

## **POLICY**

### **Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy (S1)**

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### **1. Purpose**

The Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy is to provide the framework upon which the Australian Guild of Education Pty Ltd ('AGE') manages and responds to issues around Academic Integrity in accordance with 5.2 of the HESF. Misconduct of a non-academic nature is covered in the Student Misconduct Policy (Non-Academic).

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### **2. Scope**

This Policy applies to all higher education students enrolled in AGE.

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### **3. Principles**

1. AGE is committed to high academic standards and expects students to understand and apply high standards of academic integrity.
2. All academic work submitted for assessment at AGE must be the independent and original work of the student.
3. AGE provides students with information about what constitutes academic misconduct and provides educational strategies to avoid academic misconduct.
4. In responding to allegations of academic misconduct, AGE will apply procedural fairness:



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- a. Students are presumed to be innocent unless evidence is demonstrated to the contrary;
  - b. Before a decision is made regarding misconduct, students will be given opportunity to respond to allegations of academic misconduct and will be entitled to bring a support person to any formal meeting;
  - c. A previous instance of academic misconduct will only be taken into account in investigating an allegation when it is similar in nature, and the student has been provided with a formal warning or penalty;
  - d. When it is determined a student has committed academic misconduct, the determination and penalty will be recorded on the student's record.
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## 4. Definitions of Academic Misconduct

### Academic misconduct includes:

- a. Plagiarism (see below)
- b. Cheating
- c. Contract cheating
- d. Falsification of any data or claims
- e. Falsification of sources or references
- f. Assisting others in committing any academic misconduct
- g. Infringing copyright laws
- h. Taking any action in any assessment with the intention of, or that has the effect of misleading academic staff regarding the student's ability, skills and capacity for original work.

### 4.1 What is Contract Cheating?

Contract cheating happens when someone has someone else do their assessments for them. This could include, but is not limited to, a paid third party unknown to the student, a family member, a former student etc. It could be paid or unpaid. It includes, amongst other things, the use of file-sharing sites, sharing user login details, as well as organising another person to take an examination. Contract cheating is extremely serious and must be completely avoided.

### 4.2 What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the reproduction of someone else's work including, but not limited to, research, words, ideas, data or findings as the student's own work and presenting them as original ideas.

Plagiarism includes:

- a. Direct copying or paraphrasing from someone else's published or unpublished work in any form without appropriately acknowledging the source using in text citations and referencing.
- b. Using facts, information and ideas derived from a source without acknowledgement.
- c. Submitting an assessment that the student has not written (in part or in full).
- d. Receiving substantial assistance with an assessment without acknowledgement
- e. Copying answers or text from another student and submitting as one's own.
- f. Citing the work of another person without acknowledging the original source.
- g. Using incorrect references in assessment tasks.
- h. Submitting another person's presentation, program, spreadsheet, composition etc. with only minor alterations.
- i. Improperly obtaining information with the intent to commit plagiarism.

### 4.3 Avoiding Plagiarism

Information on academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism will be presented to new students in Orientation



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activities.

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with academic citation and referencing conventions used by AGE (APA 7th), the Student Code of Conduct and Shared Responsibility Policy, the Assessment Policy and Procedures, and the Academic Appeals Policy.

#### **4.4 Identification of Plagiarism and other forms of Academic Misconduct**

Supervisors, examiners and lecturers will use the following mechanisms to systematically check for instances of plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct:

- a. Assessors will be vigilant for instances of assignment tasks with a high level of similarity. In such cases software packages may be used to compare the similarity of assignments between students and with other published works.
  - b. Assessors will be vigilant for instances of summative assessment tasks of a markedly different standard than the student's past assessment performance, and identify when the improvement is not likely to be the result of formative assessment.
  - c. Assessors will undertake online searches of extracts of assignments as another means of identifying whether assessment tasks have been copied from the internet or other sources without acknowledgement.
  - d. Assessors may take other steps as necessary to satisfy themselves that academic misconduct has or has not occurred.
  - e. All text based assessments must be created in and submitted on the AGE specified software to assist with plagiarism detection.
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## **5. Investigation of Misconduct**

