



## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

### Policy and Procedures

#### DEFINITIONS

Terms in this document, for which definitions are not provided in the text or may not be self-evident or for which usage at ACC may differ to that in other higher education institutions are as follows:

**Academic Integrity:** To act in a way that maintains integrity of all academic work and is not academically dishonest in any way.

**Academic Misconduct:** (As defined under 'Procedures' in this Policy and Procedures document) It includes various forms of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, cheating, contract cheating, the sale of one's academic work for use by another person, and purchasing or obtaining assessment material through individuals, companies or web-based services.

**Subject:** A scientific or professional discipline or body of knowledge which forms an essential part of the degree program curriculum. Subjects at the ACC comprise one or more units of study.

**Subject or Unit Coordinator:** The academic staff member who is responsible for the design, delivery and assessment of a scientific or professional discipline or body of knowledge which forms an essential part of the degree program curriculum.

**Unit (or Unit of Study):** An element of a subject that has specified student learning outcomes and requires satisfactory performance in assessments that measure student performance regarding learning outcomes.

**Assessors:** Designated staff or associates of the College who have been given responsibility for assessing student learning outcomes (knowledge and skills), be it a written or oral assessment or clinical practice based.

**Exam invigilator(s):** Academic or other contracted staff who supervise examinations and in so doing ensure that students abide by the rules applicable to that examination and are available to answer any procedural query that a student may have.

**Adjudication:** The process of determining which party has right on their side in a dispute or difference of opinion (in this instance, in the case of alleged student academic misconduct), and the decision following investigation of the alleged academic misconduct.

#### PURPOSE

The *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure* outlines the College's stringent approach to academic misconduct and the breach of academic integrity. It provides clear definitions of academic misconduct and outlines the expectations of students regarding assessment submission, ensuring that all work submitted is their own, and appropriately acknowledges the ideas, data and/or work of others.

#### SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled in units of study at the ACC.

## POLICY STATEMENT

The ACC holds in high regard the academic standards of integrity, honesty and ethical behaviour in all areas of academic endeavour. The College will not tolerate behaviour which would bring the College into disrepute or damage its reputation as a high quality higher education provider, committed to academic rigour and the maintenance of exemplary academic standards. The ACC investigates and deals with academic misconduct in a clear, consistent approach, and applies penalties which are fair and equitable to the level of misconduct.

In order to uphold these standards, the College requires acceptable and appropriate behaviour and conduct in the learning environment including accuracy, honesty and accountability.

The ACC takes seriously its mission to educate students and reinforce the parameters by which students will be held academically accountable. It has committed to the use of Turnitin® as part of its efforts to identify and prevent academic misconduct.

ACC investigates and deals with all manner of student academic misconduct in a clear, consistent approach, applying penalties which are fair and equitable to the level of misconduct.

## PROCEDURES

The procedures detailed below cover a wide range of academic misconduct issues, including but not limited to:

- **Plagiarism** – defined as *ideas, data or work of others submitted as one's own, without appropriate referencing or acknowledgement*, including:
  - the omission of quotation marks to indicate the use of another's work or acknowledgement of the source;
  - the use of one or more sentences from the work of another person where a few words have been changed or the order of copied phrases/sentences has been changed;
  - Copying the work of another student (with or without their knowledge and/or agreement);
  - Copying tables, graphs, images, designs, computer programs and any other data;
  - Omission of acknowledgement or appropriate referencing.
- **Cheating** – defined as *a practice of fraud or deceit in relation to academic assessment, which violates the rules or regulations, or involves the taking of an examination or test in a dishonest way*. This is a broad definition in which all actions or attempted actions by a student may gain them an unfair advantage over other students. Common examples include:
  - Copying or attempted copying of assessments or examinations;
  - Collusion on individual assessments;
  - Obtaining unauthorised access to written notes or examination material;
  - Bringing unauthorised material into examinations;
  - Providing falsified or forged documentation in order to obtain an unfair academic advantage;
  - Making false claims in relation to assessments or examinations in order to obtain an unfair academic advantage.
- **Contract Cheating** – *where an enrolled or former student arranges, attempts to arrange for, or acquire, any form of paid or unpaid academic work (e.g. assessment, exam, research) to be undertaken fully or partially by another party, which the student represents as their own*. Contract cheating is also a form of plagiarism. It is commonly presented in the form of essays and reports, but can also include all types of assessment work, including another party impersonating a student in exams.

