



<b>AAPoly Policy and Procedure</b>			
<b>Doc #: PP – 1.12</b>		<b>Title: Academic Integrity and Misconduct (VET)</b>	
Standards: 1.8	NC: 8, 10		
<b>Rev #: 1</b>	<b>Approved By: VET Operations Manager</b>	<b>Date: 16/08/2024</b>	

REVISION HISTORY			
Rev	Description of Change	Author	Effective Date
1	New Policy and Procedure to address the academic integrity and the inappropriate use of AI in VET.	Compliance Manager	16/08/2024

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## 1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that the College promotes and upholds a culture of academic integrity and meets the requirements of all relevant endorsed Training Packages and outcomes specified in accredited courses. This policy and procedure provide guidelines for detecting and addressing academic misconduct by students.

1.2 This document outlines the College's academic integrity practices which are consistent with guidelines and policies issued through state and national training authorities and the relevant National Training Packages.

## 2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure apply to all students enrolled in the College's nationally recognised VET qualifications, and to trainers and assessors involved in the delivery and assessment.


2.2 It provides guidelines for the College students and assessors to:

- Ensure regulatory compliance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, along with relevant federal and state legislations and regulations.
- Promote a culture of academic integrity, ensuring that students enrolled in ACA VET courses are aware of consequences of academic misconduct, including the unauthorised use of AI in preparing assessments.
- Establish and implement standardised and systematic process for managing the academic misconduct processes.

## 3.0 Definitions

**Academic integrity** means adhering to ethical principles and upholding honesty, fairness and responsibility in all aspects of academic work.


**Artificial intelligence (AI)** tools are defined as computer programs that are designed to simulate human intelligence, including but not limited to natural language processing, decision making and the production of content.

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**Assessment** is the process of collecting evidence and making judgments on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.

**Academic misconduct** refers to inappropriate behaviours including but not limited to cheating in assessments, resorting to contract cheating which involves tasks like ghost-writing or outsourcing academic assignments, committing plagiarism, participating in collusion, misrepresentation, unauthorised and inappropriate use of AI or similar technology tools and engaging in improper collaboration when preparing designated assessment tasks. It also encompasses deliberate acts of non-compliance with assessment and workplace policies and procedures, which includes intentionally disregarding assessment and workplace instructions provided by the trainer/assessor or supervisors.

- **Cheating** – unfair or dishonest acts in order to gain advantage in an assessment. It includes, but is not limited to:
  - Allowing others to do an assessment or portion of an assessment for someone else, including the use of a commercial term-paper service
  - Submission of the same assessment for more than one subject without prior approval of all the lecturers involved
  - Collaborating on an assessment with any other person without prior approval from the lecturer
  - Unauthorised and inappropriate use of generative Artificial Intelligence, including chatbots such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Scribe and Copilot, among others, to produce all or part of an assessment.
  
- **Contract Cheating** – when students outsource their assessments to a third party, whether that is a commercial provider, current or former student, family member or acquaintance.
  
- **Collusion** – unauthorised collaboration between a group of students in the preparation and production of work, which is ultimately submitted by each in an identical or similar form as to be the product of their own efforts.
  
- **Plagiarism** – presenting someone else’s works which include ideas, words, image, or opinions without proper acknowledgement and referencing. It can be divided into unintentional plagiarism and intentional plagiarism.


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- **Unintentional plagiarism** occurs as a result of improper or inadequate referencing, or failure to reference some materials. Unintentional plagiarism could result from:
  - Unaware or inadequate information of what constitutes plagiarism;
  - Unaware of citation and referencing conventions of the institution;
  - Carelessness and haste; and
  - Inadequate English language skills and understanding.
- **Intentional plagiarism** may include:
  - Copying of passages, paraphrases, summaries, audios, videos, computer-based material, programming data or code from works of others into the student’s homework, essay, or report without proper acknowledgment.
  - Downloading or buying research papers;
  - Using Generative Artificial Intelligence to produce an assignment; Use of the views, opinions, or insights of another without proper acknowledgment.

