



IONA COLLEGE
TRINITY

TEQSA Provider ID PRV14376 • CRICOS Provider Code 04294D

Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure

Approved by Academic Board on 16 November 2021

1. Purpose	2
2. Scope	2
3. Policy	2
3.1 Principles	2
3.2 Categories of academic misconduct.....	2
3.3 Strategies	3
4. Procedure	4
4.1 Reporting, assessment and determination of allegations	4
4.2 Determination of penalties	5
4.3 Academic misconduct during examinations.....	6
5. Monitoring and improvement	6
6. Appeals.....	7
7. Responsibilities.....	7
8. Definitions.....	7
9. Version history	8
10. Additional Information	8
Appendix 1: Responses and penalties for academic misconduct	10
Appendix 2: Academic Misconduct Flowchart	11

1. Purpose

Ensuring the academic integrity of student work is critical to maintaining high quality academic and professional practice and the reputation of Iona Trinity College of Higher Education (**the College**).

Academic integrity requires that students are ethical and honest in the development and presentation of their work and are careful to distinguish and identify their own work from that of others.

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 students enrolled at the College;
- academic and professional staff with responsibilities under this Policy and Procedure;
- the full range of academic activities and practices within the College including examination and assessment tasks.

3. Policy

3.1 Principles

Student academic integrity is central to educational success and student attainment of the College's Graduate Attributes.

A range of strategies will be used to support the academic integrity of students.

Academic, library and learning support staff should provide consistent guidance and opportunities for students to understand and practise integrity in their coursework and assessment tasks.

Where the academic integrity of student work is in question, the College will follow a consistent and fair process of investigation, and where academic misconduct is established will apply appropriate educative responses and/or penalties as described in this Policy and Procedure.

3.2 Categories of academic misconduct

Academic misconduct refers to any breach of academic integrity by students at the College. The College classifies academic misconduct into minor and major misconduct.

Minor Academic Misconduct

This may be defined as including, but not limited to, plagiarism, collusion or cheating that occurs in the student's first or second term of study.

An allegation of Minor Academic Misconduct arises where an academic staff member identifies that between five (5) and ten (10) percent of material submitted for an assessment

task has been plagiarised, and where that academic misconduct is the student's first offence.

Major Academic Misconduct

A student is alleged to have committed Major Academic Misconduct where they have engaged in activities that include:

- bringing in or referring to unauthorised material in an exam room;
- communicating with other students during an exam;
- reading the work of other students in an exam;
- contract cheating, e.g. completing an assignment or other work for a student, procuring another student's services to complete an assignment for another student, or providing or procuring answers for an examination;
- engaging in or agreeing to any form of dishonest act;
- submission of assessable material that is identified by academic staff as comprising more than ten (10) percent of unattributed work not authored by the student.

3.3 Strategies

The College adopts a risk-based approach to academic integrity. Key strategies for the management of academic integrity risk includes the following:

- **Culture:** The College fosters a culture of academic integrity through a process of awareness, training, benchmarking, and monitoring of trends.
- **Leadership:** Senior staff will demonstrate a high level of commitment to academic integrity.
- **Understanding of academic integrity risk:** The College will maintain an understanding of risk factors in breaches of academic integrity, including cultural and linguistic factors.
- **Understanding of cheating techniques:** Academic staff will maintain a current understanding of cheating techniques, including emerging technologies which could compromise academic integrity.
- **Staff awareness and training:** All staff of the College will have a sound awareness of academic integrity expectations. This is supported through the following measures:
 - academic staff induction includes a component on academic integrity and the College's detection and reporting mechanisms
 - Course Coordinators are responsible for informing teaching staff about the latest issues around academic integrity in the sector and for organising annual academic integrity sessions for teaching and other relevant staff
 - staff are made aware that risks to academic integrity do not only relate to assessment but also to other aspects of the College's operations, such as admission
 - staff receive communications on developments and emerging issues relating to academic integrity.

- **Student awareness and training:** Measures to promote student awareness and academic integrity training include:
 - regular communications on academic integrity. All prospective students are informed of the College's expectations with regard to academic integrity prior to accepting an offer for admission. Visual reminders are posted on campus
 - an academic integrity session is run during orientation and an academic integrity module will be available via the Learning Management System
 - regular learning skills support workshops are run with printed and online support materials and Academic Services are available for individual consultation on questions relating to acknowledgment practice
 - teaching staff remind students of academic integrity requirements when providing information on assessments. Appropriate referencing and citation knowledge and skills related to a wide range of text types are provided in the course documents;
 - all submitted assessment tasks must include a signed cover sheet by which a student declares their work is free from plagiarism and collusion. Student work is submitted via a mandatory online plagiarism/originality report submission process.
- **Information security:** Learning and information systems are assessed for any security weakness which could lead to breaches of academic integrity.

