

Student Academic Misconduct		
Code: A1.15	Area: Academic	
Policy Owner: Academic Board		
Policy Developer/Reviewer: QAO/Dean	Version #: 1.0	Date: 29/04/2018

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Updated by	Approval Date	Details
0.1	QAO		Document creation; updated and replacement version of the Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy.
0.1	QAO	29/04/18	Policy Review Group approval pending final approval by Academic Board.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The aim of this policy is:

- Detail the levels of academic misconduct as determined by SITCM.
- Ensure that students have a clear understanding of what constitutes Academic Misconduct and what are the definitions and standard parameters of Plagiarism, Cheating, Contract Cheating, Collusion, Enabling Plagiarism and Cheating, and Falsification and Fabrication.
- Detail the range of responses when students are determined to have been culpable of academic misconduct.

This policy applies to all students (Higher Education and VET) at the Sydney Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SITCM) and covers all forms of academic misconduct including but not limited to plagiarism and cheating.

1 OVERVIEW

The Sydney Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SITCM) upholds the principle that academic integrity relies on the application of honesty in all scholarly endeavours. Academic misconduct will not be tolerated at SITCM and penalties may be applied to students who are determined to be culpable of misconduct.

SITCM recognises that the seriousness of misconduct varies and has structured a two-tier approach to dealing with academic misconduct depending on the level of seriousness.

Misconduct that is not academic in nature is covered under the *Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy*.

This policy has been informed by the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015*, particularly Section 5.2 Academic and Research Integrity.

2 POLICY

2.1 TYPES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct is (but is not limited to) the following:

2.1.1 PLAGIARISM

- 1) Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking and submitting or presenting the thoughts, writings or other work of another person as though it is your own work.
- 2) Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to any of the following, when presented as original material and without full and appropriate acknowledgement of the source(s):
 - a. The whole or part of a written work from any source such as books, journals, newspaper articles, lecture notes, current or past student work, another person's work, information from a website or database;
 - b. The close paraphrasing of another person's work;
 - c. The use of audio, visual, graphic and photographic work, animations, code.
- 3) Plagiarism also includes the preparation, production, submission or presentation of assignments or other work in conjunction with another person or other people when that work should be the student's own independent work.
- 4) Plagiarism also includes the reuse of a student's assessment that has been used in other assessments.
 - a. Information from Case Studies may be used for separate assessments provided the lecturer agrees and the analysis is original.

2.1.2 CHEATING

- 1) Cheating is the attempt to deliberately circumvent examination or assessment rules or regulations.
- 2) Examples may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Bringing of unauthorised material into an examination;
 - b. Accessing material illicitly during examinations;
 - c. Disguising work in a deliberate attempt to conceal its origins;
 - d. Fabricating information.

2.1.3 CONTRACT CHEATING

- 1) Contract cheating occurs when a student requests, commissions or offers for another party to procure or complete on their behalf, academic work that is likely to result in their use for the purpose of cheating, misrepresentation and/or plagiarism. Contract cheating occurs when a student seeks help with their academic work:
 - a. through another party that produces academic work for a fee to the student;
 - b. through another party who has offered to help.

2.1.4 COLLUSION

- 1) Collusion (unauthorised collaboration) involves working with others without permission to produce work which is then presented as work completed independently by the student.
- 2) Collusion is a form of plagiarism. Students should not knowingly allow their work to be copied.

2.1.5 ENABLING PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

- 1) Enabling plagiarism means deliberately allowing or otherwise assisting another student to plagiarise one's own or another person's work, for example, by allowing that student to copy a part or all of one's own or another person's draft, completed assignment or other work.
- 2) Enabling cheating means deliberately allowing or otherwise assisting another student to cheat for example, by allowing that student to copy a part or all of one's own examination script or by providing work to another student for the purpose of copying it closely or substantively for submission.

2.1.6 FALSIFICATION AND FABRICATION

- 1) Falsification is the deliberate misrepresentation or forgery of existing information or documentation and representing that to be real.
- 2) Fabrication is the deliberate creation of purported or non-existent information or documentation, and the representation of that as actual data.

2.2 LEVELS OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**2.2.1 MINOR ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

- 1) Instances of academic misconduct are deemed MINOR where the misconduct may reasonably be judged to result from careless practices and/or neglect of the specific guidelines relating to assessment requirements by students.
- 2) Minor misconduct does not include relatively trivial breaches by an entry level student in their first semester of study in a course, which in the opinion of the Dean/Associate Dean/Course Coordinator may routinely occur in the course of learning the techniques, methodologies and presentation conventions within an area or discipline.

2.2.2 MAJOR ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

- 1) Instances of academic misconduct are deemed MAJOR where the misconduct may reasonably be judged to result from an intentional breach of ethical scholarship and/or deliberate disregard of the specific guidelines regarding plagiarism and cheating.
- 2) Major Academic Misconduct includes collusion of all kinds, the provision of materials to another for the purposes of cheating or plagiarism, the deliberate OR persistent use of unattributed materials.

