

<b>PROCEDURE</b>		
<p>Ref. to Legislative Frameworks:</p> <p>HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021: Standards 5.2 / 6.3</p> <p>NVETR (Outcome Standards for NVR RTO) Instrument 2025: 1.4 / 1.5</p> <p>National Code 2018: Standard 8.4 / 8.8 / 10</p>	<b>Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism</b>	
Version: 6.3	Approved By: Academic Dean	Issued on: 20/08/2025 Review by: 20/08/2027

### Revision History

Current Version	Description of Change	Procedure Developer(s)	Effective Date
6.3	<p>Updated the penalties with AI Writing Indicator Value.</p> <p>Inclusion of invigilated examinations/tests in misconduct detection, penalty procedures, and clarity in assessment protocols.</p>	Academic Dean, Head of Academic Integrity and Compliance Manager	20/08/2025
6.2	<p>Updated the procedure with reference to the inappropriate use of AI and similar technology tools and the penalties associated with misconduct.</p> <p>Updated the similarity table and included the AI content table based on the index value of TURNITIN report.</p> <p>Updated responsibilities and references.</p>	Compliance Manager, Head of Academic Integrity and Academic Dean	29/11/2024

6.1	Updated reference to Artificial Intelligence	Compliance Manager and Academic Dean	22/09/2023
6.0	Updated to HESF 2021 Included definition on misrepresentation	Compliance Manager and Academic Dean	09/03/2023
5.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional clarification of roles and responsibilities were included.</li> <li>Changes to the Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of a Student's Enrolment Procedure v9 were refelected in 2.3.2</li> </ul>	Academic Dean	24/01/2020
4.2	Reviewed amended and approved	Head of Academic Departments Committee (HOAD) and The Academic Quality Assurance Portfolio Holder	23/05/2019

## PURPOSE

This procedure sets out the strategies and sequence of actions in identifying and responding to academic misconduct, including plagiarism.

## SCOPE

This procedure applies to all students enrolled in accredited training and/or higher education courses and the teaching staff members of AAPoly.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. Detecting and Dealing with Academic Misconduct Including Plagiarism

The Academic Team may identify an academic misconduct, including misconduct during invigilated exams and tests, contract cheating and plagiarism, using three methods:

#### a) Traditional methods

Bates, P & Fain, M. (2003), Detecting Plagiarised Papers, provided a checklist of indicators, such as:

- a) Difficult to interpret or inconsistent **formatting** may indicate that material has been copied and pasted from other sources.
- b) 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.
- c) 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 (Kern & Jackson 2000).
- d) 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. This may mean that a student has copied an original work and substituted some details.
- e) **Technical** clues may also indicate plagiarism.
- f) Any form of cheating or misconduct during an **invigilated exam or test** (including unauthorised materials, impersonation, use of communication devices, copying, or disrupting the exam environment) will be classified as academic misconduct. Invigilators must report any such incidents using the standard Academic Misconduct Incident Report, supported by evidence such as seating plans, photos, and statements.

#### b) Electronic methods

The Academic Team utilises 'Turnitin' software, search engines such as Google and software packages to detect academic misconduct, especially plagiarism.

### **c) Calibration**

Subjects must be designed and delivered to provide opportunities for both formal and informal calibration of the assessment of student performance. Calibration can be used to identify any mismatch between student performance across different assessment tasks, where there is any suspicion of a breach of academic integrity, such as the unauthorised use of Generative Artificial Intelligence or similar technologies to produce material for assessment and presenting as original ideas without acknowledging the source.

In the subject design phase, subjects must include at least one opportunity to undertake invigilated assessment, such as an exam or test. In the subject delivery phase, lecturers must use a range of approaches including comparing performance between invigilated and non-invigilated assessment to prompt interviews and other verification approaches to ensure academic integrity is upheld.

To control academic misconduct incidents, lecturers are encouraged to be vigilant of any high standard quality works submitted by a student especially when it is above the student's normal standard or calibrated against another piece of work submitted earlier by the student. If a lecturer is suspicious about the quality of a student's report or essay, it is recommended to interview the student and ask them about how they have answered the questions and compare the student's responses to the content in the report. The lecturer will record the interview and generate a report with the academic misconduct incident report and submit to the Head of Academic Misconduct. Calibration of student's work can be achieved through verifiable work done during tutorials or formative or invigilated assessments completed early in the semester.

## **2. Investigation of a Suspected Academic Misconduct**

### **2.1. Identification**

If an Academic Staff member believes that there is evidence of intentional plagiarism in work submitted by a student or evidence of cheating (including during invigilated exams or tests), collusion or any other academic misconduct has occurred, the following steps apply.

