

Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure

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Purpose

This Policy and Procedure outlines an approach to promoting and upholding academic integrity at Australia Institute of Future Education (**AIFE**).

This policy provides a definition of academic integrity and examples of academic misconduct. It also provides procedures for the investigation of allegations of academic misconduct and outlines penalties for proven academic misconduct.

Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to:

- all students enrolled at AIFE and academic staff, whether full-time, part-time, sessional or contract, and
- academic visitors to AIFE when engaging in any academic work associated with AIFE.

Policy

Principles

Academic misconduct is not tolerated at AIFE, which expects academic staff and students to observe the highest ethical standards in their academic endeavours.

Academic staff are expected to play a key role in cultivating ethical scholarship practices in their students and minimising instances of academic misconduct in student work.

When the academic integrity of a student or staff member is in question, AIFE will follow a consistent and fair process of investigation.

AIFE will apply appropriate responses and/or penalties to established misconduct.

Approach

Key strategies for managing academic integrity risk include the following:

- **Culture:** Fostering a culture of academic integrity through a process of awareness, training, benchmarking, and monitoring of trends;
- **Leadership:** Senior staff demonstrating a high level of commitment to academic integrity;
- **Understanding of academic integrity risk:** Maintaining an understanding of risk factors that facilitate breaches of academic integrity; and
- **Understanding of cheating techniques:** Academic staff maintaining current understanding of current and emerging cheating techniques which could compromise academic integrity.

Prevention

AIFE will utilise a range of strategies to support academic integrity at all times, including:

- advising enrolled students of the details of this policy,
- submission of assignments in electronic form,

- use of plagiarism detection software in all units,
- explicitly referring to plagiarism and collusion at key stages in units and courses,
- explicitly explaining the use and mis-use of generative artificial intelligence (genAI),
- providing students with opportunities to practise writing and referencing skills,
- providing prompt and constructive feedback to assessments and examinations,
- explaining the aims and purposes of assessment tasks,
- providing examples of sound and poor practice,
- monitoring time pressures and timetabling that may adversely affect completion and submission of assignments,
- mixing assessment tasks of units to minimise risk of plagiarism, contract cheating, collusion and foster positive values and behaviour among students, and
- requiring students to provide a disclaimer appended to their assignments which affirms that, where otherwise acknowledged, the material submitted in the assignments is their own.

All AIFE staff will have a sound awareness of academic integrity expectations, which is supported through the following measures:

- Academic staff inductions include components on academic integrity and training in the use and interpretation of AIFE's detection and reporting mechanisms;
- Staff are made aware of types of risks to academic integrity including assessments, admissions and other identified areas of risk;
- Staff receive communications on developments and emerging issues relating to academic integrity;
- Regular sessions on academic integrity will be held for staff and students;
- Staff are informed about findings arising from the collection and analysis of academic misconduct data at AIFE and sector benchmarking; and
- Academic staff inductions include components on assessment moderation, with emphasis on academic integrity in moderation, including assessment design, point of assessment, and grading output review stages.

Measures to promote student academic integrity include the following:

- Regular communications on academic integrity. All enrolled students are informed of AIFE's expectations with regard to academic integrity. Reminders are posted on Cloudcampus;
- Academic integrity sessions are run during orientation and an academic integrity module will be available via Cloudcampus;
- Regular learning skills support workshops are conducted with printed and online support materials;

- Teaching staff and course documents provide appropriate examples of use of genAI, referencing and citation knowledge and skills related to a wide range of text types; and
- Submitted assessment tasks include a signed cover sheet in which students declare that their work is their own and free from plagiarism and collusion and acknowledges if/when/how genAI has been used. Student work is submitted via a mandatory online plagiarism/originality report submission process.

Learning and information systems are assessed for any security weakness which could lead to breaches of academic integrity.

Categories of Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct refers to any breach of academic integrity by students or staff. AIFE classifies academic misconduct by staff and students as Minor and Major Academic Misconduct.

Staff shall exercise professional judgement when applying penalties once academic misconduct has been established. A more lenient or severe penalty may be appropriate, depending on the circumstances as outlined below.

Student Academic Misconduct

Minor

Minor Academic Misconduct committed by students includes, but is not limited to, unacknowledged use of genAI, plagiarism and collusion that occurs in the student's first or second unit of study.

An allegation of Minor Academic Misconduct arises where an academic staff member identifies that material submitted for an assessment task has been produced using genAI and/or plagiarised, **and** where that academic misconduct is the student's first offence.

