

# **VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

## **PLAGIARISM POLICY**



### **STUDENT GUIDE**

## **Plagiarism Policy for Vocational Qualifications**

When you submit work for your vocational qualification, you are declaring that it is your own work. Awarding organisations require all assessment evidence to be authentic and to show your own knowledge, understanding and skills.

Using someone else's work without acknowledging it, or submitting AI-generated work as your own, is considered plagiarism and may result in penalties that affect your qualification.

This guide explains what plagiarism is, how to reference sources correctly, and how AI tools can and cannot be used.

### **What is Plagiarism?**

Plagiarism is when you use someone else's words, ideas, images, research, or work and present them as your own.

Plagiarism can happen whether it is done intentionally or accidentally.

### **Examples of Plagiarism**

- copying directly from a textbook without referencing it.
- copying and pasting information from a website into your assignment.
- using another student's work.
- using AI to write sections of your assignment and submitting them as your own work.
- rewording information from a source without saying where it came from.
- downloading coursework examples from the internet and submitting them.

### **Sources to Build Assessments**

You are encouraged to use sources to support your learning, including:

- Textbooks
- Websites
- Journals and articles
- Videos
- Teacher resources
- AI tools (where permitted)

Remember: using sources is good academic practice. The key is making sure you acknowledge them properly.

## Referencing from Sources

### Referencing a Textbook

#### Example

If you write:

According to Smith (2023), effective communication is essential in customer service.

You would include this in your reference list:

Smith, J. (2023) *Customer Service Skills for Business*. 3rd Edition. London: Pearson.

### Direct Quotes

If you use the exact words from a source, place them in quotation marks.

Example:

"Effective communication is the foundation of customer satisfaction" (Smith, 2023, p.45).

### Referencing a website

#### Example

In your assignment:

The Health and Safety Executive state that employers have a duty to manage workplace risks (HSE, 2025).

In your reference list:

Health and Safety Executive (2025) *Managing Workplace Risks*. Available at: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) (Accessed: 12 June 2026).

### Referencing Images

If you include an image, chart, diagram, or photograph, you must acknowledge where it came from.

#### Example:

Figure 1: Customer Service Process Diagram (Pearson, 2024)

### Referencing Videos

#### Example:

The video highlights the importance of active listening during customer interactions (BBC Teach, 2025).

Reference list:

BBC Teach (2025) *Customer Service Skills*. Available online. Accessed 12 June 202

## Using AI Tools

AI tools such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot and Google Gemini can be useful learning tools, but there are strict rules about how they can be used in vocational qualifications.

You may use AI to:

- Generate ideas for a project.
- Brainstorm possible approaches to a task.
- Explain difficult concepts.
- Create revision materials.
- Improve spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Suggest sources for further reading.

## Example

You ask ChatGPT:

"Give me five ideas for a social media marketing campaign."

You then carry out your own research and create your own campaign plan ... this **IS** acceptable.

You must **NOT** use AI to:

- write assessment answers for you.
- produce analysis or evaluation that you submit as your own.
- complete required calculations.
- generate reports, presentations, portfolios or code that forms part of your assessment evidence.
- write conclusions that are assessed against grading criteria.

## Example

You ask ChatGPT:

"Write a distinction-level answer explaining customer service principles."

You copy and paste the response into your assessment ...this is **NOT** acceptable and would be treated as plagiarism.

## How to Reference AI Tools?

If you use AI for brainstorming or research, you must acknowledge it.

### Example Statement

I used ChatGPT to generate initial ideas for this assignment. The research, analysis and final written work were completed independently.

### Example Reference

ChatGPT (OpenAI), response generated on 15 June 2026 to the prompt: "Generate ideas for a customer service improvement campaign."

## Submission of Assessments

Before you submit your assessment to your assessor, check you have carried out the following before you press submit:

- **Read the Brief:** check your work against the assignment sheet to ensure you have responded to every single task.
- **Format Correctly:** set your fonts, margins, and file types exactly how your teacher asked.
- **Cite Your Sources:** double-check that every quote, image, and fact from a book, newspaper, magazine, website or AI tool has a clear reference.
- **Proofread Your Work:** run a spell check and read it aloud once to fix silly mistakes.
- **Bibliography:** ensure you have included a list of sources you have used to carry out your research and those which have supported you in completing your assessment.
- **Learner Declaration:** you must complete and sign a learner declaration form for every assessment you submit to prove the work is entirely your own.

When you sign the declaration, you are making a formal, legal promise to your school and the exam board. You are confirming that:

- **True Authorship:** you wrote, designed, or created the work yourself.
- **Proper Referencing:** you have clearly credited all books, websites, and sources you used.
- **No AI Misuse:** you did not use AI tools like ChatGPT to write the assignment for you.
- **No Collaboration:** you did not copy from friends, and you did not let friends copy from you.

## Behaviour for Learning: Plagiarism

Unacknowledged generated content or submitting work that is not genuinely your own is treated as plagiarism and academic malpractice. Consequences for making a false declaration range from grade penalties and warnings to disqualification from the qualification.

SEVERITY LEVEL	CONTEXT OF PLAGARISM USAGE	PENALTY / BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING POLICY
MINOR	Poor or incomplete referencing of a text or an AI tool used solely for research.	<b>B1: Official Written Warning</b> Requirement to properly cite the tool, potential loss of small criteria-specific marks
MODERATE	Copying or paraphrasing significant sections or whole paragraphs of text from any source into the assignment without disclosure.	<b>B2: Official Written Warning (Stage 1 Contract)</b> Zero marks for the specific unit component
SEVERE	Submitting a completely AI-generated assessment unit portfolio, product, or code script with a signed false declaration.	<b>B3: Official Written Warning (Stage 2 Contract)</b> Disqualification from the entire internally assessed unit.
EXTREME / REPEATED	Deliberate, repeated, or large-scale fraud across multiple units using generative tools	<b>B4: Official Written Warning – Final (Stage 3 Contract)</b> Disqualification from all affected internally assessed units of work. Vocational leads consider reducing qualification size.