- a) The Academic staff member documents the perceived offence in an Incident Report and forward it to Head, Academic Integrity
- b) At the first stage of academic misconduct, the Head of Academic Integrity and the academic staff (subject teacher and facilitator) responsible decides if the student is guilty of academic misconduct. The academic misconduct letter is issued to the student and the warning is recorded in Paradigm (Student Management System). Based upon the records of academic misconduct offences in the Paradigm, the Head of Academic Integrity determines the offences such as first offence and penalty; second offence and penalty; third and final offence and penalty.
- c) If the student claims with an appeal that he/she is not guilty, then the case will be forwarded to Student Discipline Committee (SDC).
- d) If the Head, Academic Integrity believes that the student/s has committed a substantial academic misconduct act, the Head, Academic Integrity forwards the investigation outcomes to the Student Discipline Committee for determination.

## 2.2. Scope of Determination of the Student Discipline Committee Regarding Academic Misconduct

The Student Discipline Committee (SDC) hears allegations of academic misconduct (including misconduct during invigilated exams/tests), hears appeals from students and determines rejection or approval of appeals.

### 2.2.1. First Offence

1. If the student is found guilty of academic misconduct (including misconduct during an invigilated exam or test), they may receive a formal warning and upto 100% mark deduction, depending on the severity of the breach.

Minor offences during an invigilated exam or test may include examples such as talking, glancing at another student's paper, or possessing unauthorised but unused materials. This will result in a formal warning and a possible mark deduction ranging from 25% to 49%.

Moderate offences may include examples such as the use of unauthorised written notes, electronic devices, or attempting to access online materials. Moderate offences will incur a mark deduction ranging from 50% to 100%, with the case potentially referred to the Student Discipline Committee based on evidence.

For assessments submitted through Turnitin, not severe offences should be considered in conjunction with the Turnitin Similarity Index table, the AI Writing Indicator table and the clause 2.2.1.5.

Severe offences may include examples such as copying from another student, impersonation, use of mobile communication devices, or serious breach of academic integrity. These offences will result in a zero mark for the exam, an automatic fail for the subject, and mandatory referral to the Student Discipline Committee.

For assessments submitted through Turnitin, severe or very severe offences may include evidence of plagiarism and unauthorised use of generative AI. Please refer to the Turnitin Similarity Index table, the AI Writing Indicator table and the clause 2.2.1.5 for further guidance.

2. If the offence is **severe**, the Head, Academic Integrity issues a warning letter to the student. The student may receive a deduction of up to 50% of the marks for the submitted assignment, taking into consideration the work that is not AI generated or plagiarised. The lecturer or content expert must assess the submission and determine the outcome. If the offence is **very severe**, penalties upto 100% will apply. Please refer to the Turnitin Similarity Index table, AI Writing Indicator table and the clause 2.2.1.5 for further guidance.

3. If the offence is not severe, the Head, Academic Integrity issues a warning letter and suggest one of the following penalties depending on the severity of the breach as indicated in the penalty tables below:
  - a. The student may resubmit the original (at the discretion of and recommendation of the facilitator), and if it meets the task requirements, a maximum of 25% of the total marks may be awarded.
  - b. The student may be required to resubmit a new task on a different topic, with maximum deduction of 25% from the total marks if the submission meets the requirements.
  - c. If the student submits the task within the deadline (five working days) and it meets the assessment requirements, the lecturer may award upto 50% of the total marks. If the student fails to meet the deadline, a zero mark will be recorded for the task.
4. If the student does not admit to the misconduct, he/she can appeal within five (5) working days of being notified about the penalty decision, using the Academic Misconduct Appeal process.
5. If the assessment is submitted through Turnitin, the following penalty rules will apply as outlined in the Turnitin Similarity Index and AI Writing Indicator tables. However, neither the similarity report nor the AI Writing Indicator should be used as the sole determinant of misconduct. The AI Writing Indicator in Turnitin should be interpreted cautiously and verified by Subject Lecturers and Facilitators through student interviews, draft reviews, and assessment context.

Penalties for Plagiarism Act Based on the Similarity Index Value of Turnitin Report	
Similarity Index*	Proposed Penalty
0 - 20 % (no offence)	<b>No Penalty</b> if the Turnitin similarity index is less than <b>20%</b> and the similarities are coming from more than one source.
21% - 30% (not severe)	<p>a) A warning letter; and at the discretion of the subject facilitator, the student may be asked to resubmit the assessment within 5 working days or a different assessment within ten working days. Assignments to be marked according to marking rubrics with <b>25%</b> penalty.</p> <p>b) If the student resubmits in time, the student may receive up to <b>50%</b> of the total original mark of the assessment.</p> <p>c) If the student did not meet the assessment deadline, the student would receive a <b>zero</b> mark for the assessment.</p>

31% - 50% (severe)	<p>a) A warning letter; and the student will be asked to resubmit the assessment within 5 working days or a different assessment within ten working days. Assignments to be marked according to marking rubrics with <b>50%</b> penalty.</p> <p>b) If the student resubmits in time, the student may receive up to 50% of the total original mark of the assessment.</p> <p>c) If the student did not meet the assessment deadline, the student would receive a <b>zero</b> mark for the assessment.</p>
> 51% to 100% (very severe offence)	A warning letter and a <b>zero</b> mark for the assessment task if the Turnitin similarity index is more than 51%.