Major

A student is alleged to have committed Major Academic Misconduct for a subsequent offence or offences and where they have engaged in activities that include:

- bringing in or referring to unauthorised material in an examination room,
- communicating with other students during an examination,
- reading the work of other students in an examination,
- contract cheating, which is when the student has outsourced their '*...assessments to a third party, whether that is a commercial provider, current or former student, family member or acquaintance. It includes the unauthorised use of file-sharing sites, as well as organising another person to take an examination*' (see [Good Practice Note: Addressing Contract Cheating](#), p.2),
- engaging in or agreeing to any form of dishonest act, and
- submission of assessable material that is identified by academic staff as work not authored by the student (unless it has been produced with assistance of genAI and acknowledged).

A breach that occurs during an examination is classified as Major Academic Misconduct, as indicated above. If students are suspected of academic misconduct during an examination, the following procedures apply:

- an examination supervisor may confiscate any item that is in the student's possession that indicates an attempt at unacknowledged use of genAI, plagiarism or cheating,
- the student will be expelled from the examination room,
- the student will be given an automatic Fail (F) grade, and
- the examination supervisor will refer the matter to the Dean who will conduct an investigation as outlined in this Policy and Procedure.

Staff Academic Misconduct

Allegations of staff academic misconduct will be classified into minor or major misconduct depending on the type, extent, impact and intent of the misconduct. Staff academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Disseminating false or dishonest information in relation to the performance (teaching or scholarship) of other scholars or students;
- Biased marking of assessments;
- Plagiarising or presenting the words, phrases or works of another as one's own, by:
 - failing to or incorrectly acknowledging text, images, videos and other artefacts sourced from others in teaching materials, works of scholarship or research outputs;
 - copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment in teaching materials, works of scholarship or research outputs;
 - using another's expression or ideas without appropriate recognition or due acknowledgement (e.g. by failure to use an academic referencing system) in teaching materials, works of scholarship or research outputs; and
 - falsifying or fabricating data obtained from experiments, interviews, surveys, or similar activities in works of scholarship or research outputs.
- Acquiring, attempting to acquire, possessing, or distributing (either physically, electronically or orally) restricted assessment-related material or information, such as examination questions or an examination question paper, without prior authorisation of the relevant academic staff.
- Providing a student with the opportunity to copy or plagiarise work completed by another person in order that the student can include that work in material to be submitted for assessment:
 - by enabling the student to copy answers produced during an examination,

- by providing the student with a copy of work completed by another student on the same or a similar assessment task and is to be submitted for assessment or had been assessed previously.
- Offering or accepting bribes for academic or career gain.

Staff conducting research are required to adhere to [the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (2018) and associated guidelines and legislation. Allegations of misconduct or breaches of research integrity will be investigated under the provisions of the NHMRC guide: [Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#). For such purposes the Dean will act as the Integrity Officer and the CEO as the Responsible Person.

Procedure

Allegations of Student Misconduct – Reporting, Assessment and Determination

If a breach of academic integrity is suspected:

- the student is to be informed in writing of:
 - the allegation,
 - the evidence that points to the breach,
 - the process for investigating and making a determination, and
 - the possible penalties that may apply if academic misconduct is confirmed.
- an academic misconduct report must be completed by the academic who suspects a breach of academic integrity and submitted to the Associate Dean with supporting evidence. The Associate Dean must notify the student within five (5) days of receiving the report that a breach of academic integrity has been filed against them.

The Associate Dean will review the submission of alleged academic misconduct and provide an opportunity for the student to respond within ten (10) working days as part of the process of establishing student intention and culpability. Students who wish to dispute the alleged misconduct will normally meet with the Associate Dean to discuss the available evidence within this timeframe.

If the student does not respond within ten (10) working days to the academic misconduct allegations, the Associate Dean will reach a finding on the basis of available evidence.

The range of possible findings, based on the criteria in this Policy, are:

- no academic misconduct has occurred,
- Minor Academic Misconduct, or
- Major Academic Misconduct.

The Associate Dean will issue a letter of outcome on all decisions following an assessment and/or investigation of an allegation. The letter will outline:

- a summary of the investigation and findings, including where the finding was that no academic misconduct occurred,
- where applicable, the educative response and/or penalty that is to be applied,
- advice to the student that the incident has been recorded in an Academic Misconduct Register (AMR). This also applies to a finding of no academic misconduct:
 - a record will still be made to provide a background for any subsequent incidents, and
 - the student will be given a warning that any repeat event may result in a finding of Academic Misconduct and associated consequences,
- if this was a first offence, advice that any subsequent offences will be automatically deemed Major Academic Misconduct, and
- the student's right to appeal any decisions within 10 working days of notification.

