Inclusive Assessment and Academic Integrity Policy

Next review date: January 2028

1. Purpose

Circle of Life Rediscovery CIC (CLR) is committed to inclusive, fair and supportive assessment practices that enable all learners to demonstrate their learning and skills in ways that work best for them.

We recognise that people learn and communicate differently. This policy sets out how we provide flexible assessment opportunities while maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity, including the responsible use of technology and artificial intelligence (AI).

2. Inclusive Assessment

Our assessments are designed so that completing them provides evidence for all required learning outcomes. However, we understand that not every task suits every learner.

If a particular assessment task does not fit your preferred learning style or you have additional learning needs, you may provide evidence in alternative formats. Examples include:

- Writing in a different style (notes, bullet points, visual mapping).
- Creating an artefact, model, or photographic record.
- Recording a short video or audio reflection.
- Having a reflective conversation with your tutor.

Please speak with your tutor as early as possible if you would like to explore different methods of showing your learning. We'll work with you to find an approach that meets your needs and the assessment criteria.

The most important thing is that your work represents your own understanding, ideas and practice.

3. Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

All evidence submitted for assessment must be your own original work. Plagiarism — using someone else's words, ideas or work without acknowledgement — is not acceptable.

You are encouraged to draw on the work, ideas and experiences of others, but you must clearly show where these come from. Referencing can be simple and practical — for example, including the author, website or organisation name when quoting or paraphrasing.

If you collaborate with colleagues on any aspect of your work, please discuss this with your tutor so that contributions can be properly acknowledged.

Definition of Plagiarism:
Submitting, as one's own, work that derives in part or entirely from the work of others without due acknowledgement.

Examples include:

- Quoting another person's work word-for-word without acknowledging the source.
- Paraphrasing someone else's work without acknowledgement.
- Using ideas, data, or concepts taken from another person or organisation without crediting them.
- Copying or pasting from websites or books without citation.
- Submitting someone else's work (in whole or in part) as your own.
- Concealing collaboration or group work when individual work was required.

Plagiarism can apply to all forms of content, including text, images, diagrams, music, data, computer code, video, or other media.

4. Responsible Use of Technology — Plagiarism and AI

4.1 Policy Statement

CLR is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity across all Forest School, Outdoor Learning qualifications. This includes the responsible and transparent use of technology, such as AI, in assessment and reflective practice.

4.2 Definitions

- **Plagiarism:** Presenting someone else's work, ideas, or intellectual property as your own without acknowledgement.
- **AI Use:** The use of artificial intelligence tools to generate, paraphrase, or alter content for assessments or written submissions. *Unauthorised AI use* refers to using AI tools to produce work without proper human oversight or failing to disclose AI assistance when permitted.

- **Assistive Technology:** AI-based or digital tools that support accessibility (e.g. speech-to-text, text readers, translation tools). These are permitted when used to enable learners to produce their own authentic work.

4.3 Purpose

- Ensure that submitted work is a true reflection of each learner's understanding and ability.
- Promote fairness, honesty, and inclusivity in learning and assessment.
- Protect the integrity and value of all qualifications delivered by CLR.
- Comply with awarding body regulations.

4.4 What learners can and cannot do with AI

The key question is always: does the submitted evidence genuinely demonstrate your own knowledge, understanding, reflection and competence? AI may support your learning, but it must not do the assessment for you.

Use the guide below. If you are unsure, ask your tutor before submitting your work.

Use of AI	Is it allowed?	What this means in practice
Spelling and grammar checking	**Yes**	You may use AI or digital tools to correct spelling and grammar in text you have written. The tool should not change your meaning or add new content.
Translation of your own work	**Yes**	You may use a translation tool to translate work that you have written yourself, provided it is a straightforward translation and the meaning is not changed.
Exploring a subject or finding further reading	**Yes**	You may use AI to help you understand a topic, suggest search terms or signpost possible sources. You should then check the information and read and reference the **original sources** you rely on.
Suggestions about structure or editing	**Limited**	Light suggestions may be useful, but AI should not reorganise, rewrite or polish your answer in a way that changes your meaning, emphasis or level of evidence.
Using AI suggestions while developing an answer	**Limited**	AI can help explain ideas while you are learning. Your final assessment evidence must be written from your own understanding. Check factual claims against reliable original sources and reference those sources.
Asking AI to write or complete an assessment answer	**No**	Do not paste an assessment criterion into AI and ask it to produce an answer for you, even if you later make small changes to the wording.
Turning rough notes into a finished reflective account	**No, if AI is doing the writing**	Your reflections, examples and professional experience are assessment evidence. AI must not create the final account or invent examples, experiences or reflections for you.

