

PROCEDURE S1.2-P1.2

MANAGING STUDENT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Related Policy

Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy

1.2 Purpose

This procedure outlines the responsibilities and processes required in managing academic misconduct by students. Refer to the Staff Code of Conduct for managing academic misconduct by staff.

1.3 Scope

This procedure applies to all students of the AIM Business School (ABS), irrespective of their location, mode of study, or if they are taught by third-party partners. It also applies to all ABS or third-party staff, outlining their responsibility to report academic misconduct, and to staff involved in actioning the procedure.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

None.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Head of School, ABS or a third-party partner, is responsible to ensure induction of new staff and ongoing staff development includes training and access to resources on academic integrity, including resources issued by TEQSA.
2. The Facilitators and Success Coaches or a third-party partner are responsible to ensure that orientation of new students and ongoing student training and information includes access to resources on academic integrity.
3. All students are responsible to ensure they understand what Academic Misconduct is, and to attend training provided on academic integrity.
4. All students are responsible to conduct their scholarly activities with integrity, ethics and honesty.
5. All students and staff are responsible to report to the Head of School, ABS any instances where they suspect academic misconduct.
6. The Head of School, ABS is responsible to investigate all instances of suspected academic misconduct and to initiate disciplinary procedures if required and as appropriate.

7. Students whose behaviour has been reported as suspected academic misconduct are responsible to comply with this procedure.
8. Staff are responsible to enact this procedure as outlined.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Information and Training

- a. The Program Manager - Digital and Facilitators will ensure that all Unit Guides and relevant contents available at the ABS learning management systems contain standard information about good scholarly practice, what constitutes academic misconduct, referencing and the concept of plagiarism. Information on plagiarism must include that it involves the following:
 - other people's work and/or ideas paraphrased and presented by the student without a reference;
 - other students' work copied or partly copied and presented as the student's work;
 - other people's designs, codes or images presented as the student's own work;
 - phrases and passages used verbatim by the student without quotation marks and/or without a reference to the author or source;
 - lecture notes reproduced without due acknowledgement.
- b. Facilitators will ensure that Unit Guides contain advice about how to avoid plagiarism, and clear instructions to reduce the likelihood of unintentional academic misconduct. For example, instructions as to whether students are permitted to jointly work on an assignment and guidelines relating to all aspects of group work.
- c. The Head Success Coach will ensure that orientation of new students includes:
 - training on academic integrity, including referencing;
 - training on what constitutes academic misconduct including plagiarism;
 - training on protection of the student's own work when using computers, including when using computer suites/labs; and
 - the importance of not sharing log-in details.
- d. The Head Success Coach and ABS Facilitators will ensure regular tutorials are provided on referencing techniques.

3.2 Prevention and Detection of Plagiarism and Collusion

- a. Students studying via a blended delivery mode or via face-to-face delivery mode are required to submit assessments via the Moodle online learning management system. Upon submission the students must give their permission for electronic scanning of their assessment to check for plagiarism. Assessments will not be accepted if they are not submitted via the online system.
- b. Electronic scanning will be conducted on submission of each assessment to look for any instance of plagiarism.
- c. Random sampling of an assessment piece may be conducted by academic staff to look for strong similarities which could indicate collusion.
- d. 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; suddenly improved writing style; a paper veering away from the topic; lack of recent reference sources or unusual or anachronistic references; and common phrases appearing in more than one paper.
- e. If a member of the academic staff believes that plagiarism has occurred, searching for a key phrase on a search engine (preferably enclosed in quotation marks) may confirm this.
- f. If it is suspected that plagiarism from an internet site has occurred, print out the material in case the site is changed or removed, to use as reference in discussions with the student, or as evidence in an investigation.
- g. The Head of School, ABS ensures that Facilitators and where applicable third-party partners have the required information to support them in making decisions.