4. Procedure

4.1 *Reporting, assessment and determination of allegations*

If academic staff involved in assessing coursework suspect that a breach of academic integrity has occurred, they will report their concerns as follows:

- the student is to be informed in writing by the academic staff member of the nature of the alleged breach, the evidence that points to the breach, the process for investigating and making a determination and the possible penalties that may apply if academic misconduct is confirmed;
- the staff member must also complete an Academic Misconduct Report and submit it to the relevant Course Coordinator with supporting evidence within 24 hours of notifying the student.

The Course Coordinator will review submission of alleged academic misconduct and provide an opportunity for the student to respond within ten (10) working days as part of the process of establishing student intention and culpability. Students who wish to dispute the alleged misconduct will normally meet with the Course Coordinator to discuss the available evidence within this time frame.

If the student fails to respond to allegations of academic misconduct within ten (10) working days, the Course Coordinator will reach a finding on the basis of available evidence.

The range of possible findings, based on the criteria in this Policy, are:

- no academic misconduct has occurred;
- minor academic misconduct;

- major academic misconduct.

The finding will include a response and/or penalty as outlined in Appendix One to this Policy. In the case of a finding of major academic misconduct, the recommended penalty must be referred to the Principal for approval.

All decisions will be entered in the Academic Misconduct Register (AMR) against the student's ID. Where there is a finding of no academic misconduct a record will still be made in order to provide background for any subsequent incidents.

The Course Coordinator will issue a letter of outcome on all decisions following an assessment and/or investigation of an allegation. The letter will outline:

- a summary of the investigation and findings, including where the finding was that no academic misconduct occurred;
- where applicable, the educative response and/or penalty that is to be applied;
- advice to the student that the misconduct has been recorded in the AMR;
- if this was a first offence, advice that any subsequent offences will be automatically deemed Major Academic Misconduct;
- the student's right to appeal any decisions within ten (10) working days of notification.

Where misconduct has been established, the Course Coordinator will action the penalty, in accordance with the criteria outlined in this Policy.

All students registered on the AMR will receive mandatory referral to learning support and library staff and the College's academic integrity resources to develop improved referencing and citation techniques and an understanding of what constitutes good practice in relation to academic integrity. Depending on the severity of the offence, students may also be enrolled in the Managing Academic Progress program (see *Academic Progression Policy and Procedure*).

4.2 Determination of penalties

The College will in the first instance adopt a primarily educative response to the majority of findings of academic misconduct. Where there is a finding of no academic misconduct the student will normally be counselled by the Course Coordinator, directed to relevant resources and given a warning.

The range of possible responses and penalties to findings of academic misconduct is included in the table in Appendix One and will be selected based on the extent of the misconduct and the background of the student.

First offence

The majority of first offences are likely to be assessed as Minor Academic Misconduct unless a more serious breach such as contract cheating has occurred.

Where a student has no prior record of a warning or finding of academic misconduct on the AMR, the Course Coordinator may consider the following when deciding a fair penalty:

- whether the student is a first-year student with limited opportunity to learn and develop good citation practices to date;
- whether instructions regarding collusion, plagiarism and proper acknowledgement of sources were unavailable or unclear;

- the degree and extent of plagiarism or other misconduct in the student's work.

When a penalty has been determined the normal assessment rubric will be applied and the student's marks for the assessment in question will be deducted consistent with the level of misconduct detected.

Second offence

If the student has a pre-existing record of a finding of academic misconduct or a warning registered on the College's AMR marks will be deducted based on the severity of the misconduct identified through the plagiarism identification technology or other relevant means. Where this leads to a failure being recorded for one or more units the student will be informed that they risk an outcome of unsatisfactory academic progression.

Third offence

If the student has two (2) prior records of findings of academic misconduct or warnings on the AMR, they will be referred to the Principal. The outcome may result in an exclusion from their course and, in the case of an international students, the cancellation of their student visa, subject to any appeals that may be lodged by the student.

