


<b>POLICY</b>		
<p>Ref. to Legislative Frameworks:</p> <p>HESF2021: Standard 5.2 / 6.3</p> <p>National Code 2018: Standard 8.4 / 8.8</p>	<b>Academic Integrity</b>	
Version: 7.0	Policy Owner: Academic Board	Issued on: 10/04/2026 Review by: 10/04/2028

## Revision History

Current Version	Description of Change	Policy Developer(s)	Effective Date
7.0	<p>Policy title changed to Academic Integrity.</p> <p>Updated the policy version number to 7 to align the version with the procedure.</p> <p>Updated policy principles and included a new policy principle (5) to address the appeals related to Academic Misconduct.</p> <p>Updated some responsibilities. Included responsibilities for Program Coordinator.</p>	CEO, Academic Dean, Head of Academic Integrity and Compliance Manager	10/04/2026
6.2	Updated the policy principle 4 and the definition “cheating” with reference to the inappropriate use of AI and similar technology tools without acknowledging the sources.	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	Update for HESF 2021 Included definition on misrepresentation Included reference to Artificial Intelligence	Compliance Manager and Academic Dean	09/03/2023
5.0	Minor changes	Academic Dean	24/01/2020
4.2	Cyclical Review – no change required to Policy but some modifications made to Procedure	Head of Academic Departments Committee (HOAD) and The Academic Quality Assurance Portfolio Holder.	23/05/2019
4.1	Added Contract Cheating aspects to the policy Conducted general editing and revisions Updated the reference to National Code (2018)	Student Discipline Committee Quality Assurance Support Officer	28/12/2017

## **PURPOSE**

This policy establishes the principles and institutional commitments that support academic integrity and guide the prevention, identification, and management of academic misconduct.

Academies Australasia Polytechnic (AAPoly) is committed to fostering a culture of academic integrity in which students and staff uphold high standards of honesty, ethical scholarship, and responsible use of emerging technologies, including Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen-AI).

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

AAPoly supports a transparent, ethical, and rigorous academic environment through education and capability development for students and staff; assessment design that promotes authentic learning; fair and consistent responses to academic misconduct; and continuous monitoring and improvement of academic integrity practices.

## **SCOPE**

This Policy applies to all students and to staff responsible for the identification, investigation, management, and determination of suspected breaches of academic integrity.

Operational processes for implementing this policy are outlined in the **Academic Integrity Procedure**.

This policy suite should be read in conjunction with the **HE Assessment Policy and Procedure and Gen AI Plan**.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Academic misconduct includes, but is not restricted to, cheating in exams or other assessments, contract cheating (ghost writing or academic work outsourcing), plagiarism, collusion, unauthorised use of AI technology tools and other forms of improper collaboration during the preparation of any prescribed assessment tasks.

### **1. Cheating**

Detecting exam cheating in an exam by invigilators, an exam supervisor or a lecturer may be as simple as witnessing the act. Typical indicators are:

- Copying or attempting to copy from others during an exam or on an assignment.
- Communicating with others in an examination.
- Having precise answers to long answer questions or long strings of identical choices in multiple choice exams.
- Detecting the same wrong answer(s) or unusual mistakes by some students.
- Using unauthorised materials such as cheat sheets, electronic devices (programmable calculator, mobile phone, electronic watch etc).
- Taking an exam for another person or having someone take an exam for the actual student.

Cheating or academic misconduct in non-exam assessments may be indicated by:

- Allowing others to do an assignment or portion of an assignment for someone else, including the use of a commercial term-paper service.
- Submission of the same assignment for more than one subject without prior approval of all the lecturers involved.
- Collaborating on an assignment with any other person without prior approval from the lecturer.
- Using Generative Artificial Intelligence tools, such as ChatGPT, CoPilot, or similar AI technology tools to produce material for assessment and presenting it as original ideas, research, or analysis does not qualify as submitting one's own work. Submitting work knowingly produced by a third party, including AI technologies, is considered deliberate cheating and constitutes a breach of academic integrity. Any use of artificial intelligence technologies to generate material for assessment preparation must be appropriately acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the Learning Resources and Educational Support Policy and Procedure.

## 2. Contract Cheating

TEQSA defines contract cheating<sup>1</sup> as the case when students outsource their assessments to a third party, whether that is a commercial provider, current or former student, family member or acquaintance. It includes the unauthorised use of file-sharing sites, as well as organising another person to take an examination, and these third parties include but are not limited to:

- essay writing services
- friends, family or other students
- private tutors
- copyediting services
- agency websites

Walker and Townley (2012)<sup>2</sup> pointed out that cheating that involved third parties was difficult to detect and constituted a form of fraud.

## 3. Plagiarism and Collusion

The most common type of academic misconduct is plagiarism and collusion on assignments and team projects.

