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1. Introduction

1.1 These procedures describe academic misconduct and outlines TAFE NSW Higher Education response to instances of academic misconduct detected in courses and activities delivered by the TAFE NSW Higher Education.

1.2 TAFE NSW Higher Education upholds the principle that academic integrity relies on the application of honesty in all scholarly endeavour.

1.3 These procedures apply to students of the TAFE NSW Higher Education who are expected to conduct themselves in their academic studies honestly and ethically and carefully acknowledge the work of others in all their academic activities.

1.4 Use of the *Model Policy for the Prevention and Detection of Plagiarism* as a reference source is acknowledged.

2. Audience and applicability

2.1 This procedure applies to:

- all TAFE Higher Education students enrolled in higher education courses;
- academic staff who have a responsibility to explain to students both good scholarly practice and the academic integrity; and
- academic staff who are responsible to monitor and review academic misconduct.

3. Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic staff</th>
<th>Dean, Course Coordinators, Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Coordinator</td>
<td>Head Teacher of higher education course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning Committee</td>
<td>Committee responsible for monitoring and reporting on quality assurance processes for teaching and learning ensuring day-to-day academic operations meet quality educational standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE NSW Higher Education</td>
<td>TAFE NSW Commission Higher Education Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic misconduct</td>
<td>Academic misconduct includes any form of activity that negates the academic integrity of the student or another student and/or their work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating</td>
<td>Cheating occurs when a student seeks to obtain an unfair advantage in an examination or in other written or practical work required to be submitted or completed for assessment. This may be by use of deceit or dishonesty, such as bringing unauthorised material into an examination room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collusion</td>
<td>Collusion (unauthorised collaboration) involves working with others without permission to produce work which is then presented as work completed independently by the student. Collusion is a form of plagiarism. Students should not knowingly allow their work to be copied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plagiarism

Conduct that deliberately or inadvertently claims ownership of an idea or concept without acknowledging the source of the information: for example, passing off the knowledge, ideas or concepts of others as one’s own. Plagiarism occurs when students fail to acknowledge that the ideas of others are being used. Specifically it occurs when:

- other people’s work and/or ideas are paraphrased and presented without a reference
- other students’ work is copied or partly copied
- other people’s designs, codes or images are presented as the student’s own work
- phrases and passages are used verbatim without quotation marks and/or without a reference to the author or a web page
- lecture notes are reproduced without due acknowledgement.

Academic misconduct as defined above will not be tolerated and any detected instances of same will put in train the procedures and penalties outlined below.

4. Document history and details

Version 1: October 2009

5. Notification to students

5.1 All subject outlines will include relevant extracts from this procedure and will give students clear instructions as to:

- referencing requirements and academic conventions for the use of others’ work including advice on how to avoid plagiarism; and
- whether they are permitted to work on an assignment jointly and provide clear guidelines relating to all aspects of group work.

5.2 Academic Staff will enforce academic misconduct policy at the commencement of each subject

5.3 The Student Handbook will include information about this policy.

6. Prevention and detection of plagiarism

6.1 In order to assist in the prevention of plagiarism academic staff have a responsibility to explain to students both good scholarly practice and the concept of plagiarism.

6.2 The subject outline will provide advice to students about referencing requirements and academic conventions for the use of others’ work as well as advice on how to avoid plagiarism.
6.3 When marking papers academic staff may detect possible plagiarism by observing changes in formatting within a paper, including:

- a mixture of quotation marks;
- changes in writing style within a paper;
- suspicious/unexplained improved writing style;
- a paper veering away from the topic;
- lack of recent reference sources or unusual or anachronistic references;
- common phrases appearing in more than one paper.

6.4 If an academic staff member believes that plagiarism has occurred they may use electronic scanning software to detect the breach of academic integrity or search for a key phrase used in the student work on a search engine such as Google. Academic staff will also carry out checks on a random basis as a matter of course.

6.5 If it is suspected that plagiarism from an internet site has occurred it is recommended that the material is printed out in case the site is changed or removed.

6.6 Students will be required to submit all papers in electronic copy, where appropriate, so that they may be subject to electronic scanning to detect plagiarism. Students will be given access to IT facilities if necessary.

6.7 Academic staff will be made aware of their responsibilities to monitor and report plagiarism by way of Subject Teaching Guides and staff development practices.