Where any period of exclusion or suspension applied as a penalty is greater than a term of study, in order to be considered for re-enrolment, the student must first submit an application for re-admission for the next term of study. The outcome of such an application will be determined by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

4.3 Academic misconduct during examinations

Under the provisions of this Policy a breach that occurs during an examination is usually classified as Major Academic Misconduct. If students are suspected of academic misconduct during an exam, the following procedures apply:

- an exam supervisor/academic staff member may confiscate any item that is in the student's possession that indicates an attempt at plagiarism or cheating. The student will be given an automatic Fail (F) grade and be reported to the Principal for immediate action;
- a student may be refused entry to an exam, or expelled from an exam room, if the student fails to give to the exam supervisor/academic staff anything that indicates potential plagiarism or cheating. The student will be given an automatic Fail (F) grade and be reported to the Principal for immediate action;
- the exam supervisor/academic staff member who suspects that any other form of academic misconduct by a student has occurred in relation to an exam will refer the matter to the Course Coordinator who will conduct an investigation as outlined in this Policy and Procedure.

5. Monitoring and improvement

The College collects de-identified data through the AMR on academic integrity, including by student group, course, and assessment method. Student feedback is sought on their experience of processes relating to academic integrity, including access to support services.

The College uses the collected data to monitor trends in academic misconduct and will establish targets on the basis of sector benchmarking.

A report is provided to the Teaching and Learning Committee every semester by the Principal on all academic integrity matters including allegations, institutional responses, and trends.

The Teaching and Learning Committee will in turn submit a report to the Academic Board each semester including any recommendations for improvement.

The Academic Board will refer any recommendations that require additional resourcing to the Board of Directors, as appropriate.

6. Appeals

As this Policy and Procedure provides mechanisms for the reporting, review and assessment of concerns about or allegations of academic misconduct, the *Student Grievance Policy and Procedure* does not apply.

A student may appeal against any decision made under this Policy and Procedure under the provisions in the *Student Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

7. Responsibilities

Academic staff are responsible for:

- ensuring that students are trained in good scholarship and aware of the provisions of this Policy, and
- detecting instances of potential academic misconduct, notifying the student and submitting an Academic Misconduct Report to the Course Coordinator.

Course Coordinators are responsible for:

- investigating and determining allegations of academic misconduct
- referring recommendations in relation to penalties for findings of Major Academic Misconduct to the Principal for approval
- notifying students of outcomes, and
- ensuring that appropriate records are kept.

The Principal is responsible for:

- general oversight of academic integrity matters at the College
- approving recommendations in relation to penalties for findings of Major Academic Misconduct, and
- collecting and analysing academic integrity/misconduct data, undertaking any required analysis and benchmarking and making reports to the Teaching and Learning Committee/Academic Board.

8. Definitions

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

Academic integrity	The ethical practice of academic activities centred on a commitment to values such as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage
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Academic misconduct	Breach of academic integrity and includes misrepresentation, fabrication, plagiarism and misuse of intellectual property
Cheating	Any dishonest, fraudulent, or deceitful conduct associated with assessment including collusion
Contract cheating	Paying another person to prepare an assignment
Course documents	a document providing detailed information for students enrolled in a unit. This will include details of each learning activity and assessment task and the links between Unit and Course learning outcomes.
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

9. Version history

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

10. Additional Information

Policy Status	Approved
Policy Owner	Principal
Next Review Date	3 years from Approval Date
Associated Internal Documents	Academic Progression Policy and Procedure Student Appeals Policy and Procedure Student Grievance Policy and Procedure
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	Standards 5.2.1 to 5.2.3
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	Standard 8.8.1

Other Applicable Legislation Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
and Instruments Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011

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Appendix 1: Responses and penalties for academic misconduct

Finding	Range of responses and penalties
No Academic Misconduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event will be recorded on the AMR • Student will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ counselled and referred to learning support staff and AI resources ○ advised that any repeat event may result in a finding of academic misconduct and associated consequences
Minor Academic Misconduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event will be recorded on the AMR • Student will be referred to learning support staff and AI resources • The student is required to undertake and submit work in place of any work that was associated with the misconduct and is advised that where the work is an assessment item, any mark or rating awarded for the work may not exceed a score of 50% of the worth of the assessment item • The student is given a formal written warning or reprimand including advice of the possible consequences of any further student academic misconduct
Major Academic Misconduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event will be recorded on the AMR • One or more of the following penalties will be applied; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A zero grade is awarded for the assessment in which the misconduct occurred ○ A mark of Fail is recorded for the unit ○ The student is suspended or excluded from the College.

Appendix 2: Academic Misconduct Flowchart

