

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Approving Authority	Academic Board 21 st October 2015
Responsible Officer	Dean of Academics
Version	1.3 Renaming, Reformatting and inclusion of Academic Integrity and Contract Cheating statements. Principal approved – 7 th January 2021
Next Scheduled Review	Oct 2023
Related Legislation and Regulations	Higher Education Standards Framework 2021, standard 7.2 Standard 5.2, 6.2, 7.2 and 7.3. Australian Skills Quality Authority 2015 Clauses 1.8-1.12
Associated Documents	Student Code of Conduct Policy Academic Integrity Modules Assessment Policy and Procedure https://online.ccs.edu.au/course/view.php?id=270#section-2 The College Style Manual

1 SCOPE

This policy applies to students and faculty within the College across all sectors.

2 PURPOSE

ACCS is committed to academic excellence and high ethical standards in relation to work that is produced by students. The aim of this policy is to support the rights of ownership of intellectual property and outlines the expectation of the need to give due acknowledgement to authors and sources used and inform that failure to do so may incur consequences.

3 DEFINITIONS

Academic Integrity: For the purposes of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* (HES Framework), academic integrity is: *'the moral code of academia. It involves using, generating and communicating information in an ethical, honest and responsible manner'* (Monash University, 2013). The term 'ethical scholarship' has a similar meaning. These definitions apply to the behaviour of teachers, researchers, students or others who are engaged in any form of scholarly activity. TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Integrity

Plagiarism: Presenting another person's work as one's own. This also includes:

- The direct duplication of the thoughts or work of another without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Paraphrasing another person's work with minor changes but keeping the meaning, form and/or progression of ideas of the original.
- Presenting an assessment as an independent work when it was produced in whole or part in collaboration or collusion with other people.
- Submitting an assessment that has already been submitted for assessment in another subject.
- Submitting an assessment as one's own independent work when it has been produced by another person voluntarily or in return for payment.

Negligent Plagiarism: Unknowingly or carelessly presenting another's work as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement of the source.

Dishonest Plagiarism: Knowingly presenting another's work as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement of the source.

Alleged plagiarism: Alleged Dishonest Plagiarism where:

- Substantial proportions of a student's work have been copied from the work of another person in a manner that clearly exceeds reasonable academic practice;
- A student's work contains a substantial body of copied material (including from the internet) without appropriate acknowledgement of the source, and in a manner that cannot be explained as negligent plagiarism; or
- The student has previously received a written warning.

Contract Cheating: Contract cheating can involve plagiarism and or collusion. Contract cheating is the practice of a student engaging someone to complete their assignments or to produce or conduct research for the work, either partly or wholly, for payment or other consideration which they then submit as their own. It includes the student paying for an assignment response or swapping or the use of a downloaded response.

Collusion: Involves students or others working together on an assignment which was designed and presented as an independent task. Or group tasks presented for which a student has made no contribution.

Faculty Executive: Dean of Academics and the Heads of Departments.

4 POLICY/PROCEDURE STATEMENT

ACCS considerations to endorse academic integrity by the:

- Provision of clear expectations and definitions through the compulsory modules for students;
- Provision of support software and other resources for lecturers to assist learning and feedback to students;
- Requirement for students to complete the declaration of ownership of their submitted works and
- Provision of support for students to develop a clear and applicable understanding of academic integrous study principles.

For the purpose of the following *plagiarism* is inclusive of collusion and contract cheating.

Prevention

Students are required to sign a declaration on the assignment cover sheet which states:

"I certify that this assignment is my own work in my own words. All sources have been acknowledged and the content has not been previously submitted for assessment to Australian College of Christian Studies or elsewhere."

At commencement of their studies, all students are required to complete a set of 6 *Academic Integrity Modules* within their first week of study.

Students can avoid plagiarism by ensuring that:

- They only submit work which they have prepared themselves;
- They do not submit work that has already been presented for assessment in another subject without lecturer knowledge; and
- They acknowledge all items used in their assessment which come from the work/s of others.
- As per the College policy for referencing, they include page numbers to all references either cited or referred to within the body of the assessment.

Detection

Students are advised that submission of written assessments is in electronic form. Although moral and legal copyright to this material vests in the student as the author, the student, by enrolling in an accredited program, provides an implied consent to the College which authorises:

- Reproduction and storage of material which they may author and submit as part of their program assessment; and
- Scanning this material for purposes of moderation of assignments or detecting, through software processing, any plagiarized material used in assignments. Lecturers will be advised of various methods and means of detecting plagiarism as part of the Lecturer Orientation/Induction. Material will be scanned in response to suspicion of the lecturer and also a random sample of assessments will be checked throughout the trimester.

Some of these methods include:

- Using plagiarism detection software;
- Using internet sources for checks on similarity of wording;
- Checking the students previous written and submitted work for comparison ;
- Cross-checking the references cited or referred to by the student, or
- Obtaining a second opinion from the Faculty Head or Dean of Academics.