- **Other breaches of Academic Integrity** – which *comprise any other act that can be regarded as academically dishonest*. Examples include:
  - Giving or providing for sale one’s own work to another person for copying for use by another person;
  - Purchasing or obtaining assessment material through individuals, companies or web-based services.

ACC has established different procedures for the management of Minor Incidents of Academic Misconduct and for all other levels of Academic Misconduct, as indicated in the sections below.

## 1. Student Education

It is acknowledged that the first year of learning can present challenges to all new learners. The ACC therefore provides structured learning support to assist students during their higher education study. Steps to the successful and continuing education of students on Academic Integrity include:

- Face-to-face Orientation – a compulsory orientation process designed to familiarise new students with the ACC, its policies and procedures including clear information about academic misconduct;
- On-line Orientation – a further compulsory part of orientation to ensure that essential elements of the higher education context, such as academic integrity, are fully understood by students;
- Provision by subject coordinators of a written summary of examination and assessment expectations along with examples of acceptable standards via the student learning platform (e.g. Moodle), in order to ensure that all expectations are fully understood by students;
- On-going student support, available to all students. This support may include (but is not limited to) assistance in understanding appropriate referencing practices, guidance for group work or explanation of research ethics. Support will be available in person through Student Support and Librarian Services and on-line student learning platforms.

## 2. Reporting, Recording, Adjudicating and Penalising discovered, suspected or alleged Incidents of Academic Misconduct

In all instances of discovered, suspected or alleged academic misconduct the following procedures apply:

- 2.1 A detailed incident report is completed and submitted by the Subject Coordinator providing details of an alleged case of academic misconduct.
- 2.2 All appropriate details and evidence are collated and attached to the incident report, including relevant assignments, examinations, Turnitin reports and other supporting evidence.
- 2.3 Students may be required to submit evidence of authentication of work in order to assist in identification and/or classification of the level of misconduct.
- 2.4 Following appropriate adjudication of the incident by the Subject Coordinator and relevant Assessor(s), ultimately, a penalty will be imposed. Implementation of the penalty is the responsibility of the Subject Coordinator.
- 2.5 The principles behind adjudicating and ultimately penalising offenders of academic misconduct are aimed at protecting and maintaining academic rigour as well as encouraging an honest and ethical academic environment. In all circumstances, penalties will be arrived upon and implemented in a consistent and fair manner.

- 2.6 If outcomes of potential misconduct cases are pending at the time of grade finalisation, the Subject Coordinator will register a Grade Outstanding (GO) until the adjudication and penalising process has been finalised.

### **3. Identification of Minor Academic Misconduct**

- 3.1 Identification of misconduct is dependent on assessment type. In the case of examination misconduct, the assessor, exam invigilator or other staff member who reasonably suspects breach of academic integrity, will liaise with the Subject Coordinator, in addition to supplying supporting evidence.
- 3.2 Whether the student has committed a Minor Incidence of Misconduct will be determined after consideration of the student's prior records and discussion by both Subject Coordinator and Assessor.
- 3.3 A Minor Incident of Misconduct is defined as the first incident of plagiarism or academic misconduct, if the following applies:
- It is the first plagiarism or academic misconduct offense;
  - The student is considered within the early stages of academic study (i.e. first four units of undergraduate study at the ACC);
  - The extent of the plagiarism or academic misconduct is considered to be within the acceptable margins by the Subject Coordinator or nominee, with the plagiarised content being minimal (within 25%) as determined on the interpretation of a plagiarism software (Turnitin).