**Plagiarism** is defined as presenting someone else's works which include ideas, words, image, or opinions without proper acknowledgement. Plagiarism can be divided into unintentional plagiarism and intentional plagiarism.

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<sup>1</sup> TEQSA, (2022), What is contract cheating and methods to reduce it. Available at <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/preventing-contract-cheating/what-contract-cheating-and-methods-reduce-it> and TEQSA, Good Practice Note: Addressing contract cheating to safeguard academic integrity October 2017 (Accessed 25/03/2026)

<sup>2</sup> Walker, M. and Townley, C. (2012). Contract Cheating: A New Challenge for Academic Honesty? Journal of Academic Ethics, 10(1), pp. 27-44.

- **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.
  
- **Collusion** is the 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 his/her own efforts.

#### 4. Misrepresentation

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.

## POLICY

### 1. Prevention, Education and Culture

Assessment design, academic integrity awareness, and capacity building are the key pillars of AAPoly's academic misconduct prevention strategy.

1.1 Students are provided education and training to develop a clear understanding of:

- a. the principles of academic integrity;
- b. what constitutes academic misconduct;

- c. ethical research and scholarly practices;
  - d. responsible and transparent use of Gen-AI tools; and
  - e. proper acknowledgement of sources, including human and machine-generated content.
- 1.2 Academic integrity education aims to promote authentic engagement in learning, including critical thinking, independent work, and ethical use of information and sources.
- 1.3 AAPoly builds staff capability through professional development that:
- a. strengthens understanding of academic integrity principles and emerging risks;
  - b. supports the design of assessments that promote authentic learning and minimise opportunities for misconduct (Refer to AAPoly's HE Assessment Policy and Procedure);
  - c. promotes consistent and fair approaches to identifying and responding to potential academic integrity breaches; and
  - d. encourages continuous improvement in assessment design and academic integrity practices.

## **2. Use of Gen-AI**

- 2.1 Detailed guidance regarding the responsible use of Gen-AI in learning and assessment is provided in assessment instructions.
- 2.2 Students may use AI tools where permitted in assessment instructions.
- 2.3 Unauthorised or undisclosed use of AI tools in assessment tasks, including presenting Gen-AI material as one's own original work, may constitute academic misconduct.

## **3. Responses to Academic Misconduct**

- 3.1 AAPoly responds to suspected academic misconduct in a manner that is:
- a. proportionate to the nature and severity of the breach;
  - b. educative where appropriate, particularly for students developing skills or experience in applying academic conventions and standards;
  - c. consistent and evidence-based; and
  - d. conducted in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
- 3.2 Sanctions may be applied where misconduct is established and may include academic penalties up to and including exclusion in cases of serious or repeated misconduct.

## **4. Investigation and Decision-Making**

- 4.1 Allegations of academic misconduct will be managed in accordance with AAPoly's Academic Integrity Procedure, which outlines:
- a. processes for raising and investigating concerns;
  - b. decision-making authorities;

- c. opportunities for students to respond to allegations;
- d. possible outcomes and sanctions; and
- e. record-keeping requirements.

## 5. Appeals

- 5.1 Students have the right to appeal decisions relating to academic misconduct.
- 5.2 Appeals are managed in accordance with the Academic Integrity Procedure.
- 5.3 All appeals are considered in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
- 5.4 Students dissatisfied with the way AAPoly has managed their case are advised to contact the National Student Ombudsman (refer to AAPoly's Academic Integrity Procedure)

## 2. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- 2.1 AAPoly monitors academic misconduct data and related information to identify systemic risks, emerging trends, and opportunities to strengthen academic integrity practices.
- 2.2 Periodic review of de-identified data and case outcomes supports improvements in:
  - a. prevention strategies;
  - b. assessment design;
  - c. student and staff education and support; and
  - d. institutional policy and procedures.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Academic Board** is responsible for developing and maintaining this policy.
- **Academic Dean** is responsible for communicating and overseeing the implementation of this policy. The Dean also ensures that all academic staff and students are familiar with and adhere to this policy.
- **Associate Dean (Education)** is responsible for communicating this policy to the students and the academic staff members within their teams.
- **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).
- **Program Coordinator** is responsible for the initial verification of the academic integrity incident report and forwarding the report to the Head, Academic Integrity. The program coordinator is also responsible for the initial determination of appeals against academic integrity breaches and misconduct.

- **Academic staff** are responsible for ensuring their awareness of this procedure and follow appropriate reporting of academic misconduct and plagiarism to the Program Coordinator and Head, Academic Integrity. Academic staff are also responsible for providing unambiguous instructions and training to students on 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.
- **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 own genuine work and protect it from 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 if unsure about the proper way of referencing or academic work preparation. Finally, students must acknowledge the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence during assessments.

## FEEDBACK

Queries or feedback about this policy should be directed to the Academic Dean through [academicdean@aapoly.edu.au](mailto:academicdean@aapoly.edu.au). The 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
	Academic Integrity 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)