Where misconduct has been established, the Associate Dean will action the penalty, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the following section.

All students registered on the AMR will receive referral to ancillary support and academic integrity resources to develop improved referencing and citation techniques and an understanding of what constitutes good practice in relation to academic integrity.

A summarised description of this process is attached in Appendix 1.

Determination of Penalties

For Minor Academic Misconduct, the student will be:

- required to submit revised work associated with the misconduct, and
- given a formal written warning or reprimand including advice of the possible consequences of any further student Academic Misconduct.

For Major Academic Misconduct, the following penalties will be applied to the student:

- a zero grade is awarded for the assessment in which the misconduct occurred,
- a Fail grade is recorded for the unit,
- compulsory attendance at an academic integrity education session, and
- suspension or exclusion from AIFE.

Where a student has no prior record of a warning or finding of academic misconduct on the AMR (i.e. this is the student's first offence), the Associate Dean may consider the following when deciding a fair penalty:

- whether instructions regarding collusion, plagiarism and proper acknowledgement of sources were unavailable or unclear, and/or
- the degree and extent of plagiarism or other misconduct in the student's work.

If the student has a record of a finding of academic misconduct or a warning registered on the AMR (i.e. the student's second offence):

- marks will be deducted based on the severity of the misconduct identified, and
- where a fail grade is to be applied for one or more units, the student will be informed that they risk an outcome of unsatisfactory academic progression.

If the student has two prior records of findings of Academic Misconduct or warnings on the AMR (i.e. the student's third offence):

- the student will be referred to the Dean. The outcome may result in an exclusion from the course, and
- where the period of exclusion or suspension is greater than a term of study, in order to be considered for re-enrolment, the student must first submit an application for re-admission for the next term of study. The outcome of such an application will be determined by the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC).

Appeals

A student may appeal against any decision made under this Policy and Procedure under the provisions in the *Student Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Allegations of Staff Misconduct – Reporting, Assessment and Determination

Where a staff member or a student suspects an instance of staff academic misconduct, they must immediately report the allegation with accompanying evidence to the Dean, who will make a preliminary assessment of the allegation within 10 working days. The staff member or student reporting the allegation will be kept informed of progress regarding the investigation.

Based on the information and evidence, the Dean will determine if:

- there is no case to answer, in which case, a record of the reasons for this must be maintained, or
- there is sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation.

Where further inquiry is warranted, the Dean will:

- notify the staff member against whom the allegation has been made ('the Respondent') and the Chair of Academic Board, and
- appoint an external investigator who is of sufficient academic seniority and expertise and is without conflict of interest and provide them with copies of all relevant documentation.

Within 20 working days of being appointed, the investigator will:

- review all relevant documentation,
- gather any additional evidence and conduct interviews as required, and
- provide a report on the findings to the Dean.

Within 5 working days of receipt of the investigator's findings, the Dean will advise the Respondent of the outcome.

Where the finding is:

- in favour of the Respondent, the matter will be deemed closed, the Chair of Academic Board will be advised, and all records will be filed, or
- of a possible minor or major offence, the Respondent has the right of reply in writing to the Dean within 10 working days of receipt of the findings.

Where the Respondent:

- does not invoke the right of reply, the Dean will advise the Academic Board Chair to initiate action in the form of an appropriate penalty, or
- pursues the right or reply, the Dean will review all records pertaining to the allegation and provide a review report within 20 working days of receipt of the reply from the Respondent.

Within 5 working days of receipt of the review report, the Dean will advise the Respondent of the outcome.

Where the outcome of the review report is:

- in favour of the Respondent, the matter will be deemed closed, the Dean will be advised, and all records filed, or
- to uphold the original decision in relation to a minor or major offence, the Respondent is advised of the outcome and their right of appeal under the appeal provisions of the relevant industrial award.

Where the Respondent does not exercise their right of appeal, the Dean is advised of the final outcome and authorises initiation of all required action in the form of an appropriate penalty.