### **4. Penalties for Minor Incidents of Misconduct**

- 4.1 An invitation to respond (within 10 working days) to a reported allegation of minor academic misconduct will be emailed to the involved student. The invitation will include details of the alleged misconduct. The decision to, uphold the allegation as a minor incident, upgrade the level of misconduct or dismiss the case will be influenced by any response provided by the student during the invitation period.
- 4.2 Penalties for a finalised Minor Incident may include:
- Reduction in mark or standardised grade dependent upon the extent of plagiarism;
  - Referral to appropriate student support for development of the student's academic skills.
- 4.3 Implementation and monitoring of mark deduction will be determined by, and the responsibility of the Subject Coordinator.
- 4.4 All details of the misconduct, including student name and details, will be recorded and maintained with the College's central records, however a minor incident will not be noted as part of the student's permanent record.
- 4.5 A minor Incident Letter will be signed by the Academic Dean and issued to the student providing details of the incident, penalties applied and a statement requiring the student to undergo academic support and/or training in the area of academic integrity breach. Compulsory training ensures the student understands the error made and ensures the student understands the importance of academic integrity and consequences of any further breach.

### **5. Penalties for all types of Academic Misconduct other than Minor Incidents**

- 5.1 An invitation to respond (within 10 working days) to a reported allegation of academic misconduct will be emailed to the involved student. The invitation will include details of the alleged misconduct. The decision to, uphold the allegation of misconduct and determine the level of severity or to dismiss the case will be influenced by any response provided by the student during the invitation period.
- 5.2 Determination and Implementation and appropriate penalty is the responsibility of the Academic Dean.

- 5.3 Schedule 1 provides a list of penalties dependent upon level or severity of academic misconduct.
- 5.4 All details of the misconduct, including student name and details, will be recorded and maintained with the College's Academic Misconduct database.
- 5.5 An Academic Misconduct Letter, signed by the Academic Dean and issued to the student will provide the following:
- Details of allegations, allowing for a full understanding of the nature and severity of the allegation, including adjudicator details;
  - Details indicating how the misconduct was determined;
  - The penalty imposed; and
  - Confirmation of no internal right to appeal (except where new evidence is available or due process was flawed).

## **6. Student Appeal**

- 6.1 A student deemed to have committed academic misconduct and has had a penalty imposed under the *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures* may challenge the decision or penalty on the grounds of inadequacies in the reporting and adjudication process. Appeals will be processed in accordance with the *Student Academic Appeals Procedure* and must be lodged within 20 days of notification of the misconduct decision and associated penalty.
- 6.2 In the case that the penalty imposed will result in a suspension or cancellation of an overseas student's enrolment, before imposing a suspension or cancellation the College will:
- inform the overseas student of that intention and the reasons for doing so, in writing
  - advise the overseas student of their right to appeal through the College's internal complaints and appeals process within 20 working days, in accordance with Standard 10 of the National Code for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

## **IMPLEMENTATION and MONITORING**

The Academic Dean is responsible for this procedure.

Implementation of actions under this procedure are detailed within the document.

A report pertaining to Academic Integrity issues within the ACC will be a standing item on the agenda of each Academic Board meeting. The report will be presented to the Academic Board by the Academic Dean. The Academic Board Chair will convey its comments and any recommendations arising from this report to the Board of Directors as part of the Academic Board Chair's report.

All records of academic integrity breaches and the outcomes of the above procedures will be retained in the College's formal record system.

## **REVIEW**

The ACC's *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure* is normally reviewed every three years.

It is a policy of the ACC that any Policy or Procedure may be reviewed earlier as indicated by internal or external factors (including but not limited to such factors as changes in the guidelines of regulatory authorities, accreditation/registration requirements of the profession, or relevant legislation at state or federal level) as determined the Board of Directors and/or Academic Board.

## RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Governance Framework
- Student Academic Appeals Procedures

## VERSION CONTROL

<b>Document:</b> A003 Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures		
<b>Responsible Officer:</b> Academic Dean		
<b>Initially Approved by:</b> Academic Board		<b>Date:</b> 15 October 2018
<b>Reviewed and approved by:</b> Academic Board		<b>Date:</b> 2 September 2020
<b>Version:</b> V3.1	<b>Replaces Version(s):</b> V3.0	<b>Next Review:</b> March 2022
<b>Nature of Change</b>	August 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minor spelling, other text and formatting edits</li><li>• Addition of definitions</li></ul>	