Academic Integrity Procedure

Document Owner	Chief Executive Officer		
Responsible Officer	Director of Studies / Operations and Compliance Manager		
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Related Documents	*Academic Integrity Policy* *Complaints and Appeals Policy* *Complaints/Appeals Request Form* *Student and Staff Code of Conduct and Misconduct Procedure* *Standards for RTOs 2015* *National Code 2018*		
Version	**Authorised by**	**Approved**	**Effective Date**
1.1	Chief Executive Officer	8/04/2024	8/04/2024

1. Scope

This Procedure implements the Australian College of Business Intelligence (ACBI)'s *Academic Integrity Policy*.

This Procedure provides a framework for staff and students to prevent breaches of academic integrity, manage suspected breaches, and impose penalties for breaches.

2. Definitions

Academic integrity: a commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage in all areas of academic activity.

Academic misconduct: acting in any way contrary to the spirit of academic integrity to gain an unfair and unmerited advantage.

Assessment: a process to determine a student's achievement of identified learning outcomes and may include a range of written and oral methods and practice or demonstration.

Breach: a failure to comply with ACBI's *Academic Integrity Policy* and related policies, procedures, directions, or instructions – intentionally or unintentionally.

Collusion: an agreement between two or more parties to mislead or deceive others. Regarding coursework and assessments, the aim of collusion is usually to gain an unfair advantage.

Contract cheating: a form of academic misconduct in which students get others to complete their coursework, assessment, or examination, and claim the work is their own (also referred to as "ghost-writing").

Exclusion: the suspension of a student's enrolment for a period of time.

Ghost-writing: refer to "contract cheating".

Plagiarism: occurs when work is submitted that includes the words or ideas of others without appropriate attribution or reference to the original author.

SMS: Student Management System as RTO Manager

3. Preventing Breaches of Academic Integrity
3.1. Students

The following measures are designed to support students in meeting academic integrity requirements:

3.1.1. Assessment Design

In designing assessments, ACBI incorporates strategies to eliminate or minimise opportunities for academic misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to:

- assessment tasks that have clearly explained requirements, supported by well-designed marking criteria and marking guide;
- measures that eliminate or minimise the possibility of academic misconduct are included in the assessment brief, such as:
  - written submissions may include:
    - outlines or drafts;
    - open questions tests and assessments
    - demonstration of ability and knowledge via a written or practical examination;
    - academic referencing;
  - for non-written submission, part of the assessment may include:
    - practical demonstration of skills and application of knowledge;
    - an oral presentation;
    - evidence of research and findings;
    - drafts or preparatory work;
- assessment tasks in which breaches of academic integrity have occurred are redesigned; and
- rewriting of assessment task questions to avoid repetition of assessments in which students have gained knowledge of the task.
- Systematic validation and moderation activities of assessment strategies and tools.

3.1.2. Student Orientation

The student orientation program includes information about academic integrity, particularly what academic misconduct is and how to avoid it such as:

- following the requirements in the assessment guide and the advice of the trainer;
- seeking assistance from the trainer or Academic Team.
- All commencing students are required to undertake a module on academic integrity as part of their orientation, which is available on the Learning Management System. The Academic Integrity Module is set up as a pre-requisite module to be completed before accessing the course content on the LMS. The LMS and Academic Team will maintain a record of students who have undertaken the pre-requisite module.
- Education campaigns/workshops on academic integrity may be developed based on recent good practice guidance from relevant industry bodies.

3.1.3 Learning Support

Learning and academic skills support will be offered to students throughout their enrolment by the trainers and the Academic Team. Support can be offered in the areas of:

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- accessing resources;
- researching;
- paraphrasing and quoting;
- acknowledging sources and referencing; and
- self-regulation – using a free plagiarism checker such as Grammarly or Small Seo Tools

This support will be offered through scheduled workshops, learning support materials on the LMS, and individually on request.

3.1.4. Academic Integrity Declaration

As assessments are submitted via the Learning Management System, students are required to declare that the work being submitted is their own and there is no breach of academic integrity. On submission, students will be advised that making a false declaration is a serious offense and will be taken into consideration if a breach of academic integrity has taken place.

3.2. Staff

The following measures are designed to support students in meeting academic integrity requirements:

3.2.1 Staff Induction

When inducting new academic and professional staff, the Director of Studies is to include a reference to the *Academic Integrity Policy* and this Procedure. They will also be advised to seek further support as required to maintain academic integrity from the Academic Team.