- **The similarity index in Turnitin** is the proportion of the document that is copied from or similar to other reports submitted by other authors, or the same author but for different subjects or locations.
- **The overall similarity index reading** should not include the cover page or the reference list.
- **If a student plagiarised an assessment**, the subject lecturer should (i) fill an academic misconduct report, (ii) provide the evidence to support the claim, and if required (iii), the lecturer should conduct a recorded interview and forward it to the Head, Academic and Integrity.

Penalties for Unauthorised use of Generative AI Based on the AI Writing Indicator Value of Turnitin Report	
AI Usage Index*	Proposed Penalty
0 - 30 % (no offence)	<b>No Penalty</b> if the Turnitin AI writing indicator is less than or equal to 30% and the indicator displays an asterisk (*) for the percentage.
31% - 40% (not severe offence)	A warning letter; and a <b>25%</b> penalty on the achieved marks.
41% - 50% (severe offence)	A warning letter; and a <b>50%</b> penalty on the achieved marks.
51% to 100% (very severe offence)	A warning letter and a <b>zero</b> mark for the assessment task if the Turnitin AI writing indicator index is 51% or more.

- **The AI writing indicator in Turnitin** exhibits the overall percentage of text detected as AI within the assessment. This includes the two categories; 1) the amount of likely AI-generated text and, 2) the AI-generated text that was also likely paraphrased,
- **The overall AI writing indicator** should not include the cover page or the reference list.
- **If a student plagiarised an assessment with AI content**, the subject lecturer should (i) fill an academic misconduct report, (ii) provide the evidence to support the claim, and if required (iii), the lecturer should conduct a recorded interview and forward it to the Head, Academic and Integrity.

### 2.2.2. Second Offence

If the student repeats the act of academic misconduct, the Academic staff member provides the evidence including the Turnitin report to the

Head, Academic Integrity who brings it to the Student Discipline Committee for investigation.

If the student is found guilty of a second offence, the following penalties will apply based on the type and severity of the misconduct:

- a. For plagiarism, similarity or AI-related misconduct: The student will receive a second formal warning and a deduction of zero mark for the assessment task.
- b. For misconduct during an invigilated exam or test:
  - o Minor to moderate misconduct (e.g., repeated unauthorised materials, suspicious behaviour): The student will receive a deduction of upto 50% for the exam and a final warning.
  - o Severe misconduct (e.g., repeated cheating, impersonation, use of devices, aggressive behaviour): The student will receive a zero mark, fail the subject, and the matter will be escalated to the Academic Review Committee for further action.

If the student did not admit the academic misconduct or disagreed with the decision, he/she can appeal within five (5) working days of being notified of the penalty decision. The appeal must be submitted through the Academic Misconduct Appeal process. The Student Discipline Committee (SDC) will investigate the offence and review the appeal to determine the final decision.

### **2.3. Scope of Determination of the Academic Review Committee Regarding Academic Misconduct**

The Academic Review Committee will hear allegations of Academic Misconduct and determine penalties (as appropriate) for the **Third** and **subsequent** offences.

#### **2.3.1. Third Offence**

If the student repeats the academic misconduct, such as excessive similarity in assessments, unauthorised use of generative AI, or cheating during exams and tests, the relevant Academic Staff member provides the evidence, and the Head, Academic Integrity concurred that a breach of academic integrity has occurred, the matter is referred to the Academic Review Committee for investigation.

If the student admits to the offence or if the result of the investigation determines the student committed the offence, the Head, Academic Integrity issues the final warning letter to the student and will receive fail for the whole subject.

If the student disagrees with the decision, he/she can appeal within five (5) working days of being notified about the penalty decision using the Academic Misconduct Appeal process. The SDC then forwards the results of the investigation and the appeal to the Academic Review Committee to make a decision.

### 2.3.2. Expulsion from the Course

If the student commits a fourth act of academic misconduct such as excessive similarity in assessments, unauthorised use of generative AI and repeated cheating during invigilated exams and tests, the relevant Academic Staff member provides the evidence, and the Head, Academic Integrity concurred that a breach of academic integrity has occurred, the matter is referred to the Academic Review Committee for investigation. The Academic Review Committee may, if deemed appropriate, determine that the student should be expelled from the course.