Determination of Penalties

In determining the penalty for proven academic misconduct, the following circumstances are required to be taken into consideration:

- whether the staff member is relatively new and inexperienced,
- whether the staff member has a history of academic misconduct,
- any admissions by the staff member in relation to the misconduct,
- the nature and extent of the misconduct,
- whether the misconduct was a deliberate act of deception or cheating, and
- the extent to which the misconduct approximates an offence in the wider community that under law might lead to legal proceedings, e.g. theft, fraud, false representation.

Where appropriate, disciplinary and/or termination proceedings may be implemented for proven academic misconduct, in accordance with the *Human Resources Management Policy and Procedure* and the relevant industrial award.

Appeals

Staff dissatisfied with any action or outcome associated with this Policy may lodge a grievance under the relevant provisions of the *Human Resources Management Policy and Procedure*.

Confidentiality

All information associated with reports, investigations and outcomes associated with individual instances of academic misconduct must be treated as confidential. The only circumstances under which information will be released are if it is required by law or the person has expressly consented to its release in writing.

Monitoring and Improvement

De-identified data from the AMR are collected to monitor trends in academic misconduct, to determine and address any systemic academic misconduct issues, and establish targets on the basis of sector benchmarking.

Student feedback is sought on their experience of processes relating to academic integrity, including access to support services.

The Dean provides a report to the LTC every teaching period on all academic integrity matters including allegations, institutional responses, and trends.

After consideration, the LTC will the report to the Academic Board including any recommendations for improvement.

The Academic Board will refer any recommendations that require additional resourcing to the Board of Directors as appropriate.

Responsibilities

Academic staff

- Ensure that students are trained in good scholarship and are aware of the provisions of this document.
- Maintain awareness of instances of potential academic misconduct.
- Investigate any suspicion of academic misconduct in students and submit an Academic Misconduct Report to the Associate Dean as appropriate.
- Observe the principles of academic integrity in all their teaching and scholarship.
- Report instances of potential academic misconduct in fellow staff to the Dean.

Associate Dean

- Investigate and determine allegations of student academic misconduct.
- Refer recommendations in relation to penalties for findings of Major Academic Misconduct to the Dean for approval.
- Notify students of outcomes.
- Ensure appropriate records are kept.

The Dean

- Has general oversight of academic integrity matters at AIFE.
- Approves recommendations in relation to penalties for findings of Student Major Academic Misconduct.

- Collects and analyses student academic integrity/misconduct data, including making reports to the LTC and/or the Academic Board.
- Reports staff academic integrity matters to the Academic Board.
- In relation to staff academic misconduct matters:
 - makes initial determinations as to whether an allegation has substance,
 - appoints an investigator where an allegation appears to have substance, and
 - authorises initiation of appropriate actions and penalties following the exhaustion of any relevant appeal processes.

The Academic Board is responsible for the overall monitoring of academic integrity at AIFE and reporting to the Board of Directors on breaches to academic integrity.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure, the following terms are defined as follows.

Academic integrity	Academic activities centred on a commitment to honesty, trust, respect and responsibility.
Academic misconduct	Breach of academic integrity and includes misrepresentation, fabrication, plagiarism and misuse of intellectual property.
Contract cheating	TEQSA defines contract cheating as: ‘... when students outsource their assessments to a third party, whether that is a commercial provider, current or former student, family member or acquaintance. It includes the unauthorised use of file-sharing sites, as well as organising another person to take an examination’ (see Good Practice Note: Addressing Contract Cheating , p.2).
Course documents	A document providing detailed information for students enrolled in a unit. This will include details of each learning activity and assessment task and the links between Unit and Course learning outcomes.
GenAI (generative artificial intelligence)	A type of artificial intelligence technology that can produce various types of content, including text, imagery, audio and synthetic data.
Plagiarism	Intentionally or unintentionally using the work of another person, copying (in whole or in part) the work or data of another person, paraphrasing closely or presenting substantial extracts from written, printed, electronic or other media in a student's written, oral, electronic, online or group assessment task without due acknowledgment.

Version History

Version #	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	New Policy	Academic Board	19 April 2022

2.0	Update staff positions in line with approved Workforce Plan	Academic Board	06 December 2022
3.0	Update policy to include use and mis-use of genAI and minor editing	Academic Board	31 October 2024

Additional Information

Policy Status	Approved
Policy Owner	Dean
Next Review Date	2 years from Approval Date
Related Internal Documents	Academic Misconduct Register Course Development and Approval Policy and Procedure Student Appeals Policy and Procedure
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2022	Standards 5.2.1 to 5.2.4
Other legislative or regulatory instruments	Not applicable

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Appendix One – Student Academic Misconduct Flowchart

