Identification and Authentication Policy

Version 1.2

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Academy Online Learning Ltd

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1.0 Introduction

This policy establishes guidelines for the process of validating learner identity, and authenticating learner work. The process begins with initial provision of approved forms of identification for the purpose of enrolment on the course of study, progresses through stages of validating assessment, and concludes with submission of authentic learner work.

Due to the online rather than traditional face to face learning environment in which Academy Online Learning Ltd (AOLL) operates, it is extremely important that all learners who enrol on the course are the ones completing the work. This policy identifies the procedures that establish that the learner is the named learner who participates in, completes the learning program and receives the academic credit.

1.1 Scope

There are two main areas of concern where authentication of learner identification needs to be addressed:

1.11 Plagiarism and cheating - it is necessary to determine if the work a learner's work is authentic and unique. Details of identifying and dealing with instances of plagiarism are addressed in the Plagiarism Policy.

1.12 Impersonation – it is necessary to determine if the learner receiving the credit for the course of study is the person completing the work.

1.2 Definitions

1.21 Identity fraud: any learner who allows another person to impersonate them or in any other way commit identity fraud in any course, exam or other academic exercise will be dismissed

from the course. This also applies to a learner who is found to impersonate another.

1.22 Skills and Education Group – the awarding body

1.23 QAA – Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

1.24 RPL – Recognition of Prior Learning

2.0 Persons Affected

2.1 All learners.

3.0 Aims

Authenticating learner identity is integral:

3.1 To prevent impersonation of learners on the course of study and to protect and uphold the integrity and reliability of the Diploma qualification

3.2 When authenticating previous qualifications. Certificates or other evidence of previous qualifications must be an accurate reflection of a learner's achievements.

3.3 To ensure compliance to quality procedures. AOLL are required by the QAA and The Skills and Education Group (AVA) to have strict systems in place to authenticate all learner work and their identity.

3.4 To maintain credibility: through certificates, diplomas and certified forms, AOLL declare that a Learner named on these documents has personally achieved all relevant academic requirements. Qualifications are at risk if learners emerge as having achieved academically but have not acquired new and relevant knowledge or skills.

3.5   To ensure learner achievement. AOLL have a responsibility to their learners to facilitate learning and prepare individuals for the challenges in Higher Education. This can only occur if the learner has successfully completed the course and achieved learning at the relevant standard of achievement.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1   Learners have responsibility to provide appropriate evidence of identity and adhere to AOLL rules relating to assessment of work.

4.2   AOLL has responsibility for upholding the validity of the course of study

5.0 Procedures

AOLL implements a number of procedures to ensure that a learner who gains an award for academic achievement is the person who actually completes the work.

Authentication is demonstrated by the following:

5.1   All learners must provide supporting evidence of personal identification prior to the commencement of study in the form of photographic ID. Valid examples are current Passport or Photo ID driving licence.

In the event of a learner not holding a current Passport or Photo ID driving licence, they must provide a photograph of themselves countersigned by a professional person. Counter signatories cannot be a close members of the Learner's family and must work in (or be retired from) a recognised profession, or be 'a person of good standing in their community' i.e. Teacher, Member of the police, Doctor, Company Director, Etc.

5.2 After enrolment, the validity of the photographic evidence is confirmed via initial video-conference.

5.3 Learners must provide copies of all previously certificated qualifications in any request of RPL.

5.4 Upon registration, a learner is issued with a confidential login password to enable access to their AOLL VLE. The sharing of passwords is strictly forbidden.

5.5 On submission of each assignment, learners complete an online declaration to conform that work submitted is their own.

5.6 All assignments submitted are subject to screening by AOLL's plagiarism software, Ouriginal.

5.7 AOLL implement a variety of assessment methods and tutors have a right to question the content or meaning of any submitted assignments with the learner, to verify that a verbal level of understanding reflects the written content.

5.8 AOLL use videoconferencing as a method of communication and identification. Under closed book tests, learners must agree to being observed via 'shared screen'.

5.9 Where any name change occurs during the course of study, evidence of name change i.e. copies of: marriage certificate or deed pole documentation and a copy of a recent utility bill (within 3 months) as proof of name and address are required to implement any changes.

5.91 AOLL operate a zero tolerance approach where a learner who has registered is not the person completing the work. Any proven instances will result in the learner being disqualified and removed from the course instantly. There will be no refund of course or registration fees. All evidence will be recorded by the quality review team and presented to the Awarding Organisation (The Skills and Education Group) immediately.