If the Academic Review Committee decides to expel the student from the course, then the Chair will refer the matter, with recommendations, to the Chief Executive Officer, who will review the case within five (5) working days of receiving the report.

If the outcome of the review requires the expulsion of the student, the Designated Head of Student Services will act in accordance with the Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of a Student's Enrolment Procedure to cancel the student's enrolment and report the student to the Department of Education via PRISMS. This record of penalty will be shown in the student's academic record.

## 3. Academic Misconduct Appeal Process

If student/s believes that his/her work has not been plagiarised or that he/she has not committed academic misconduct, an Appeal must be lodged in writing through Student Services within five (5) working days of being notified about the above decision.

If the student intends to appeal the decision of the academic misconduct, he/she must provide supporting evidence to substantiate his/her case and is entitled to bring an advocate.

The student's Appeal Application will be forwarded to the Head, Academic Integrity. The Head, Academic Integrity will refer the matter to the Student Discipline Committee, with supporting evidence of the Misconduct and the Appeal application. The SDC decision would be conveyed to Student Services for recording to student files and informing the student.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Academic Dean** is responsible for developing and maintaining this policy.
2. **Associate Dean (Education)** is responsible for communicating this policy to the students and the academic staff members within their teams.
3. **The Head, Academic Integrity** is responsible for implementing the procedures and taking appropriate actions in cases of academic misconduct and plagiarism. The Head,

Academic Integrity also ensures accurate and timely communication with students and ensures the safe receipt and filing of all evidence related to an academic misconduct investigation. The Head, Academic Integrity also facilitates the process involving student, academic staff, and committees (wherever it may be necessary).

4. **Academic staff** are responsible for ensuring their awareness of this procedure and follow appropriate reporting of academic misconduct and plagiarism to the Head, Academic Integrity. Academic staff are also responsible for providing unambiguous instructions and training to students on what constitutes cheating in exams, Academic Assessment preparation highlighting examples of appropriate referencing techniques. They must provide a range of opportunities for calibration in subject delivery, including formal and informal approaches. Staff conducting invigilated exams and tests, are also responsible for detecting and reporting potential misconduct using appropriate evidence.
5. **Students** are responsible for ensuring proper referencing and signed declaration of Academic Integrity on the assessment cover sheet acknowledging original work, academic honesty, unique submission and retention of assignment copy, before submitting any assessment tasks. Students must commit to submitting only their own genuine work and protect it from both intentional or unintentional copying by fellow students. If unsure about the proper way of referencing or academic work preparation, students can seek assistance from appropriate lecturers about the proper way of referencing or academic work preparation. Students must also declare the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence during assessments. Finally, students are required to comply with all tests and examination rules. Cheating, use of unauthorised materials, or engaging in misconduct during invigilated tests and exams will be treated as academic misconduct.
6. **The Student Discipline Committee (SDC)** hears allegations of academic and non-academic misconduct by students and reviews the initial appeals for misconduct. The AAPoly Student Discipline Committee Chair is appointed by the Academic Dean. Committee members are selected by the Academic Dean. The Committee will convene to hear allegations of student misconduct within two weeks from the date of receiving the misconduct report.
7. **The Academic Review Committee (ARC)** hears allegations of academic misconduct and makes decisions based upon the severity of the misconduct. The ARC reviews the further appeals forwarded by the SDC and makes the final decision on the forwarded appeals. The Academic Dean chairs the ARC. Members of the committee include the relevant Program Coordinator, the Associate Dean (Education), and the Head, Academic Integrity. The Committee will convene to hear allegations of academic misconduct within five working days from the date of receiving the misconduct report.

## FEEDBACK

Queries or feedback about this procedure should be directed to the Academic Dean through [academicdean@aapoly.edu.au](mailto:academicdean@aapoly.edu.au). The Academic Dean will respond to the written question or feedback within two (2) weeks from the receipt unless an extenuating circumstance requires an immediate response or action. The feedback and subsequent outcome will be documented in the version register which will form a part of quality assurance and continuous improvement of AAPoly.

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## REFERENCES

Source	Document Title
Internal	Learning Resources and Educational Support Policy and Procedure
	AAPoly Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Procedure
	AAPoly Higher-Education Student Handbook
	AAPoly Academic Integrity, Honesty and Free Intellectual Inquiry Policy
External	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
	National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
	TEQSA: Contract Cheating (2022)
	TEQSA Guidance note: Academic and research integrity (2024)
	TEQSA: Assessment reform for the age of artificial intelligence (2023)
	TURNITIN Guides: AI Writing