3.3 Reporting Alleged Academic Misconduct

- a. Staff and students reporting alleged academic misconduct by a student(s) must:
 - maintain the confidentiality of the student(s) concerned. Talking about the alleged misconduct with anyone other than the Head of School, ABS or delegate or, if requested, other staff involved in the investigation will be viewed as misconduct; and
 - make an appointment to discuss the issue with the Head of School, ABS, or delegate, who will investigate the allegation as outlined in clause 3.5.
- b. Allegations of academic misconduct must be based on clear evidence provided to the Head of School, ABS or delegate. Proven malicious allegations will be viewed as harassment and a breach of the relevant Code of Conduct and will result in consequences.

3.4 Levels of Academic Misconduct

- a. **Level 1/minor academic misconduct** is judged to be unintentional misconduct due to careless practice or misinterpretation of the academic misconduct rules and guidelines by a student, which results in only minor impact on the purpose of the assessment. For example:
 - inadequate or inconsistent referencing.
 - copying one or two sentences verbatim without adequate referencing.
- b. **Level 2/moderate academic misconduct** is where the misconduct clearly breaches the Student Code of Conduct and is deliberate. For example, copying more than one or two sentences without referencing.
- c. **Level 3/serious academic misconduct** is where the misconduct is a serious, substantial breach of the Student Code of Conduct, and is deliberate. For example, serious plagiarism, cheating in an examination, contract collusion, or providing fraudulent documents.

3.5 Investigating Alleged Academic Misconduct

- a. In all investigations, communication to students must be in writing and the communication and the result of the investigation, recorded on the student's file. In the communication, the student(s) must also be advised of their right to appeal any finding of academic misconduct through the Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- b. Investigating alleged academic misconduct takes into account:
 - the level of the academic misconduct (see 3.4);
 - the experience of the student(s) (for example, the student is in first year of the course);
 - whether there have been prior instances of academic misconduct by the student(s);
 - the circumstances, such as a medical issue or other significant personal issue that has impacted on the student(s), language issues, or cultural background.
- c. On receipt of the allegation of academic misconduct, the Head of School, ABS, or delegate, will, within five (5) working days of the allegation being made, write to the student, and include in the letter:
 - the full particulars of the allegation and the possible penalty should the allegation be proven;
 - the date, time, venue/mode for a meeting of the student(s) with the Head of School, ABS, or delegate;

- that the student should come to the meeting prepared to discuss and defend their position if they believe that they did not commit academic misconduct, and bring any evidence they have to support that;
 - a requirement for the student(s) to reply in writing to the letter within ten (10) working days of receiving it, with the reply to include a response to the allegation, and noting whether or not the student will attend the meeting with the Head of School, ABS;
 - that, if it is impracticable for a student to attend the meeting, the student may send in their evidence with their letter; and
 - that the investigation will continue irrespective of whether the student responds to the letter, or if they withdraw from the course.
- d. The Head of School, ABS will consider the factors listed in clause 3.5.b. and the defence provided by the student(s) and make a decision on whether the allegation of academic misconduct is upheld or rejected and, if upheld, whether the academic misconduct was likely to have been intentional or unintentional.
- The factors that can be taken into consideration when deciding whether the alleged academic misconduct was unintentional, are:
 - a negligible amount has been plagiarised;
 - the student's evident intent; and
 - 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;
 - the student has made an attempt, albeit inadequate, at referencing.
 - Indications that the academic misconduct was intentional include:
 - the student's evident intent;
 - the student was present at the time the information on how to acknowledge extracts and quotations was given out and received it, or, if external, received it through other means such as Orientation materials/ Online resources on the online learning system and knew that the use of material without acknowledgement was unacceptable;
 - the student had received a prior warning about academic misconduct or had previously been penalised for academic misconduct.

