

Student Academic Integrity Policy



Purpose/objective

The Australasian Academy of Higher Education (AAHE) expects each one of its students and staff members to act with academic integrity.

This document explains what this means for students and how AAHE supports them in developing and maintaining academic integrity. The Student Academic Misconduct Procedure (below) sets out the process that is used at AAHE to manage alleged breaches of the Student Academic Integrity Policy.

The [Academic Progress Policy](#) sets out AAHE's expectations in relation to a student's progress through their course. The [Student Code of Conduct](#) sets out AAHE's expectations in relation to a student's general conduct.

Scope

This Policy and Procedure apply to all students and staff at AAHE.

Definitions

Terms used in this document are defined in the [AAHE Glossary](#).

Policy

1. Principles

- 1.1 AAHE is committed to academic integrity: 'the expectation that teachers, students, researchers and all members of the academic community act with: honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility'¹. Terms used in this document are defined in the [AAHE Glossary](#).
- 1.2 AAHE and its staff and students share responsibility for upholding academic integrity.
- 1.3 AAHE will actively promote academic integrity; do all it can to minimise breaches; respond quickly and consistently to alleged breaches; and seek to address any underlying causes.
- 1.4 AAHE will take an educative approach to minor, unintentional breaches of academic integrity and will initiate a disciplinary process for more serious breaches.
- 1.5 Investigations into alleged breaches will be handled in accordance with the principles of natural justice and will maintain privacy and confidentiality as far as possible.
- 1.6 Where a breach is found to have occurred, the penalty will be reasonable and will take the following matters into account: the assessment task and instructions; the impact and extent of the misconduct; the student's educational background and year level; whether the misconduct appears to have been intentional; and any previous breaches.
- 1.7 Proven breaches of academic integrity may be noted on a student's record.

¹ TEQSA (2022) [Understanding academic integrity](#)

2. Breaches of academic integrity

2.1 Breaches of academic integrity include, but are not limited to:

- a. plagiarism: copying or closely paraphrasing material or using another person's ideas, work or research without acknowledging the source
- b. collusion: working with another person or people on an assessment task that is supposed to be done individually, or allowing another student to copy your work
- c. contract cheating: submitting work under your name that another person completed (whether or not any payment was involved); asking another person to write part of an assignment or to sit a test or examination for you
- d. using artificial intelligence platforms and tools, such as generative artificial intelligence, in developing content for assessment (e.g. essay, assignment, creative or mixed media project, coding and data generation) unless expressly permitted to do so. Any authorised use of generative artificial intelligence content must be clearly indicated and appropriately cited and referenced
- e. cheating in examinations or disobeying AAHE's examination rules
- f. resubmitting work that you have already had assessed at AAHE or elsewhere, without the Unit Coordinator's permission
- g. producing or submitting false or misleading academic records
- h. fabricating your sources or research findings
- i. infringing [copyright law](#)
- j. taking any other action that could undermine the integrity of the assessment process or the validity of the marks or grades a student is awarded for their work.

2.2 A student will also be considered to have breached academic integrity if they knowingly help other people to behave unethically – lend them their work; share their AAHE login details or unit materials; do their work or sit their test or examination; use assignment sharing websites or social media platforms; or promote an academic cheating service.

2.3 Where a breach or potential breach is identified, it will be managed in accordance with the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure, except where the Registrar determines that the Student General Misconduct Procedure should apply.

3. AAHE responsibilities

3.1 The Learning and Teaching Committee is responsible for monitoring academic integrity issues and recommending changes to assessment and delivery methods to assist in minimising breaches.

3.2 The Dean is responsible for:

- ensuring that academic integrity is discussed as part of the academic staff induction program, so that all teaching staff are aware of this Policy and understand how to foster academic integrity and how to detect and respond to potential breaches
- arranging professional development for academic staff in relation to academic integrity, including assessment design that minimises opportunities for breaches
- determining the academic integrity training materials that students must complete, actively promoting those materials and making them readily available
- including an explanation of academic integrity and misconduct with a reference to this Policy in all unit outline templates and/or on all unit sites
- reporting to the Learning and Teaching Committee on academic integrity breaches and the actions taken to address them and to prevent a recurrence.