2.3 PREVENTION AND DETECTION OF PLAGIARISM**2.3.1 PREVENTION**

- 1) Academic staff have a responsibility to explain to students both good scholarly practice and the concept of plagiarism.
- 2) Unit guides 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.

- 3) Students are permitted to upload their assessments through Turnitin¹ prior to the formal submission of an assessment to check their similarity score. The similarity score allows students to check their assessment for plagiarism.

2.3.2 DETECTION OF PLAGIARISM

- 1) All student assessments are submitted via Turnitin so that they can be subject to electronic scanning to detect plagiarism.
 - a. If Turnitin returns a similarity score of 25% or more, the lecturer for that unit of study must report the matter to the Associate Dean. The matter may result in an allegation of academic misconduct.
- 2) 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.
- 3) If academic staff suspect plagiarism they must complete the *Allegation of Academic Misconduct* form.
 - a. Evidence supporting the claim must be provided with the completed form.

3 PROCEDURES

3.1 DETERMINING ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

3.1.1 INVESTIGATION

- 1) The Associate Dean will investigate allegations of academic misconduct.
- 2) Allegations of academic misconduct must be based on evidence.
- 3) If no evidence of academic misconduct is found by the Associate Dean there is no requirement to contact the student.
- 4) If evidence is found of academic misconduct the student must be notified within five working days of the allegation.
- 5) A student accused of academic misconduct must attend a meeting with the Associate Dean.
 - a. The student will be advised of the particulars of the suspected academic misconduct and given a chance to respond to the allegation.
 - b. The student(s) should be informed of the penalties that may be applied if the allegation of academic misconduct is upheld.
 - c. The student has the right to be represented by a support person at the meeting.
 - d. In cases where it is impracticable for a student to attend a meeting, the academic misconduct will be put to the student in writing, and the student must respond within ten (10) working days from receipt of the written communication.

1) ¹ SITCM uses the automatic plagiarism detection software Turnitin. Turnitin is online web-based text-matching software that electronically compares submitted assessment papers to content located on the internet.

3.1.2 DECISION

- 1) Academic misconduct is to be established by the Associate Dean (or other nominated person) after the investigation and will be determined as follows:
 - a. Whether a student is innocent of academic misconduct.
 - b. Whether a student is guilty of academic misconduct.
 - c. Whether the academic misconduct was minor or major.

3.2 PENALTIES

Once an allegation of academic misconduct has been investigated and found to be upheld a determination will be made within ten (10) working days of the appropriate penalty. Each case of academic misconduct will be treated on its merits.

3.2.1 MINOR ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

- 1) Where the Associate Dean determines that academic misconduct was not intentional they may take one of the following possible actions:
 - a. Warn the student and mark the assessment item without penalty (no deduction of marks); or
 - b. Warn the student and mark the assessment item with penalty (with a deduction of marks); or
 - c. Warn the student, request resubmission, and mark the assessment item with or without penalty.
- 2) Where this is the second reported instance of Minor Academic Misconduct, the student is required to formally meet with the Associate Dean and may be required to undertake a session of Academic Counselling (submitted work may be corrected and resubmitted with or without penalty).
- 3) Where any student has been found guilty of Minor Academic Misconduct on three occasions, they shall immediately be reported for Major Academic Misconduct.
- 4) Warnings and penalties must be communicated in writing to the student and will be kept on the student's file.
- 5) The student must be advised of their right to appeal the finding of academic misconduct and the penalty imposed.

3.2.2 MAJOR ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

- 1) Where Major Academic Misconduct has been established, the Associate Dean may take one of the following actions:
 - a. The student will be required to undertake an additional or alternative assessment (the maximum mark possible being 50/100 with the maximum grade possible being Pass grade);
 - b. A grade of Fail with a mark of 0/100 will be recorded for the assessment item;
 - c. A grade of Fail with a mark of 0/100 will be recorded for the unit of study;
 - d. The student is withdrawn from the course for a period of specified time;
 - e. The student is excluded from the course and expelled from SITCM.
- 2) Warnings and penalties must be communicated in writing to the student and will be kept on the student's file.
- 3) The student must be advised of their right to appeal the finding of academic misconduct and the penalty imposed.

3.3 OUTCOMES

- 1) Students will be notified of the outcome of the investigation and any penalties that may apply in writing via email.
 - a. Students may be required to attend a further meeting with the Associate Dean to discuss the outcome of the investigation.
- 2) All proven cases of academic misconduct will be entered into the Academic Misconduct Register to allow for verification of repeated infringements. This register is maintained by the Associate Dean.

4 APPEALS

- 1) A student may appeal against a decision made under this policy.
- 2) The grounds for appeal are that the decision is inconsistent with this policy.
- 3) Students wishing to make an appeal should consult the *Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*.
 - a. An appeal of an academic decision begins at Stage 3: Appeal (Internal Panel).
- 4) Appeals will be reviewed by the Academic Board.

5 RELATED POLICY AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

- 1) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.
- 2) E2.08 Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.
- 3) A1.14 Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- 4) Allegation of Academic Misconduct Form.