Owner and version control

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Signature:		Next review date	March 2025

Plagiarism Policy including the use of artificial intelligence (AI) 2023/24

Introduction

Best Practice Network is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, honesty, and originality in all our work, and this Plagiarism Policy reflects our dedication to these principles. Plagiarism undermines our credibility and the reputation of our organisation. This policy applies to all individuals associated with Best Practice Network, including employees, associates, and learners in any of our courses or programmes with assessments. By upholding this policy, we ensure the integrity of our programmes and prepare our learners—school leaders, teachers, early years practitioners, business managers, support staff, and SENCOs—to reach their full potential and positively impact the lives of children and young people through excellent education.

Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's ideas, words, images, creative works, or intellectual property without giving appropriate credit or authorisation. It includes, but is not limited to:

A. Copying and pasting content from a source (published or unpublished) without proper citation.
B. Paraphrasing or rephrasing someone else's work without acknowledgment.
C. Using images, graphics, or multimedia content without obtaining the necessary permissions or giving proper credit.
D. Presenting another person's ideas or research findings as one's own.
E. Submitting work created by others as one's own, including essays, reports, code, designs, etc.
F. Using unauthorised assistance or collaboration on individual assignments or projects where individual effort is expected.
G. Self-plagiarism, which involves reusing one's own previously submitted work without appropriate citation or permission.
H. Use of artificial intelligence (AI) or any automated tools in completing study assignments, projects, or assessments. (Refer to Policy on the use of artificial intelligence (AI))

Responsibilities

Employees and Associates

All employees and associates of Best Practice Network are responsible for adhering to this Plagiarism Policy. They must promote that any work their learners submit, or present is entirely their own, or if using external sources, that proper credit is given to the original authors or creators.

Management and Supervisors

Management and supervisors are responsible for promoting awareness of this Plagiarism Policy among their teams and ensuring that their team members understand the importance of maintaining academic and professional integrity.

Preventive Measures

To prevent plagiarism, Best Practice Network will take the following measures:

a) Provide training and resources on proper citation and referencing practices.
b) Encourage the use of plagiarism detection tools to review and verify originality.
c) Establish clear expectations regarding individual effort and collaboration on projects and assignments.
d) Implement regular checks and audits to identify and address potential cases of plagiarism.

Consequences of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is considered a serious breach of trust and may result in suspension or removal from the programme of learning, The severity of the consequences will depend on the nature and extent of the plagiarism, as well as the individual's history of previous work assessed and submitted.

Reporting Plagiarism

Any individual who becomes aware of a suspected or confirmed case of plagiarism is encouraged to report it immediately to their supervisor, manager, or the designated authority for handling such matters. Reports will be treated confidentially and with utmost seriousness.

If checks confirm that plagiarism by an individual(s) has taken place, dependant on the gravity and scope, one or more of the following actions will be taken:

- Disallowing all or part of a learner/s assessment evidence or marks
- The learner(s) certificates will not be issued, or previously issued certificates will be made void
- No further registrations will be accepted for the learners
- The individual(s) may be withdrawn from their programme/course
- A report will be made to the Best Practice Network Senior Leadership Group (SLG)

Revision of the Plagiarism Policy

Best Practice Network reserves the right to revise and update this Plagiarism Policy as needed. All employees and associates will be notified of any changes, and they will be expected to comply with the updated policy.

By adhering to this Plagiarism Policy, Best Practice Network aims to foster an environment of trust, respect, and originality while upholding the organisation's values and professional standards.

Policy on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) 2023/24

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to maintain academic integrity and ensure that students' work, including assignments are based on their own understanding, effort, and creativity. This policy prohibits the use of artificial intelligence (AI) or any automated tools in completing study assignments, projects, or assessments.

Scope:

This policy applies to all students enrolled on any Best Practice Network course or programme where study assignments are a part of the learning process.

Policy Guidelines:

Prohibition of AI Usage:

a. Learners are prohibited from using AI, machine learning algorithms, or any other automated tools to complete any work that contributes to their final grade including essays, reports, presentations, programming assignments, and problem-solving tasks. All submitted work must be the original creation of the learner.

b. There may be instances where limited use of AI can support the development of formative tasks that do not contribute to their final grade. However, learners must refer to the specific programme guidance to ensure compliance with the policy. Any exceptions or authorised use of AI will be clearly outlined in the assessment guidance specific to your programme.

c. The limited use of AI in formative tasks, where permitted, should be viewed as a means to enhance learning and critical thinking skills. It should not replace the learner's own intellectual engagement and original work.

d. Any use of AI tools must be clearly cited and acknowledged in the learner's work, following the programme's citation guidelines.

e. Learners are encouraged to consult with their instructors or programme coordinators if they have any questions about the appropriate use of AI tools in their specific programme or for particular assignments.

Academic Integrity:

a) Students are expected to uphold the principles of academic integrity, honesty, and responsibility in all academic activities.
b) Plagiarism, including the use of AI-generated content without proper attribution, is a violation of academic integrity and will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Knowledge and Skills Development:

a) The purpose of projects and/or study assignments is to assess students' understanding, knowledge, and skills acquired during their academic journey.
b) Using AI to complete projects and/or assignments undermines the learning process and hinders the development of critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and creativity.

Assessment Methods:

a) Best Practice Network shall design projects and/or study assignments that require individual thinking, analysis, and application of learned concepts.
b) Projects and/or assignments will be structured in a way that discourages or prevents the use of AI as a substitute for individual effort.

Detection and Prevention:

a) Best Practice Network tutors, trainers, facilitators and the assessments team may use various methods and technologies to detect potential AI usage in study assignments.
b) Students must be informed about the measures taken to identify AI-generated content and the consequences of such usage.

Consequences of Policy Violation:

a) Violation of this policy will result in academic penalties, which may include failing grades, academic probation, or expulsion, depending on the severity of the offense and institutional policies.

Ways we will Check for AI Usage:

- Plagiarism Detection Software: Utilise plagiarism detection tools to identify similarities between submitted assignments and known AI-generated content.

- In-Depth Evaluation: Review assignments for inconsistencies in writing style, unusual vocabulary, or unnatural language patterns that may indicate AI usage.

- Individual Assessments: Design assignments that are tailored to each student's understanding and require personalised responses, making it difficult for AI-generated content to fulfil the criteria.

- Verbal Defence: In some cases, conduct oral assessments to allow students to explain their assignments and demonstrate their understanding of the topic.

- Knowledge-Based Questions: Include questions in assignments that require students to apply their knowledge beyond the scope of readily available AI-generated information.

- Randomised Elements: Introduce randomised elements or scenarios that prevent students from relying solely on pre-existing AI-generated materials.

- By implementing this policy and employing effective detection methods, Best Practice Network can ensure a fair and genuine learning environment that promotes intellectual growth and academic excellence.