**Misrepresentation** refers to a situation where a student presents untrue information with the intention of misleading the assessor or lecturer. Misrepresentation can include but is not limited to:

- submitting falsified, copied or improperly obtained data relating to results of practical work,
- misleading with incorrect information on work placements, practicums, field trips or other work as if they were genuine;
- altering or falsifying any evidence document or record for the purposes of gaining academic advantage;
- deliberate attempts to deceive about assessment submission times, word counts, attendance or
- misleading with incorrect information on participation in learning activities; inclusion of citations to non-existent or incorrect sources.

**Suspected Academic Misconduct** refers to the alleged breach of academic integrity principles which have not been proven and cases under investigation are referred to as suspected misconduct until a final outcome is reached in which the student is deemed to have committed a breach of academic integrity or the allegations are dropped.

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## 4.0 Responsibilities

- 4.1 General Manager, Vocational (International)** – Responsible for communicating and overseeing the implementation of this policy and ensuring that all academic staff and students are familiar with and adhere to this policy.
- 4.2 Course Coordinators (CC)** – Responsible for implementing this policy and the procedures with appropriate actions in cases of academic misconduct.
- 4.3 Trainers and Assessors** – Responsible for following and adhering to this policy and procedure to ensure the appropriate detecting and reporting of academic misconduct by students.
- 4.4 Student Services (SS)** – Responsible for communicating the outcome of the appeal to the student.
- 4.5 Students** – Responsible for reading, comprehending, respecting and complying with this policy and procedures prohibiting plagiarism, collusion and contract cheating. Students are also responsible for their participation in training to obtain the required knowledge and skills and make sure that the appropriate academic referencing technique is used in all assessment tasks.
- 4.6 Compliance Manager** – Responsible for conducting regular monitoring and audits to assess the organisations adherence to the academic integrity policy and procedure and collaborating with the General Manager, Vocational (International) to update the policy accordingly providing insights into areas of improvement and suggest corrective actions as needed.

## 5.0 Procedure

### 5.1 Education and Awareness

The College's primary focus is on raising awareness of academic integrity and educating and guiding both students and trainers on its principles and values. This includes guidance to students on academic integrity, writing, referencing and the acceptable use of AI of academic work on assessments. These will be made to student during orientation, through the student handbook, staff handbook, subject guides, and instructions by trainers and assessors during the beginning of each term. The Course Coordinator will provide training to trainers and assessors about

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the use of AI. The College also encourages VET trainers and assessors to attend webinars on academic integrity and subscribe to relevant newsletters.


## 5.2 Detecting Academic Misconduct

Trainers and assessors may detect potential instances of academic misconduct when marking assessments. This may include:

- Strange or inconsistent **formatting** may indicate that material has been copied and pasted from other sources.
- Irregularities in the use of **citation** protocols, inconsistencies between in-text citation and reference lists (or bibliographies) may indicate that the student has copied and pasted sections of the submitted work from different sources. Although students often forget to list all citations in the references, or bibliography, it is also common in plagiarised work.
- Variations in writing **style** within an assignment can be a clue to plagiarised work. However, style questions might also point to poor or exceptional writing skills.
- The **content** of a plagiarised paper may not be on the topic but be very well written. There may be material in an assignment which would be correct in another context but wrong with respect to the topic of the assignment or the aspect to which it refers. The content may also lack logical flow and coherence. All these signs may indicate that a student has copied original work and substituted some details. In regard to AI content detection, AI-generated content might be overly complex or overly simplistic and could contain unusual phrases or errors that are inconsistent with the student's usual work.
- **Compare** submissions from different assignments or from different students to detect repeated patterns or similarities indicative of AI usage.
- The assessment submitted contains exceptionally **well-phrased vocabulary**. The assessor may use peer review to identify inconsistencies or suspicious content that might have been missed by automated tools. In such cases, the assessor can use verification techniques such as oral questioning and follow-up questions with the student to explain parts of their submission.