Allegations of academic misconduct are investigated as follows:

- a. A member of staff who suspects a student has engaged in academic misconduct is to report the allegation in writing, with supporting evidence, to the Academic Director.
  - b. The Academic Director will review the materials and conduct further investigations as necessary to satisfy themselves that academic misconduct has, or appears to have taken place.
  - c. If satisfied that misconduct may have occurred, the Academic Director will notify the student by email of the allegation. The student will be required to provide a written response within five working days of receiving the notification. Failure by the student to provide a written response will not prevent the investigation from proceeding.
  - d. When an allegation of academic misconduct is deemed to be of a minor or potentially accidental nature, and if this is a student's first offense, the Academic Director may resolve the matter by having the student undertake training on academic referencing and avoiding plagiarism.
  - e. In more serious cases, or for subsequent offenses, the Academic Director will prepare an investigation report, including a statement of the alleged misconduct, supporting evidence, the student's written response to the allegation (if any), proposed findings and recommendations for penalties (see below).
  - f. The student will be given a final opportunity to provide a written response within three working days to the allegations and proposed penalty.
  - g. The Academic Director will implement an outcome.
  - h. The Student may appeal (see below).
  - i. The Academic Director will report to the Academic Board regarding the matter.
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## 6. Penalties

**Penalties for academic misconduct will be imposed by the Academic Director.**

### 6.1 Penalties may include but are not limited to:

- a. Requirement to resubmit the assessment task with appropriate revisions (for a first minor offense). The Academic Director may impose a 'maximum' possible mark for that assessment.
- b. Reduction in the marks allocated to the relevant assessment task. 3. Requirement to undertake another form of assessment or examination. 4. A fail grade for the assessment.
- c. A fail grade for the unit, with the option to re-enrol at a future date. 6. A probation period, requiring regular meetings with the Academic Director or other support staff.
- d. A referral to additional academic support.

### 6.2 For particularly serious or persistent offenses, penalties also include:

- a. Exclusion from the course with the option to re-enrol at a future date.
- b. Expulsion from the course.
- c. Where it is found that a Degree was awarded where academic misconduct was not identified until after award of the degree, the Academic Director may submit a request to the governing body of the AGE to cancel the degree.

*Cancellation of an awarded degree (See Conferral of Awards and Graduation Policy).*

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## 7. Appeals

Students may appeal academic misconduct decisions by following these procedures:

- a. Within three working days of the Academic Director implementing an outcome, the student should inform the Academic Director of their wish to appeal the decision.
  - b. The Academic Director will direct the student to a template for appeal which sets out the reasons for the appeal.
  - c. The student must complete and submit the appeal within one week of the Academic Director's decision to the email address specified on the form.
  - d. Once the student has submitted their appeal, an ad-hoc Appeals Committee will be convened including at least one member of the Academic Board who will chair the committee. The Committee will review the application and communicate the outcome of the review to the student. This should be completed within two weeks of the appeal being received.
  - e. If the student is not satisfied with the result of the review and wishes further appeal, an appropriately qualified and independent external arbiter will be appointed with approval of the Academic Board to review the matter. Their decision will be final.
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## 8. Responsibilities

### 8.1 The Academic Director is responsible for:

- a. Implementing this policy, and educating all staff about the policy.
- b. Ensuring this policy is communicated to students via Orientation sessions, and online portals.



- c. Providing guidance to staff members.
- d. Reviewing evidence and conducting investigations of misconduct allegations.
- e. Making determinations on allegations based on evidence and applying penalties as outlined in this policy.
- f. Reporting on allegations of misconduct to the Academic Board.

## 8.2 The Academic Board is responsible for:

- a. Providing a Chair for Ad-Hoc appeals committee when necessary.
- b. Assisting in selecting suitable external arbiters when necessary.
- c. Reviewing and approving this policy.

## 9. Review

Every three years by the Academic Board.

## 10. Document Control

Approval Review	Details
Governing authority	Academic Board
Responsible officer	Academic Director
Endorsed by	Board of Directors
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