3.6 Imposing Penalties for Academic Misconduct

- a. In all cases, warnings and penalties must be communicated in writing to the student(s) within ten (10) working days of the decision and will be recorded on the student's file. The student(s) must also be advised of their right to appeal the finding of academic misconduct through the Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- b. If the Head of School, ABS, or delegate, believes that the student's actions were not academic misconduct, the student(s) will be notified in writing and any notes about the alleged incident will be removed from the student file. The person making the report of alleged academic misconduct will also be notified in writing.
- c. If the Head of School, ABS, or delegate, believes level 1/minor academic misconduct has occurred, but that it was unintentional, the following may be actioned:
 - warn the student in writing and mark the assessment item without penalty (deduction of marks); or
 - warn the student in writing and mark the assessment item with a penalty.
- d. If the Head of School, ABS or delegate believes that level 2/moderate academic misconduct has occurred, but it was unintentional, and the first warning for this student, the following may be actioned:
 - warn the student in writing, request resubmission of the assessment item, and mark the re-submitted assessment item with or without penalty.
- e. If the Head of School, ABS or delegate believes the level 2/moderate misconduct was intentional, the following may be actioned:
 - warn the student in writing, request resubmission of the assessment item, and mark the re-submitted assessment item with a penalty; or
 - the student may be required to undertake additional or alternative assessment (the maximum mark possible being a Pass grade); or
 - a grade of Fail may be recorded for the assessment item.
- f. If the Head of School, ABS or delegate, believes the academic misconduct is level 3/serious, or is a repeat of previous serious academic misconduct, they will initiate a formal inquiry to consider:
 - withdrawing the student from the course for a specified period; or
 - excluding the student from the course and expelling them from ABS.

3.7 Formal Inquiry

- a. The formal inquiry panel consists of the Head of School, ABS, the Registrar, and the Director of Education.
- b. The student will be invited in writing to attend a meeting of the panel, and advised they can bring a support person from Student Support and any further evidence they have to support their defence. The meeting will proceed irrespective of the student's attendance.
- c. The panel will consider the alleged level 3/serious academic misconduct, to confirm whether that level of misconduct has occurred, or the conduct is actually at a lower level. The decision will be finalised after the student has left the meeting, and can be:
 - exclusion of the student from the course and subsequently expel the student; or
 - impose a lower-level punishment such as withdrawing the student from the course for a specified period.
- d. Academic Misconduct which includes fraud or an attempt at bribery will always result in exclusion from the course and the student will be expelled from ABS.
- e. Within five (5) working days of the panel's decision, the Head of School, ABS will notify the student in writing of the decision and penalty, with information on their right to appeal and the process to do so.

3.8 Appeals and Grievances

- a. Students have the right to appeal any decision and penalty made under the Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy and this procedure.
- b. The process for appeals and grievances is provided in the Student Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure.

3.9 Governance Requirements

- a. Proven incidents of academic misconduct, and the resultant disciplinary action are recorded on the Academic Misconduct Central Register by the Head of School, ABS, and included in the Head of School's report to the ABS Academic Board.
- b. The ABS Academic Board includes proven incidents of academic misconduct and the disciplinary action in its reports to the ABS Corporate Board.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- Refer to the Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy for definitions.

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Student Grievances and Complaints Policy
- Student Code of Conduct Policy

6.0 POLICY/PROCEDURE OWNERSHIP

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| Policy Owner | Director of Education |
| Status | Reviewed on July 2021 |
| Approval Authority | ABS Academic Board |
| Date of Approval | 14/09/2021 |
| Effective Date | 20/10/2021 |
| Implementation Owner | Head of School, ABS |
| Maintenance Owner | Senior Policy and Compliance Officer |
| Review Due | July 2024 |
| Content Enquiries | Ehsan Ahmed - Head of School, ABS Email: ehsan.ahmed@aim.com.au |

7.0 AMENDMENTS

| Version | Amendment Approval (Date) | Amendment Made By (Position) | Amendment Details |
|-----------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| S1.0-P1.0 | 10 July 2017 | Director ABS | Initial document review after purchase of MHMHE |
| S1.1-P1.1 | 15 January 2021 | Director ABS | General review |
| S1.2-P1.2 | 14 September 2021 | ABS Academic Board | Procedure separated from policy. Formal Inquiry Panel added. Stepped classification of academic misconduct added. Staff responsibilities clarified. Details of appeals removed and replaced with reference to the Student Grievances and Complaints Policy. |
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