3.3 The Registrar is responsible for

- ensuring that examinations are managed so as to minimise breaches of academic integrity
 - arranging secretarial support for interviews and hearings in relation to academic integrity and ensuring that appropriate records are kept
 - maintaining a secure, confidential register of all proven cases of academic misconduct.
- 3.4 As specified in the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure, the Course Coordinator or Dean may investigate alleged academic integrity breaches and determine the outcomes; the Dean may establish misconduct panels and consider appeals; and the Chair of the Academic Board may establish an Appeals Committee where appropriate.
- 3.5 AAHE academic staff are expected to:
- act in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct, modelling proper academic practice at all times in their teaching materials
 - design assessment tasks and manage in-class tests to minimise breaches of academic integrity
 - teach students how to use information appropriately and to maintain academic integrity
 - reinforce the principles of academic integrity when they provide the details of individual assessment tasks to students
 - state clearly whether students can collaborate with others in completing any assessment task and explain any limits on that collaboration
 - report potential breaches of academic integrity in accordance with the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure.

4. AAHE students' responsibilities

- 4.1 Every AAHE student must:
- act with integrity in all their academic work: only submitting work for assessment that they have done themselves; acknowledging all the sources they drew on in completing that work; and sitting all their tests and examinations themselves
 - support AAHE in upholding the academic integrity of its courses: encouraging other students to act with integrity and reporting potential breaches of academic integrity to AAHE staff
 - seek assistance from AAHE staff when they are facing difficulties that may lead them to breach the Student Academic Integrity Policy.
- 4.2 Each AAHE student must complete the academic integrity training materials to which they are directed within the first two weeks after they commence studying at AAHE and should seek advice from a staff member where they are unsure about acceptable academic conduct.
- 4.3 Students may be required:
- to use a text matching tool and to submit the final report generated by that tool when they submit work for assessment
 - to sign a declaration when they submit work for assessment confirming that they understand AAHE's expectations and have completed the work in accordance with the Student Academic Integrity Policy.

5. Communicating the Student Academic Integrity Policy

The Student Academic Integrity Policy will be communicated to students through a variety of channels, including letters of offer, the Student Handbook, AAHE website and orientation sessions, to ensure that prospective and current students are aware of what is expected of them and

understand the consequences of breaches. Academic staff will reinforce this information as part of their teaching throughout the semester.

Related documents and relevant legislation

Student Academic Misconduct Procedure (below)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#)

[TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Integrity](#)

[Good Practice Note: Addressing contract cheating to safeguard academic integrity](#)

[Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Amendment \(Prohibiting Academic Cheating Services\) Bill 2019](#)

[National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)

[Copyright Act 1968 \(Commonwealth\) \(legislation.gov.au\)](#)

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Student Academic Misconduct Procedure

1 Initial response to potential academic misconduct

- 1.1 Any AAHE student or staff member who has reason to believe that a student has committed a breach should report the matter to the Unit Coordinator, with the reasons for their concerns.
- 1.2 The Unit Coordinator will undertake a preliminary review and may ask the student to explain aspects of their work or to provide evidence of the process they used to complete the assessment task.
- 1.3 If the Unit Coordinator determines that there has been no breach or there is not enough evidence to proceed, no further action will be taken.
- 1.4 If the Unit Coordinator considers that there has been a serious breach, they will refer the matter to the Course Coordinator for resolution.
- 1.5 If the Unit Coordinator considers that there was a breach, but it was minor, has little impact on the student's overall unit mark and may have been unintentional (for example when a first year student fails to properly reference their sources for the first time, or only 5% of an assignment has been plagiarised), the Unit Coordinator will have an informal conversation with the student to ensure that the student understands why they are considered to have breached academic integrity principles and how to avoid such breaches in future.
- 1.6 Where the Unit Coordinator is satisfied with the student's response, they may apply a small marking penalty or may require the student to resubmit the work. Any marking penalty must be approved by the Course Coordinator and must be proportionate to the proportion of the work that was presented incorrectly. The student may also be required to revisit the educational materials or to meet with the Academic Learning Support Officer. The student will be advised of the outcome in writing within 5 working days.
- 1.7 If a student who appears to have committed a minor breach fails to participate in the informal conversation, or the Unit Coordinator determines during that conversation that the breach was intentional and/or more significant than they initially thought, the Unit Coordinator will notify the student that the allegations are being referred to the Course Coordinator and formal disciplinary action will commence.

