verify the accuracy and reliability of the content they generate. Some AI chatbots have been identified as providing dangerous and harmful answers to questions and some can also produce fake references to books/ articles by real or fake people.

##### Staff Responsibilities

Staff members are responsible for:

- *Reviewing and editing AI-generated content to ensure it is accurate, relevant, factual and free from errors*
- *Ensuring that AI-generated content aligns with SETA's standards, values, and objectives*
- *Being aware of potential biases in AI-generated content and taking steps to mitigate them*

#### 5. AI Learner use

SETA's Tutors need to be assured that written assignments submitted by Learners is their own work. The use of AI will indicate they have not independently met the marking criteria. In doing so, the use of AI to assist with writing the actual technical content of assignments is not acceptable. When submitting assignments, Learners are required to make a declaration that the work they have completed is their own. If AI has been used to write some or all their assignment, they are therefore in breach of this policy. The Learner will have their work returned to them, and it will have to be re-written and re-submitted; for BTEC/HNC assignments, the subsequent awarded grade will be capped at a 'Pass' if the re-submitted work is acceptable.

SETA believes it is however acceptable for a Learner to use AI generated content in their Assignments, provided it is factual and being used as a reference or quote. When a Learner does use an AI tool to produce written work,

details of the sources it has used must be both verified by the Learner and referenced in their work accordingly. It must be clearly stated that it was AI generated, for what reason and how they have used it. This allows the Tutor to review how AI has been used, and whether it has been used appropriately in the context of the assignment.

SETA is clear that AI must not be used to bypass learning and believes using AI to complete assignments without engaging with the material undermines a Learners education.

#### JCQ AI Misuse Guidance

SETA recognises the following guidance from the JCQ:

AI misuse is where a student has used one or more AI tools but has not appropriately acknowledged this use and has submitted work for assessment when it is not their own. Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work submitted for assessment is no longer the Learner's own*
- *Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content*
- *Using AI to complete parts of the assignment 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*

#### **6. AI Platforms**

AI tools are typically on-line and can be accessed using web browsers. SETA recommends the use of Microsoft Copilot for staff, as this is included with SETA's Microsoft Office 365 subscription, but they are free to use any other platform they wish, provided it is reputable and not used illegally.

SETA will not pay for any other AI platform for staff to use, nor will it re-imburse staff for the costs already paid against one.

Apprentices are free to use a platform of their choice.

#### **7. Plagiarism by Learners**

##### Reasons for Plagiarism

The Awarding Organisation Pearson believe there are many reasons why plagiarism happens. Learners may:

- *Not understand what is meant by plagiarism, because it has never been explained to them*
- *Not believe plagiarism to be wrong; they may download music, video clips and games all the time at home*
- *Not understand the concept of individual ownership of ideas and words have misconceptions about the ownership of electronic material*
- *Struggle to differentiate between intellectual property rights and common knowledge*
- *Regard the conventions of academic documentation as unimportant or irrelevant to them*
- *Lack referencing skills, and therefore be unable to record and cite sources correctly*
- *Lack the study skills, research skills and writing skills needed to produce the work required*
- *Not know how to adapt published literature sources so that they do not require citation*
- *Regard plagiarism as a short cut to success*

##### Why Plagiarism is not Tolerated

Assignment writing requires that the work a Learner produces and submits for marking is their own. An Assignment copied from another source, is not considered a Learners own original work.

### Identification of Plagiarism

Tutors visually check Learners submitted written work for:

- *Different font sizes, text, margins and line spacing*
- *Changes in vocabulary and punctuation, and spelling errors*
- *Text written in a way that does not appear consistent with other work produced by the Learner*
- *Grammar written in a standard that appears higher or lower than other work produced*
- *Hidden text to increase word count*
- *The use of foreign words and characters different to the United Kingdom written language*
- *Work that is not factually correct, where it would be unusual for the Learner*
- *Work that does not express an opinion or personal perspective, where it would be unusual for the Learner*
- *Large sections of writing that does not include referencing; references must be checked that are included to make sure they are accurate*
- *Writing that is similar to other Learners recently marked*

Tutors must check whether Learners understand what they have written, so they are encouraged to ask them to explain verbally what they mean by a certain phrase or paragraph in their work. Tutors may also wish to check with other Tutors that if Plagiarism has been detected with the same Learner in a different subject.

### Process

Tutors will:

- *Visually check written work as per the section 'Identification of Plagiarism' within this document*
- *Submitted samples of Learner's work to the on-line Plagiarism checking tool, 'Turnitin'. Other software and platforms will not be recognised by SETA.*
- *Download the report from Turnitin detailing the amount of Plagiarism in submitted work, including the sources from which it has originated*
- *Submit the report to the Learner and Lead Internal Quality Assurer for discussion where Plagiarism has been proven*
- *Operate on a particular percentage level when work is checked by Turnitin, namely 25%. It has however been proven by SETA, that a Learner's work could show 50% similarity, but on further inspection, 50% is quotation of an Awarding Organisation's set knowledge to be answered, the other being the Learners original work. Therefore, scores over 25% will be checked accordingly, and a judgement will be made by the Tutor as to whether they accept the work*

### Penalties

If plagiarism is detected by Turnitin to write some or all their assignment, they are therefore in breach of this policy. The Learner will:

- *Have their work returned to them by their Tutor, and will be shown the Turnitin report for discussion*
- *Re-write their assignment to an acceptable level*

### Appeal

Where Plagiarism has been proven, a Learner can appeal against the decision or penalty given to them by writing to the Centre Compliance Manager (CCM), who will in turn investigate the appeal, and a decision of outcome will be made based on factual information.

If the Learner is not satisfied with the outcome as decided by SETA, the CCM will provide them with contact details for the Awarding Organisation should they wish to escalate an Appeal direct.

## 8. References

### JCQ

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/artificial-intelligence/>

AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications. Guidance for Teachers and Assessors

[https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/AI-Use-in-Assessments\\_Feb24\\_v6.pdf](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/AI-Use-in-Assessments_Feb24_v6.pdf)

### Pearson

BTEC Centre Guide to Plagiarism

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/Quality%20Assurance/btec-centre-guide-to-plagiarism.pdf>

Navigating AI for Assessment: VQ Guidance (International & Higher Education)

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/demo/stuntcontent/documents/BTEC-Higer-Nationals/navigating-ai-for-assessment.pdf>

What is Artificial Intelligence? Guidance for Centre staff

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/Work%20based%20learning/pearson-ai-centre-staff-guidance.pdf>

Microsoft Copilot

<https://copilot.microsoft.com>

## 9. Review

The Centre Compliance Manager will review this procedure with SETA's FE Manager bi-annually, or as and when updates are released by Awarding Organisations and Government bodies.