Induction on academic integrity will be developed based on recent good practice guidance from relevant industry bodies.

3.3.2. Self-regulation

Staff will have to acknowledge and reference external documents in the development of new documents for ACBI, and rectify any issues identified with the similarity of their work with others before submitting the document for approval to their manager. The use of a plagiarism checker such as Grammarly or Small Seo Tools is highly recommended.

4. Dealing with Breaches of Academic Integrity
4.1. Students

Following is the procedure to be adopted by staff regarding suspected breaches of academic integrity by students:

4.1.1. Recognition

Recognition of possible breaches of academic integrity is the responsibility of the trainer or assessor and needs to be supported by clear evidence, such as:

- similarity detected by using plagiarism checker tools;
- similarity with work submitted by another student or by the same student for another assessment;

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- non-submission of required outlines, drafts, or preparatory work, as outlined in the assessment brief;
- disparity between student's performance to date in course work and/or prior assessments;

Without clear evidence, an allegation of academic misconduct is not to be acted upon.

When academic misconduct is suspected in group tasks, the steps within this procedure must be undertaken individually for each student.

Note: *Where a student has properly referenced quotes from other sources, this is **not** plagiarism. ACBI requires **at least 70%** of an assessment to be a student's original work.*

4.1.2. Enquiry

The trainer or assessor notifies the Director of Studies of the suspected breach of academic integrity, who considers the evidence provided. If the Director of Studies deems:

- the evidence does not substantiate a breach of academic integrity, the allegation is dismissed, and no further action is taken;
- the evidence indicates a possible breach of academic integrity, the Academic Team, as per instructions from the Director of Studies, informs the student via email within 5 working days and invites the student to a meeting/hearing at which the student can present their case. The email is to:
  - o inform the student of the allegation;
  - o advise the date and place of the meeting/hearing. The meeting should occur within 10 working days of the initial notification;
  - o indicate that the student may bring a support person;
  - o provide a copy of the *Academic Integrity Policy* and these Procedures
  - o allow the student to submit a written statement by the date of the meeting as an alternative to, or supplement to, the meeting.
  - o If the student is unable to attend the meeting, the discussion may occur via email, teleconference, or video conference.

The Academic Team is to record this communication within the Student Management System (SMS), along with ongoing correspondence with the student.

In response to the enquiry, the Director of Studies is to determine whether the evidence confirms:

- a breach of academic integrity **has** occurred. The Director of Studies documents this in the SMS and proceeds to Step 3 – Penalty below;
- a breach of academic integrity **has not** occurred. The allegation is dismissed, the outcome recorded in the SMS, and communicated to the student and the trainer or assessor via email.

If the student does not respond to the meeting request or chooses not to participate in the enquiry, the Director of Studies is to determine whether the available evidence confirms a breach has occurred or not.

4.1.3. Penalty

When the evidence confirms a breach of academic integrity has occurred, the Director of Studies is to determine whether the breach is:

'**majo**r' – deliberate, planned, significant in scale and/or in scope;

'**minor**' – academic misconduct that is not deemed 'major';
'**initial**' – the first time a breach has been confirmed;
'**repeated**' – a breach has previously been confirmed.

The Director of Studies is then to determine an appropriate penalty for the breach, based on the four criteria above. Penalties include (noted in ascending severity):

- resubmission of the assessment task;
- an alternative assessment task is to be undertaken by the student where the opportunity to breach academic integrity has been eliminated or reduced (e.g. an oral presentation);
- a Not Yet Competent (NYC) mark for the assessment task and the need to access the ACBI Re-assessment process as described in the *Assessment Policy* (administrative fees apply)
- a final NYC result for the Unit of Competency;
- referral to the Operations and Compliance Manager with a recommendation of suspension, exclusion, or cancellation of enrolment.

Except for cancellation of enrolment, each of these penalties is to be accompanied by a requirement for the student to undertake further training on academic integrity.

Any **major or repeated** breach must be referred to the Operations and Compliance Manager. An accompanying recommendation on how to respond to the breach must also be provided.

The Director of Studies' decision is recorded in the SMS and communicated to the student and the trainer or assessor via email. If the student disagrees with the outcome of the investigation, the student can access the appeals process outlined in the *Complaints and Appeals Policy*, which can be accessed on the ACBI website.

Note: *Appendix 1 provides an overview of the process for dealing with suspected student breaches of academic integrity.*

4.1.4. Follow-up

Breaches of academic integrity by students are to be noted in the Academic Misconduct Register and SMS, along with actions arising and the outcome.