## 5.3 Reporting a Suspected Academic Misconduct

If the trainer/assessor suspects, learns of or believes that there is sufficient evidence of academic misconduct in the work submitted by a student or that cheating, collusion or any other academic misconduct has occurred, the incident

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must be reported in writing, using the Academic Misconduct Form, to the Course Coordinator not later than five (5) working days after the detection.

#### **5.4 Investigating a Suspected Academic Misconduct**

The Course Coordinator will review the alleged academic misconduct reported by a trainer/assessor. If evidence does not support the allegation, the Course Coordinator may decide to dismiss the case and no further actions will be taken. Otherwise, the CC will notify the student in writing about the suspected academic misconduct. The student will be allowed to respond within five (5) working days. In addition, the CC may also schedule a meeting to allow the student to respond to the alleged academic misconduct in person.

When the student admits the case, the academic misconduct letter will be issued to the student and the warning is recorded in Paradigm.

#### **5.5 Imposing Penalties for Academic Misconduct**


If the offence is minor and unintentional, the CC issues a warning letter and suggests one of the following penalties depending on the severity of the misconduct:

- a. Resubmit the task with no more than 50% of the mark will be awarded if the student/s satisfied the task requirements.
- b. Resubmit the task on a new topic with no more than 50% of the mark will be awarded.
- c. If the re-submission deadline (within two weeks) is met and the task satisfies the requirements, the trainer/assessor should mark the task and award no more than 50% of the total mark of the task. If the student did not meet the deadline, the student would receive a zero mark for the task.

If the offense is severe, the CC issues a warning letter to the student, and an opportunity to resubmit and the student will receive either a pass or fail for the resubmitted assessment. If the student did not meet the deadline, the student would receive a zero mark for the task.

#### ***Second Offence***

If the student repeats the act of academic misconduct and the student did not appeal, the trainer/assessor provides evidence to the CC. If the student admits the offence or if the result of the investigation determines the student committed the offence, the student will receive a second warning letter and a zero mark in the assessment.

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If the student did not admit academic misconduct or disagreed with the decision, they can appeal within five (5) working days of being notified of the penalty decision, using the Academic Misconduct Appeal process. The Course Coordinator then forwards the results of the investigation to the General Manager, Vocational (International).

### ***Third Offence***

If the student repeats the academic misconduct for the third time, the relevant trainer/assessor provides the evidence, and the CC forwards the results of the investigation to the General Manager, Vocational (International) to make a decision.

If the student admits to the offence or if the result of the investigation determines the student committed the offence, the General Manager, Vocational (International) issues the final warning letter to the student and will receive fail for the whole subject.

If the student disagrees with the decision, they can appeal within five (5) working days of being notified about the penalty decision using the Academic Misconduct Appeal process. The CC then forwards the results of the investigation and the appeal to the General Manager, Vocational (International) to make a decision.


## **5.6 Appeals on the Outcome of Academic Misconduct Case**

If the student believes that their work has not been plagiarised or that they have not committed academic misconduct, an Appeal must be lodged in writing through Student Services within 20 working days of being notified about the decision. The student must provide supporting evidence to substantiate the case and is entitled to bring an advocate.

The student's Appeal Application will be forwarded to the General Manager, Vocational (International). The General Manager, Vocational (International) will make a decision based on the supporting evidence of the misconduct and the Appeal Application. The student will be notified by SS with the outcome within 10 days of the Appeal Applications.

If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome, they can access the external appeal with the Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO). Refer to the College's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure for further information.



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## 6.0 References

- 6.1 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- 6.2 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)
- 6.3 ASQA Guide on Academic Integrity, Available at <https://www.asqa.gov.au/how-we-regulate/risk-priorities/academic-integrity>
- 6.4 Assessment Policy and Procedure
- 6.5 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- 6.6 Student Handbook
- 6.7 Access and Equity Policy and Procedure

## 7.0 Appendices

- 7.1 Academic Misconduct Form
- 7.2 Appeal Form
- 7.3 Appeal Outcome Letter Template