



Plagiarism and Assessment Integrity Policy

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Introduction

Energy Trust is committed to upholding the highest academic and professional integrity standards in all assessments and submissions. This policy outlines our approach to ensuring fairness, rigour and authenticity, ensuring that no learner gains an unfair advantage or undermines the assessment process.

This policy applies to **all assessment types** used in our training course, including assessments, practical assessments, multiple-choice assessments, video and audio recordings, case studies, professional discussions and any other form of evaluated work as designated by Energy Trust.

Plagiarism and malpractice are **strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated**. This document defines these terms and sets out the consequences of violations. Please be aware that this list is not exhaustive; other instances may be considered at the discretion of Energy Trust or the Awarding Bodies.

Definitions and Examples

Plagiarism: *Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work, ideas, or words without proper acknowledgement or citation and presenting them as your own. Examples include, but are not limited to:*

- *Copying another individual's work (words, designs, artwork, digital work, photographs etc.). This includes reproducing phrases, sentences or entire submissions – with or without their consent – whether written, video, audio, practical or digital.*
- *Closely paraphrasing without proper acknowledgement. This includes rewriting someone else's work by only changing a few words, reordering sentences, or altering the structure.*
- *Submitting work created by any AI tool (e.g., ChatGPT, Jasper etc) and claiming it as your own.*
- *Using and submitting uncredited work that has been purchased or downloaded/ copied from third parties.*
- *Reusing previous work (self-plagiarism) without permission. This includes using words, designs, photographs etc. from earlier projects and presenting them as current work.*
- *Submitting duplicate properties and portfolio evidence, where originality is expected.*

*Please note – we understand that on occasion some overlap of properties between portfolios submitted by different individuals may occur. To avoid issues, any shared properties must be supported by **individual** evidence, such as **unique** photographs, floorplans, or other documentation specific to each portfolio. **The same evidence cannot be used for different students***

or portfolios. For groups of learners from the same organisation, we aim to assign the same assessor or, where feasible, at least one consistent verifier for all learners within that group. If any incidences of plagiarism arise, a detailed comparison will be conducted. In cases where there are multiple learners from the same company, **at least one of the submissions for assessment must be unique to the learner to ensure originality.**

Plagiarism violates academic integrity and ethical standards. Proper referencing and citation are crucial to avoid plagiarism. Students must ensure that all ideas, quotations, and paraphrased content are appropriately credited when used. Please see the “Citation and Referencing” section of this policy for further guidance.

Cheating and Malpractice: Cheating and malpractice involve any dishonest action taken to gain an unfair assessment advantage. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Impersonating another or arranging for someone else to take an assessment on your behalf.
- Fabricating results, falsifying data, or altering official documentation.
- Failing to follow assessment conditions, such as unauthorised use of materials or collaboration.
- Communicating with others during assessments when unauthorised.
- Offering a bribe of any kind to a member of Energy Trust staff or other person connected to your assessments.
- Behaving in a way that undermines the integrity of an examination or test.

Learner Agreement

At the beginning of any training course/ assessment with Energy Trust, all students must sign a *Learner Agreement*. This agreement is a contract between the student and Energy Trust, ensuring that the student will adhere to its terms. One of these terms addresses the acknowledgement and acceptance of the “*Plagiarism and Assessment Integrity Policy*” and its contents. Consequently, it is the student's responsibility to read this policy. By accepting the Learner Agreement, you confirm that you have read, understood, and agreed to this policy.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Energy Trust acknowledges the growing role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in education and learning. While AI can be a valuable resource for enhancing understanding and supporting research, it must **never** be used to create content that is submitted as your own work. **Submitting AI-generated content as original work constitutes plagiarism and violates academic integrity.**

The use of AI tools to generate answers, responses, or submissions for assignments, quizzes, or any coursework is **strictly prohibited**. All work submitted must reflect the learner's own understanding, analysis, and effort. Using AI tools in any way that gives an unfair advantage undermines the learning process and is prohibited.

AI Detection Software

Energy Trust employs third-party AI-detection and plagiarism software to ensure the authenticity of learners' work. All submissions made through our online training platforms are analysed by this software, which:

- *Compares content against its extensive database of previously submitted assessments.*
- *Cross-checks submissions with publicly available online content and resources.*
- *Identifies patterns indicative of AI-generated content.*

Submissions flagged by the software for potential AI usage or plagiarism will be further reviewed by our IQA (Internal Quality Assurance). Please see the section “*Consequences of Plagiarism and Malpractice*” for further information on how this is managed.