2 Formal disciplinary action

- 2.1 Formal disciplinary action will commence immediately if an alleged breach is serious (for example when it involves a group of students, or a significant amount of plagiarised material, or cheating in a test), or a student has a previous record of academic misconduct.
- 2.2 Where the assessment task is worth less than 10% of the overall unit mark, the Course Coordinator may hear the case themselves or may refer the matter to the Dean to hear.
- 2.3 If the allegations are extremely serious (for example a student has asked someone else to impersonate them for an examination, has paid someone to write their assignment or has produced a fake transcript), or the assessment task is worth more than 10% of the overall unit mark, the Dean will establish a Misconduct Panel to investigate and determine an appropriate outcome.
- 2.4 The Misconduct Panel will comprise three staff members who have had no previous involvement with the alleged breach. The Dean will appoint one of them to chair the Panel.
- 2.5 The Registrar will appoint a Secretary to support the Dean or Course Coordinator or Panel.

- 2.6 The Secretary will email the student to advise them that allegations have been raised against them and are being handled under the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure. The email will include:
- the date, time and location of the hearing (allowing the student at least 10 working days' notice)
 - whether the matter will be heard by the Dean, the Course Coordinator or a Panel
 - details of the alleged breaches
 - copies of the evidence upon which the allegations are based
 - a reference to this Policy and related information
 - examples of the penalties that may apply
 - the potential impact on the student's visa where applicable
 - details of support services that are available, including the Student Support Officers.
- 2.7 The student will also be advised that
- they may submit a written response up to 2 days before the hearing and/or may attend the hearing
 - that a decision will be made in their absence if they choose not to attend
 - that they may nominate a support person (who does not have legal training and was not involved in the alleged misconduct) to accompany them to the hearing, and must notify the Secretary of the name of the support person at least 2 days before the hearing
 - that the Course Coordinator or Dean or Panel Chair (as applicable) will determine whether the support person can speak on the student's behalf.
- 2.8 The Course Coordinator or Dean or Panel:
- must act fairly and in accordance with the principles of natural justice at all times
 - will make a decision on the balance of probabilities based on the student's statement and any other available evidence
 - may not take previous findings of misconduct against the student into account when making their decision to uphold or dismiss the allegation.
- 2.9 Where a Panel considers the case, an allegation will be dismissed unless a majority of the Panel members considers that it is more likely to be true than not.
- 2.10 Where an allegation is upheld, the Course Coordinator or Dean or Panel will determine which of the following penalties should be applied:
- the student will be given a warning with no marking penalty
 - the student will be given a warning with a marking penalty
 - the student will be required to resubmit the work with or without a marking penalty
 - the student will be required to complete a new assessment task for which the maximum mark to be awarded will be 50%
 - the student will be given a fail mark for the assessment task
 - the student will be given a fail mark for the unit
 - the student will be suspended from the course for one or two semesters, with or without conditions
 - the student will be permanently expelled from AAHE.
- 2.11 A student who is suspended or expelled will forfeit any fees they have paid to AAHE.
- 2.12 The Secretary will notify the student in writing within 5 working days of the findings, the reasons for the findings, the penalty to be applied if applicable, and the student's right to appeal.

- 2.13 International students will also be advised that the suspension or cancellation may affect the student's visa and that the relevant government department will be notified of the decision.

