



IONA COLLEGE
TRINITY

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Staff Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure

Approved by the Academic Board on 16 November 2021

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1. Purpose

This Policy and Procedure defines academic integrity and categories of academic misconduct and provides guidance for identifying, preventing, and responding to instances of academic misconduct.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- all academic staff whether full-time, part-time, sessional or contract
- academic visitors to Iona Trinity College of Higher Education (**the College**) when engaging in any academic work associated with the College
- the full range of academic activities and practices conducted by academic staff including their own scholarship and teaching.

3. Policy

3.1 Principles

The College does not tolerate academic misconduct and expects academic staff to observe the highest ethical standards in all their own academic endeavours.

Academic staff have a role in promoting academic integrity.

Where the academic integrity of staff work is in question, the College will follow a consistent and fair process of investigation.

The person/s reporting the allegation of academic misconduct will be kept informed of progress regarding the investigation.

Where academic misconduct is established, appropriate consequences will be applied as outlined in this Policy and Procedure.

3.2 Defining academic misconduct as it applies to staff

Any breach of the principles of academic integrity constitutes academic misconduct.

Academic misconduct by staff may be characterised by, but not limited to the following:

- disseminating false or dishonest information in relation to the performance (academic, teaching or scholarship) of other scholars and students
- biased marking of assessments
- plagiarising or presenting the thoughts, words, phrases or works of another as one's own, by:
 - failing to or incorrectly acknowledging text, images, videos and other artefacts sourced from others in teaching materials, works of scholarship or research outputs
 - copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment in teaching materials, works of scholarship or research outputs

- using another's expression or ideas without appropriate recognition or due acknowledgement (e.g. by failure to use an academic referencing system) in teaching materials, works of scholarship or research outputs
- falsifying, fabricating or tampering with data or records obtained from experiments, interviews, surveys, or similar activities in works of scholarship or research outputs
- acquiring, attempting to acquire, possessing, or distributing (either physically, electronically or orally) restricted assessment-related material or information, such as examination questions or an examination question paper, without the prior authorisation of the relevant Course Coordinator, and
- offering or accepting bribes in relation to academic conduct.

3.3 *Categories of staff academic misconduct*

Allegations of staff academic misconduct will be classified into minor or major misconduct based on a number of criteria:

- the type of misconduct;
- the extent of the misconduct;
- the experience of the person;
- the intent of the misconduct;
- the impact of the misconduct.

4. **Procedure**

4.1 *Reporting, assessment and determination of allegations*

Where academic misconduct is suspected, an immediate report of the alleged incident, together with accompanying evidence must be made to the Principal, who will make a preliminary assessment of the allegation within 10 working days.

Based on the information and evidence, the Principal will conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether there is:

- no case to answer, in which case, a record of the reasons for this must be maintained, or
- sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation.

Where further inquiry is warranted Principal will:

- notify the staff member against whom the allegation has been made (**the Respondent**) and the Chair of Academic Board
- appoint an independent investigator with sufficient academic seniority and expertise provide them with copies of all relevant documentation.

Within 20 working days of being appointed the investigator will:

- review all relevant documentation
- gather any additional evidence and conduct interviews as required

- provide a report on the findings to Principal.

Within five working days of receipt of the investigator's findings, the Principal will advise the Respondent of the outcome.

Where the finding is:

- in favour of the Respondent the matter will be deemed closed, the Chair of Academic Board will be advised, and all records will be filed
- of a possible minor or major offence, the Respondent has the right of reply in writing to the Principal within 10 working days of receipt of the findings.

Where the Respondent:

- does not invoke the right of reply, the Principal will advise the Chair of Academic Board to initiate action in the form of an appropriate penalty
- pursues the right of reply, the Chair of Academic Board will review all records pertaining to the allegation and provide a review report within 20 working days of receipt of the reply from the Respondent.

Within five working days of receipt of the review report the Principal will advise the Respondent of the outcome.

Where the outcome of the review report is:

- in favour of the Respondent the matter will be deemed closed, the Principal will be advised, and all records filed
- to uphold the original decision in relation to a minor or major offence the Respondent is advised of the outcome and their right of appeal under the appeal provisions of the relevant industrial award.

Where the Respondent does not exercise their right of appeal the Principal is advised of the final outcome and authorises the initiation of all required action in the form of an appropriate penalty.

4.2 *Determination of penalties*

In determining the penalty for proven academic misconduct, the following circumstances are required to be taken into consideration:

- whether the person is relatively inexperienced;
- whether the person has a history of academic misconduct;
- any admissions by the particular person in relation to the misconduct;
- the nature and extent of the misconduct;
- whether the misconduct was a deliberate act of deception or cheating;
- the extent to which the misconduct approximates an offence in the wider community that under law might lead to legal proceedings, e.g. theft, fraud, mis-appropriation of funds or false representation.

Where appropriate, disciplinary and/or termination proceedings may be implemented for proven academic misconduct, in accordance with the *Human Resources Management Policy and Procedure* and the relevant industrial award.

4.3 Grievances and appeals

Staff dissatisfied with any action or outcome associated with this Policy may lodge a grievance under the relevant provisions of the *Human Resources Management Policy and Procedure*.

4.4 Confidentiality

All information associated with reports, investigations and outcomes associated with individual instances of academic misconduct must be treated as confidential. The only circumstances under which information will be released are if it is required by law or the person has expressly consented to its release in writing.

5. Research misconduct

Staff who conduct their own individual research as part of regular scholarship activity, or through enrolment in a higher degree by research, are expected to observe the standards of ethical and responsible conduct outlined in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

Any breaches of the Code (allegations of research misconduct) will be managed by the Principal, or the Chair of the Board of Directors, as appropriate, according to the [NHRMC Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches](#).

6. Responsibilities

Academic staff are responsible for:

- observing the principles of academic integrity in all their scholarship and teaching
- reporting instances of potential academic misconduct in fellow staff.

The Principal:

- has general day-to-day oversight of academic integrity matters at the College
- makes initial determinations as to whether an allegation has substance
- appoints an independent investigator where a preliminary allegation appears to have substance
- communicates outcomes at various stages of an investigation and review to the Respondent and designated officers
- authorises the initiation of appropriate actions and penalties following the exhaustion of any relevant appeal processes
- reports staff academic integrity matters to the Academic Board. This report will de-identify parties involved.

The Academic Board is responsible for the overall monitoring of academic integrity at the College and reporting to the Board of Directors on breaches to academic integrity, with the parties involved de-identified to protect their privacy.

In the event of allegations that present a potential or perceived conflict of interest, the Chair of the Board may conduct a preliminary internal investigation.

7. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure, the following terms are defined as follows:

Academic integrity	The ethical practice of academic, scholarly and research activities centred on a commitment to values such as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage
Academic misconduct	Breach of academic integrity and includes misrepresentation, fabrication, plagiarism, and misuse of intellectual property
Plagiarism	Intentionally or unintentionally using the work of another person, copying (in whole or in part) the work or data of another person, paraphrasing closely or presenting substantial extracts from written, printed, electronic or other media in a student's written, oral, electronic, online or group assessment task without due acknowledgment

8. Version history

Version #	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	Original Version	Academic Board	16/11/21

9. Additional Information

Policy Status	Approved
Policy Owner	Principal
Next Review Date	3 years from Approval Date
Associated Internal Documents	Human Resources Management Policy and Procedure
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	Standards 5.2.1 and 5.2.2
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	No relevant standard
Other Applicable Legislation and Instruments	Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research NHRMC Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches

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