Procedure

Procedural Fairness

The College is committed to dealing with student plagiarism in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness, including the right of a student to:

- Be informed of the allegations in sufficient detail to be able to respond appropriately;
- Have a reasonable period of time within which to respond to the allegations;
- Have the matter resolved in a timely manner;
- Be informed of their rights under this policy;
- Invite a support person or student representative to any meeting regarding alleged plagiarism;
- Impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process.

This does not preclude penalties being imposed if detection occurs at a time after assessments have been returned or after results have been issued.

Negligent Plagiarism

First Breach: Students in their First Session of Study

- If the student is in their first session/semester/trimester of study, the student should be informed about the ways to avoid plagiarism. A warning will be given about the penalties for future breaches. The warning will be noted by the lecturer and given to the Registrar to be placed in the student's file.
- Subsequent negligent breaches will be dealt with as a breach under the section Dishonest Plagiarism.

First Breach: Other Students

- The student can be given an appropriate mark and the breach noted on the student's file. The grade will be determined by the lecturer in consultation with the Head of Faculty, or nominee. The student will also be required to seek remedial advice concerning plagiarism.
- Subsequent breaches will be dealt with as alleged Dishonest Plagiarism.

Dishonest Plagiarism

The lecturer will advise the Faculty Head if they suspect dishonest plagiarism. The Faculty Head will review the assessment in question and discuss the assessment and possible penalty with the lecturer. Instances of alleged dishonest plagiarism will be dealt with by the Faculty Head unless the Faculty Head considers the allegation to be serious enough to warrant formal review by the Faculty Executive. Repeated dishonest plagiarism will result in a fail (0 mark) for the assessment and continuation at the college will be determined by the Academic Executive.

Collusion

The processes for collusion are as per that of plagiarism outlined above.

Contract Cheating

The lecturer will advise the Faculty Head who will inform the Academic Executive. An investigation will be conducted and upon proof of the allegation the student will be awarded a fail grade and continuation at the college will be determined by the Academic Executive.

Notification

Within eight working days of receipt of the allegation, the Faculty Head will advise the student in writing of the nature of the allegation and the processes that will follow. The Faculty Head will arrange to meet with the student along with the lecturer within ten working days to discuss the allegation.

If the student advises in writing that the allegation is accepted, the Faculty Head will determine the appropriate penalty, in accordance with this policy.

If the student wishes to attend a meeting, he/she must, within five working days of the receipt of the notification of the allegation, confirm their attendance either in writing or by telephone.

The Meeting

The student is permitted to invite a support person or student representative to any meeting regarding alleged dishonest plagiarism. The Faculty Head will conduct this meeting along with the lecturer who has marked the assessment. If the Faculty Head has marked the student paper, then this meeting will be conducted along with an academic staff/faculty nominated by the Principal.

Penalties

For a first breach involving dishonest plagiarism, the following penalties may be applied:

- A warning given and no further action taken;
- The student be required to resubmit the item of work;
- The student be required to complete a new assessment task;
- Downgrading the mark for the assessment;
- Downgrading the final grade in the subject;
- Imposing a fail grade in the subject;
- Any combination of the above.

For subsequent breaches involving dishonest plagiarism, in addition to the penalties outlined above, the Head of Faculty may recommend one or more of the following penalties to the Faculty Executive:

- Suspending the student for a period of time, between six and 12 months;
- Excluding the student for a period of time, between 12 and 24 months; and/or
- Excluding the student permanently.

If the matter is not resolved in the first meeting for dishonest plagiarism or if a subsequent breach occurs, the Faculty Head will take the matter to the Faculty Executive for final decision. The Faculty Executive may confirm the decision of the Faculty Head, vary the decision, or set aside the decision and substitute a new recommendation.

When the Faculty Executive makes a decision, a formal letter will be sent to the student advising:

- of the result and
- of the internal review process available.

Appeals

If the student appeals against a decision of the Faculty Executive, the matter will be referred to a Special Committee comprised of the Principal, Dean of Academics and at least two members of the Academic Board. The Dean of Academics will acknowledge in writing, receipt of the request for an appeal and inform the student of the following information:

- who will be responsible for conducting the investigation;
- that he/she has the right to a personal meeting to present his/her case (verbally and/or in writing) and the name, address and telephone number of the person to contact if a personal meeting is required;

- that he/she has the right to submit additional information in writing, should a personal meeting not be desired; and the name and address of the person to whom the additional information should be submitted;
- the timeframe during which the internal investigation will be conducted, generally within 45 days of receiving the request for an investigation

The Special Committee may confirm the decision of the Faculty Executive, vary the decision, or set aside the decision and substitute a new recommendation.

When the Special Committee makes a decision, a formal letter will be sent to the student advising:

- of the result;
- of a recommendation to resolve the appeal, and
- of the external review process available.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This policy acknowledges the following resources:

<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-academic-integrity>

<https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/plagiarismpolicy.pdf>

<http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051&dvid=1#min1>

http://sydney.edu.au/student_affairs/plagiarismdef.shtml

<https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/UA-Academic-Integrity-Best-Practice-Principles.pdf>

<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/protecting-academic-integrity>

guidance-note-academic-integrity-v1-2-web