

Icon Accreditation

Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Statement: Guidance for Candidates, Assessors and Specialist Advisors
July 2023

Introduction

The Institute of Conservation (Icon) recognises the importance of ensuring that all assessments undertaken for Icon Accreditation are valid, fair, objective and independent. This is essential to maintain both the credibility of the ACR award and trust in the conservation-restoration profession. We expect all stakeholders involved in the Icon ACR assessment process to conduct themselves honestly and with professional integrity.

Icon takes a zero-tolerance approach to plagiarism, collusion and cheating. This statement relates to the [‘Icon Accreditation Malpractice and Maladministration’](#) and [‘Icon Accreditation Conflict of Interest’](#) policies and provides further details on the steps that must be taken to eliminate instances of plagiarism, collusion or cheating as it relates to the delivery of Icon Accreditation.

Definitions

Plagiarism	This is defined as presenting someone else’s work, ideas or words as one’s own without proper citation or attribution.
Collusion	This is defined as a situation where two or more individuals work together to deceive or manipulate the accreditation process. This may involve providing false or misleading information, deliberately concealing information or any other action that is intended to manipulate the accreditation process and unfairly influence an assessment outcome.
Cheating	This is defined as a situation where a candidate engages in dishonest or fraudulent activity to gain an unfair academic advantage. Plagiarism and collusion are two forms of cheating. However, the term cheating can also be applied to a wider variety of dishonest behaviour including, but not limited to, lying, falsifying evidence, impersonation of others etc.

Requirements of Candidates

To ensure they do not unintentionally commit an offence, candidates must do the following:

- Declare any known conflicts of interest they may have with Icon Assessors and Icon Specialist Advisors at the earliest opportunity.
- Check all materials submitted for assessment, including the ACR application and supporting evidence, are their own, original work.
- Where any part of any submitted materials includes the work of others, ensure they explicitly acknowledge this and correctly attribute it to its original source. This may include (but is not limited to):
 - Information taken from academic sources such as research papers, journals and books. (Any direct quotation or paraphrasing from these sources must be cited using a recognised citation method, such as the Harvard referencing system.)
 - Workplace documentation (such as policy documents or risk assessments) which may apply to them and be utilised by them, but are authored by others.

- Information provided by project stakeholders (e.g. clients) or subject-matter experts (e.g. historians, heritage scientists etc.)
- Work completed in collaboration with others, such as colleagues or contractors. Candidates must clearly indicate which work is their own and where contributions have been made by other parties.
- If candidates are unsure whether material for submission complies with the Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating Statement, they should seek further clarification from the Icon Accreditation Manager at the earliest opportunity. It is better to seek clarification or assistance than make assumptions that could compromise the integrity of the assessment.
- If they have any concerns about the conduct of their Assessor or Specialist Advisor, they should notify the Icon Accreditation Manager at the earliest opportunity.

Requirements of Assessors and Specialist Advisors

To ensure they do not unintentionally commit an offence, Assessors and Specialist Advisors must do the following:

- Declare any known conflicts of interest they may have with candidates or fellow assessment staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Seek guidance and support from the Icon Accreditation Manager at the earliest opportunity if they have any doubts or concerns about:
 - the authenticity of a candidate's evidence
 - the conduct of a candidate
 - the conduct of a fellow member of the assessment team.

It is better to seek clarification or assistance than make assumptions that could compromise the integrity of the assessment.

- Ensure all assessment decisions are evidence-based and made with reference to the Icon Professional Standards and the Assessment Criteria.
- Follow the specified assessment process, as outlined in the '[Icon Accreditation Assessment Plan](#)'. If they have any questions about this process, contact the Icon Accreditation Manager.

Reporting and investigating instances of plagiarism, collusion or cheating

If any stakeholder in the Icon assessment process identifies, or is made aware of, a potential case of plagiarism, collusion or cheating they must notify the Accreditation Manager immediately providing the following information:

- The name(s) of the alleged offenders
- The nature of the alleged offence if known (plagiarism, collusion or cheating.)
- The circumstances of the alleged offence – e.g. which piece of evidence it relates to and the reason for their suspicion.

Notification of alleged plagiarism, collusion and cheating will be acknowledged within 7 days of receipt of the notice.

In circumstances where plagiarism, collusion and cheating are suspected, Icon reserves the right to investigate and take appropriate action, in accordance with the Icon Accreditation Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Where an allegation of plagiarism, collusion and cheating is proven we will consider whether the integrity of our end point assessments might be at risk if the individual in question were to be involved in future assessments. If so, we will act to protect the integrity of our assessment services. The exact actions will be decided on a case-by-case basis, and the level of sanction applied will depend on the severity of the malpractice or maladministration.

Examples of sanctions which could be applied include:

- Grading the assessment method(s) in question as fail.
- Refusing to issue assessment results.
- Debarring an Assessor, Specialist Advisor or staff member from involvement in the delivery of our assessments for several years/life.
- Disqualifying a candidate from taking any component of the assessment.

If, after investigation, the individual(s) who is the subject of the plagiarism, collusion and cheating allegation is dissatisfied with the outcome they should refer to the '[Icon Accreditation Appeals and Complaints Policy](#)'.

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