Use of AI	Is it allowed?	What this means in practice
Copying or pasting AI-generated wording as your own	**No**	This is not authentic assessment evidence and may be treated as plagiarism or academic misconduct.
Declaring AI use when the AI has generated the evidence	**Declaration alone is not enough**	Being transparent is important, but acknowledgement does not make AI-generated assessment evidence authentic or acceptable for a pass.

4.5 How to acknowledge and reference AI use

AI is not normally an appropriate substitute for the original source of information. For example, writing "ChatGPT, 2026" or "Gemini, 2026" as the reference for a factual claim does not show where the information originally came from.

If AI helps you find or understand information, read the original source and reference that source in the normal way (for example, the author, book, article, website or organisation).

Where you have used AI in a permitted way, add a short AI use statement at the end of the relevant piece of work. This is an acknowledgement of the tool you used; it is not a replacement for referencing your sources.

A simple format is:

AI use statement: I used [name of tool] to [briefly state what you used it for]. The ideas, examples and final assessment evidence are my own. I checked any factual information against the original sources referenced in my work.

Examples:

- I used ChatGPT to check spelling and grammar. No content or ideas were generated by the tool.

- I used Google Translate to translate my original response from Spanish into English. The content and ideas are my own.

- I used ChatGPT to suggest search terms and possible sources for researching play and risk. I then read and referenced the original sources used in my answer.

- I used an AI tool to help me understand the difference between a hazard and a risk while studying. I wrote the submitted answer myself and checked the information against the sources I have referenced.

If your tutor is concerned that AI may have generated assessment evidence, you may be asked to explain your answer, discuss the topic professionally, or redo the evidence in another authentic format.

5. Procedures

5.1 Prevention of Plagiarism and Unauthorised AI Use

- **Education and Awareness:**
  - Learners will receive guidance on plagiarism, referencing, and appropriate AI use.
  - Tutors will explain how and when AI or assistive tools may be used responsibly.

- **Submission Guidelines:**
    - Learners must submit a signed declaration of originality confirming that their work is their own and disclosing any AI tools used.
    - All sources must be acknowledged. Where AI or assistive technology has been used, learners must disclose this clearly using the guidance in section 4.5.

5.2 Detection

- **Plagiarism Detection:**
    - Written assignments may be checked using plagiarism detection software.
    - Reports will be stored securely and referenced in marking feedback.
    - Tutors will interpret results carefully, focusing on context and intent.
- **Authenticity Review:**
    - Tutors will consider whether submitted evidence is consistent with the learner's known level, style, experience and demonstrated understanding. Concerns may include a marked change in style or content, generic responses, or a lack of personal and reflective depth.
    - AI-detection or similarity tools may be used only as supporting information. A decision about authenticity will not be based on a detector score alone.

5.3 Addressing Issues

- Where there is a concern about plagiarism or unauthorised AI-generated assessment evidence:
    - The tutor will discuss the concern with the learner and give them an opportunity to explain how the work was produced and demonstrate their understanding. CLR may seek procedural advice from ITC, the EQA or relevant quality contact where needed.
    - The learner may be asked to redo the assessment evidence or complete an alternative authentic assessment, such as a professional discussion. If the learner refuses, or authentic evidence cannot be provided, the relevant assessment criteria cannot be passed and this may ultimately mean that the qualification cannot be achieved.

The focus is on establishing authentic evidence, not on punishing learners for using technology appropriately. However, deliberately presenting AI-generated assessment evidence as your own is plagiarism and will be managed under this policy.

5.4 Appeals

- Learners may appeal in writing within **10 working days** of a decision.
- The **Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)** will review and respond within **20 working days**.

6. Responsibilities

- **Learners:**
    - Ensure all submitted work is original and accurately referenced.
    - Disclose any AI tools used in the creation of work.
- **Tutors:**

    - Provide guidance on academic integrity and AI use.
    - Identify and address potential breaches fairly and consistently.
- **IQA:**
    - Oversee the implementation of this policy.
    - Review suspected cases and manage appeals.
- **CLR:**
    - Provide clear guidance, accessible learning materials, and reasonable adjustments for all learners.

7. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by awarding body regulations or emerging best practice in AI or assessment integrity. Feedback from learners and staff will inform each review.

8. Communication and Training

- This policy is included in the **Learner Handbook** and reviewed at course induction.
- Tutors receive training on detecting plagiarism and unauthorised AI use, and on promoting inclusive assessment practices.

9. Support and Queries

If you are unsure about referencing, plagiarism, or AI use, please ask your tutor before submitting your work. We would much rather help you understand how to present your ideas correctly than have you worry about it later.