3 Appeals

- 3.1 Students may continue to attend classes while the appeal process proceeds.
- 3.2 A student who wishes to appeal must lodge their appeal with the Registrar on the prescribed form within 20 working days after they are notified of the proposed action. The form requires students to attach the advice they received from AAHE and to explain their grounds for appeal and must be accompanied by supporting documentation.
- 3.3 Appeals may only be made on one or more of the following grounds:
- new evidence is available that could not be provided when the student initially responded to the allegations
 - the proposed penalty is unreasonable and not supported by the evidence
 - there has been a misapplication of AAHE policies or procedures that has disadvantaged the student
 - the decision maker was biased or had a conflict of interest.
- 3.4 Appeals are referred for review to the Dean where the decision was made by the Course Coordinator, or to the Chair of the Academic Board or nominee where the decision was made by the Dean or a Misconduct Panel.
- 3.5 The Dean or Chair of the Academic Board will review the appeal within 10 working days of it being made and may:
- dismiss the appeal if he or she considers it to be lacking in substance and confirm the proposed penalty
 - overturn the proposed penalty where he considers that the student's argument is clearly justified
 - establish an Appeals Committee to hear the student's case.
- 3.6 Where an Appeals Committee is established, it will comprise three members nominated by the Dean or the Chair of the Academic Board, one of whom will chair the Committee. The Committee members must have had no previous involvement with the alleged breach.
- 3.7 The student who has lodged the appeal will be given at least 10 working days' notice of the time at which they will have the opportunity to present their case to the Committee and will be invited to bring a support person who does not have legal training, except where permitted by the Appeals Committee Chair. The student appealing the decision must advise the Secretary at least 2 days before the hearing whether they plan to attend the hearing and, if so, the name of any support person they wish to bring.
- 3.8 Where multiple students are involved in an alleged breach, they will be heard separately.
- 3.9 The Registrar will appoint a secretary to support the Appeals Committee. The secretary will advise all parties regarding arrangements for the hearing, collate all relevant information, circulate copies to the Committee members and the student responding to the allegations, and record the Committee's discussion in writing.
- 3.10 The Committee will make a decision by majority vote and on the balance of probabilities.
- 3.11 The Secretary will notify the student in writing regarding the outcome within 5 working days, including the reasons for the decision and external avenues of appeal where the internal appeal was unsuccessful.
- 3.12 The Registrar will write to any student who does not lodge an appeal within 20 working days or who withdraws their appeal, to confirm the outcome and the penalty.

4 External review

The decision of an Appeals Committee is final, but a student may seek a review through an appropriate external body such as the [Overseas Students Ombudsman](#) or an independent external mediator nominated by AAHE. Where an external mediator is appointed, AAHE and the student will each pay 50% of the costs.

5 Suspension or cancellation of enrolment

- 5.1 A student whose enrolment has been suspended may reenrol at AAHE at the end of the period of suspension subject to having met any conditions that were imposed.
- 5.2 A student whose enrolment has been terminated will not be admitted to any AAHE course or readmitted to their course except with the express permission of the Chair of the Academic Board.
- 5.3 AAHE will not notify the relevant government department of any change to the student's enrolment status through PRISMS until the internal appeal process has been completed, except where there are extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student; for example that the student is missing or has severe depression.
- 5.4 The suspension or cancellation will be processed and the government department advised through PRISMS as soon as the 20-day period has elapsed for a student who does not appeal or whose appeal has been considered and rejected, except where they provide evidence that they have applied to an external body for a review.
- 5.5 The Registrar will also ensure that: the student's financial records are adjusted to take account of the change; key staff are advised; and the student's computer access, email and library borrowing rights are suspended or cancelled, as applicable.

6 Records and reporting

- 6.1 All records relating to alleged breaches of the Student Academic Integrity Policy must be stored securely and retained in accordance with the Records Management Policy.
- 6.2 The Dean will report to the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Academic Board and the Registrar will brief the Executive Management Committee regarding breaches of the Student Academic Integrity Policy.

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