In response to breaches of academic integrity, the Director of Studies reviews the assessment brief for which a breach occurred, and associated assessment tools, to determine if further developments are required to eliminate or minimise future occurrences.

The Director of Studies reports breaches of academic integrity to the Management Team and advises on measures being taken to eliminate or reduce opportunities for academic misconduct.

4.2. Staff

4.2.1. Recognition

Suspected breaches of academic integrity by staff are to be raised with the Chief Executive Officer and evidence provided. Without clear evidence, an assumption of academic misconduct is not to be acted upon.

4.2.2. Enquiry

The Chief Executive Officer considers the evidence provided and determines whether the report and/or evidence indicate a breach of academic integrity:

- has not occurred. In such cases, the allegation is dismissed, and no further action is taken.
- may have occurred. In such cases, the Chief Executive Officer informs the staff member within 5 working days via email and invites them to a meeting at which they can present their case. The email is to:
  - o inform the staff member of the allegation;
  - o advise the date and place of the meeting. The meeting should occur within 10 working days of the initial notification;
  - o indicate that the staff member may bring a support person;
  - o provide a copy of the *Academic Integrity Policy* and this Procedure;
  - o allow the staff member to submit a written statement by the date of the meeting as an alternative to, or supplement to, the meeting;
  - o If the staff member is unable to attend the meeting, the discussion may occur via email, teleconference, or video conference.

The Chief Executive Officer is to maintain a record of associated correspondence and outcomes.

In response to the discussion, the Chief Executive Officer is to determine whether the evidence confirms:

- a breach of academic integrity **has** occurred. The Chief Executive Officer documents this in staff files and proceeds to Step 3 – Penalty below.
- a breach of academic integrity **has not** occurred. The allegation is dismissed, and the outcome is noted and communicated to the staff member via email.

If the staff member does not respond to the meeting request or chooses not to participate in the discussion, the manager is to determine whether the available evidence confirms a breach has occurred or not.

4.2.3. Penalty

When the evidence confirms a breach of academic integrity has occurred, the manager is to determine whether the breach is:

'**majo**r' – deliberate, planned, significant in scale, and/or significant in scope;
'**minor**' – a breach that is not deemed 'major';
'**initial**' – the first time a breach has been confirmed;
'**repeated**' – a breach has previously been confirmed.

The Chief Executive Officer is then to determine an appropriate action for the breach, based on the four criteria above. Actions include (noted in ascending severity):

- review of the *Academic Integrity Policy* and this Procedure;
- undertaking training on academic integrity;
- performance management;
- dismissal.

Any **major or repeated** breach must be referred to the General Manager. An accompanying recommendation on how to respond to the breach must also be provided.

The Chief Executive Officer's decision is recorded in the staff's file and communicated to the staff member via email. If the staff member disagrees with the outcome of the investigation, they can access the appeals process outlined in the *Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

4.2.4. Follow-up

Breaches of academic integrity by staff are to be noted in their file, along with actions arising and the outcome.

The Chief Executive Officer reports breaches of academic integrity to the Senior Management Team and advises on measures being taken to eliminate or reduce opportunities for academic misconduct.

5. Breaches

If a student or staff member is found to be in breach of this Procedure, she or he may be subject to disciplinary action per the relevant *Code of Conduct and Misconduct Procedure*, which can be accessed from the ACBI's website.

6. Appeals

Appeals concerning any decision taken about this Procedure should be made under the relevant *Complaints and Appeals Policy*. Overseas students may lodge an external appeal to the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

References

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 8

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth), Standard 1

TEQSA Good Practice Note: Addressing contract cheating to safeguard academic integrity

Acknowledgments

In developing this Procedure, ACBI acknowledges:

- *Think Colleges: Academic Integrity Procedure;*
- *AIBI HE Academic Integrity Procedure.*

Document History:

Version	Date	Author	Reason	Sections
0.1	21/09/2019	Julien Marechal	First draft	All
0.2	1/10/2019	Stephen Andrews & Laura Mao	Draft reviewed, revised, and finalised in response to	All