Acceptable Use of Tools

Certain tools designed to improve clarity and presentation, such as grammar or spell-check software, may be used within the following boundaries:

- *These tools must only be used to identify minor errors or suggest improvements to phrasing and spelling.*
- *They must not generate responses to assessment questions, or rewrite or significantly alter the content of assignments or other coursework.*

Learners are encouraged to contact the Energy Trust support team for guidance if they are unsure whether their use of a tool complies with this policy.

Citation and Referencing

Students must properly reference and acknowledge any quotations or information from another source used in their assessments. This requirement does not apply to AI tools like ChatGPT or the work of other students, which are prohibited.

Energy Trust does not mandate a specific referencing style but encourages learners to include as much detail as possible when citing sources, ensuring clarity and traceability.

Key Principles of Referencing and Citation

1. Acknowledging Sources

- Whenever you quote directly, paraphrase ideas, or summarise content - you must acknowledge this in your submission.

2. Citations

- A citation is a brief reference within the body of your work that points to the full source details in a reference list or bibliography.

3. Common Referencing Styles

- While Energy Trust does not enforce a specific system, widely recognised styles like Harvard are useful. The Harvard style typically includes:
 - Author(s) or editor(s) name(s)
 - Year of publication

Examples:

Single Author:

- Example 1: "A recent study highlights the role of technology in assessments (Smith, 2020)."
- Example 2: "Smith (2020) argues that technology improves assessment accuracy."

Two or Three Authors:

- Example: "Research shows that collaborative learning enhances outcomes (Jones, White & Patel, 2018)."

Web Pages:

- Format: *Author, Initial. (Year) Title of web page. Available at: URL (Accessed: Date).*
- Example: "Botham, D. (2015) Retrofitting Your House. Available at: <http://www.retrofitforyou.org.uk> (Accessed: 09 November 2024)."

Consequences of Plagiarism and Malpractice

Energy Trust takes violations of this policy seriously. The following actions will be taken if plagiarism or malpractice is detected:

Plagiarism:

1. If the initial analysis validates suspicions by an assessor, then the assessor will provide feedback to the student within the learning management system. This is recorded and visible to an IQA (internal quality assurer) and EQA (external quality assurer from the Awarding Body).
2. The assessor will allow the student a chance to **resubmit** their work/ assessment. If this second attempt is satisfactory, no further action will be taken for this specific piece of work. If there is further suspicion of plagiarism by your assessor, then steps 3-4 will be taken.
3. If a second incident of plagiarism occurs within the same assessment, then the assessment method is considered compromised. The student will be required to undertake a different assessment method at the discretion of the assessor. This can include but is not limited to, providing additional explanations, submitting supporting materials, engaging in a professional discussion with their assessor, completing extra assessments, submitting additional properties, or completing an observed assessment by a member of the Energy Trust team*, to demonstrate their knowledge and ensure the originality of their work.
4. If the third attempt is unsatisfactory and plagiarism is detected again, then the case will be escalated to the IQA, who will review the situation/ case and decide upon the next steps. In severe cases, the IQA may choose to take the following disciplinary measures:

- *The student may be dismissed from the qualification (without a refund).*
- *The Awarding Body may be informed of the failure and the reasons behind it.*

5. Failure to abide by the instructions or feedback of an assessor, trainer, Internal Quality Assurer (IQA), or Awarding Body may also result in dismissal from the course, as it demonstrates a lack of commitment to the learning process, Energy Trust's terms and conditions (including policies) and adherence to professional standards.

**An additional cost would be incurred to the student and the student would need to attend the Energy Trust head office to undertake this assessment.*

Cheating and Malpractice

Instances of cheating and malpractice are unacceptable and will lead to immediate dismissal from the course without a refund.

We urge all students to maintain ethical standards, utilise their own knowledge and skills, and demonstrate their learning and understanding during the training course and subsequent assessments.

Appeals Process

Learners who feel they have been unfairly treated under this policy have the right to appeal. Appeals must be submitted in writing to Energy Trust within **five working days** of notification to helpline@energy-trust.co.uk.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with best practices and regulatory standards.

Contact

Should you have any questions about this policy, then you can contact us at:

E: helpline@energy-trust.co.uk

T: 0333 012 0002