7. **Suspicion of academic misconduct**

7.1 When academic misconduct is suspected the Course Coordinator should be notified. Allegations of academic misconduct must be based on firm evidence.

7.2 The Course Coordinator is required to decide whether the allegation of academic misconduct is upheld and, if upheld, whether the academic misconduct was likely to have been intentional or unintentional.

7.3 There are a number of factors that might be taken into consideration when deciding whether academic misconduct was unintentional, such as:

- the student is in the first year of the course and has not received a prior warning;
- the student is from an educational background where different norms apply for the acknowledgement of sources;
- a negligible amount has been plagiarised;
- the student has made an inadequate attempt at referencing.

7.4 An indication that academic misconduct was intentional may be that:
• the students in the cohort were given information on how to acknowledge extracts and quotations and the student was present and received written information and knew that the use of material without acknowledgement was unacceptable;
• the student had received a prior warning about academic misconduct;
• a large amount of information has been plagiarised.

7.5 The Course Coordinator will put the matter to the student(s) and give them an opportunity to respond to the allegation of academic misconduct.

7.6 The student(s) will be called to a meeting where they are given particulars of the suspected academic misconduct and given a chance to respond to the allegation.

7.7 The student(s) should be informed of the penalties that may be applied if the allegation of academic misconduct is upheld.

7.8 In cases where it is impracticable for a student to attend such a meeting, particulars of the academic misconduct should be put to the student in writing, and the student should be asked to respond within 10 working days from the date shown on the written communication.

8. Penalties

8.1 Once an allegation of academic misconduct has been investigated and found to be upheld a determination of the appropriate penalty will be made within 10 working days.

8.2 Each case of academic misconduct will be treated on its merits.

9. Unintentional academic misconduct

9.1 Where the Course Coordinator decides that academic misconduct was not intentional they may take one of the following possible actions:

• warn the student and mark the assessment item without penalty (deduction of marks); or
• warn the student and mark the assessment item with penalty; or
• warn the student, request resubmission, and mark the assessment item with or without penalty.

9.2 Warnings and penalties must be communicated in writing to the student and will be kept on the student’s file. The student shall also be advised of their right to appeal the finding of academic misconduct and the penalty imposed.

10. Intentional academic misconduct

10.1. Before the Course Coordinator determines that the academic misconduct was intentional they must consider the student’s response (if any) to the allegation.
10.2 If the student fails to respond to an allegation of intentional academic misconduct or cannot convince the Course Coordinator that the academic misconduct was unintentional, the Course Coordinator will report the matter to the Dean.

10.3 In such cases the Dean, in concert with the Course Coordinator, will determine the appropriate penalty for the intentional academic misconduct, which may be one or more of the following:

- the student may be required to undertake an additional or alternative assessment (the maximum mark possible being a Pass grade);
- a grade of Fail may be recorded for the assessment item;
- a grade of Fail may be recorded for the subject;
- the student may be withdrawn from the course for a period of specified time;
- the student may be failed in the course overall and expelled from TAFE NSW Higher Education.

10.4 The most serious penalties may be considered in the case of repeated academic misconduct.

10.5 The basis on which the academic misconduct has been determined to be intentional and the penalty that has been determined must be communicated in writing to the student and a copy kept on the student’s file. The student shall also be advised of their right to appeal the finding of academic misconduct and the penalty imposed.

11. Appeals

11.1 A student may appeal against a decision made under this procedure.

11.2 The grounds for appeal are that the decision is inconsistent with this procedure.

11.3 Appeals must be made in writing and lodged with the Dean within 10 days of the date shown on the written notification of the decision.

11.4 The Dean will normally respond in writing to the appeal within 20 working days and may confirm or vary the decision.

11.5 All decisions of the Dean in regards to appeals will be reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

11.6 If a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal they may utilise TAFE NSW Higher Education’s grievance handling procedures.

12. Related documents

Student Grievance Procedures for Academic Matters
Student Grievance Procedures for Non-academic Matters
13. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

13.1 This document will be reviewed and updated regularly in line with the *Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework*. 

14. Publication of this procedure

14.1 All relevant TAFE NSW Higher Education policy and procedure will be published on the TAFE NSW Higher Education web-site. Where appropriate it will be published in subject outlines, subject teaching guides and on the academic staff web-site.