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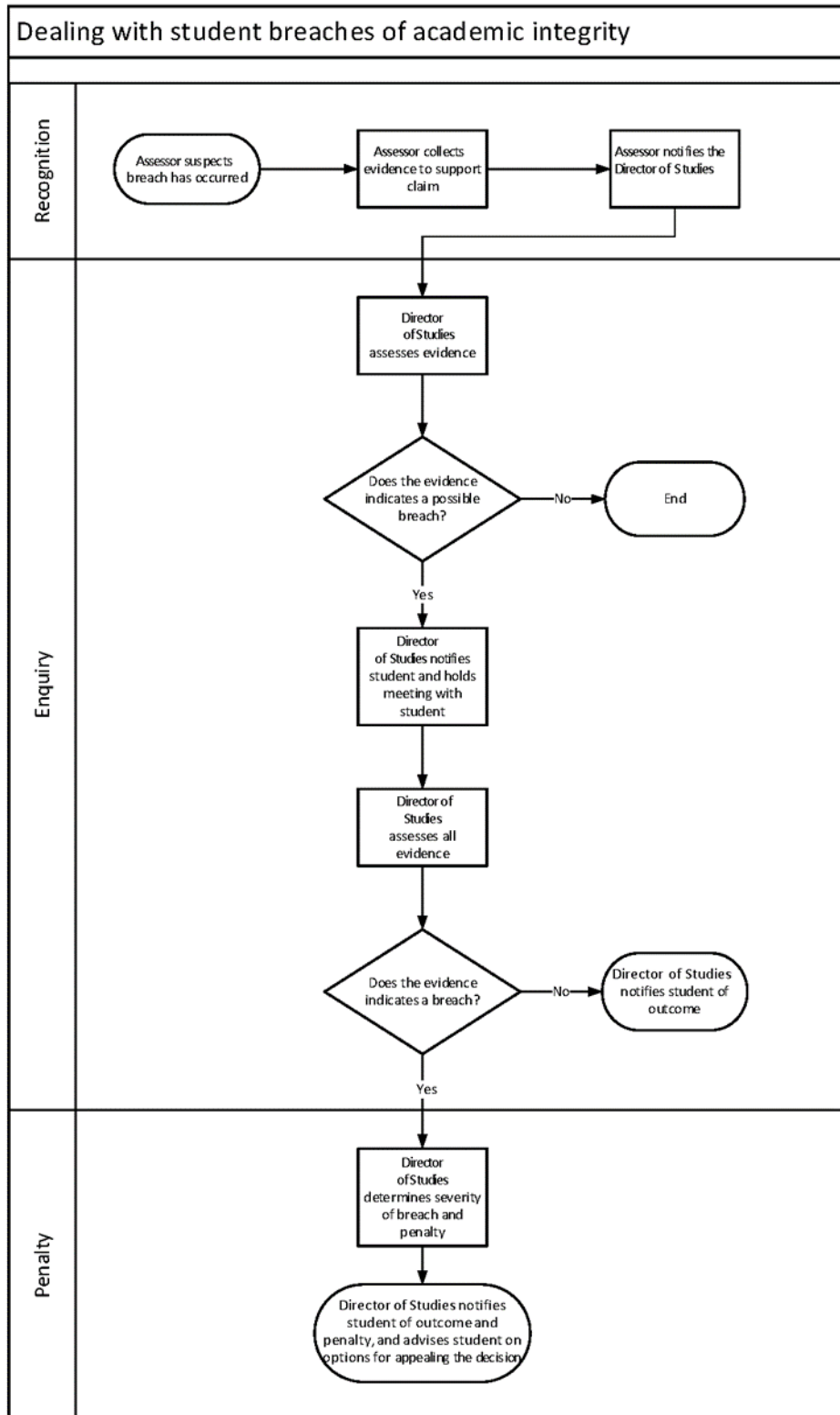**Phone:**1300 237 741 **Email:** info@acbi.edu.au **Website:** www.acbi.edu.au

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			Management Team feedback.	
1.0	18/10/2019	-	CEO approval.	All
1.1	28/03/2024	Ivan Negro	Revised to align with updated internal processes	All

Appendix 1 – Student breaches of academic integrity

Dealing with student breaches of academic integrity

Recognition

Assessor suspects breach has occurred → Assessor collects evidence to support claim → Assessor notifies the Director of Studies

Enquiry

Director of Studies assesses evidence

Does the evidence indicates a possible breach? — No → End

Yes ↓

Director of Studies notifies student and holds meeting with student

Director of Studies assesses all evidence

Does the evidence indicates a breach? — No → Director of Studies notifies student of outcome

Yes ↓

Penalty

Director of Studies determines severity of breach and penalty

Director of Studies notifies student of outcome and penalty, and advises student on options for appealing the decision