

Academic Integrity and Conduct Policy

Scope

This policy applies Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd, trading as Murdoch Institute of Technology (“School”), specifically to current and former students who are enrolled or have previously been enrolled in any of the School’s subjects or programs.

The policy also applies to staff who are involved in the detection, investigation and response to students who may have engaged in academic or non-academic misconduct.

Purpose

The Academic Integrity and Conduct Policy aims to:

- provide information regarding academic integrity and expected conduct aimed at preventing incidences of misconduct;
- outline principles that underpin the investigation of misconduct; and
- provide a fair, equitable and confidential framework for investigating and resolving alleged cases of misconduct.

This policy defines the School’s principles and commitment to academic integrity and provides guidelines for investigating breaches of academic integrity among students and staff.

Policy Statement

Murdoch Institute of Technology has a strong commitment to ensuring and upholding academic integrity, as academic integrity is integral to maintaining academic quality and academic standing of its qualifications.

It is an essential aspect of our graduate attributes that our students be able to stand by the integrity of the academic work they produce while enrolled at Murdoch Institute of Technology, and their academic careers beyond their studies with the School.

Policy Principles

1. The School’s approach to academic integrity is primarily aimed at educating students about expectations for academic writing and the appropriate use and acknowledgement of intellectual material, including authorship.
2. Honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility are the core values that underpin the learning aims around academic integrity and conduct at the School.
3. Acts of misconduct are considered serious breaches of the core values which undermine the integrity of learning and scholarship with the School and contravene the academic value of respect for knowledge.

4. Academic misconduct is considered fraudulent behaviour.

Therefore:

- Each case of alleged misconduct is dealt with on its merits, in consideration of the circumstances surrounding the case and in accordance with this policy.
- Students will be treated fairly and equitably and with due regard to their privacy and the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- Students will be regarded as not having committed the alleged Act of Misconduct unless they admit to the misconduct, or an investigation/hearing determines that they committed an Act of Misconduct.
- Knowledge of a student's previous behaviour will not be assumed to be evidence that they have acted in the same manner again. Such knowledge, however, may be considered relevant to the level of penalty that may be imposed where an Act of Misconduct is determined to have occurred.
- Students are to be informed of their rights and responsibilities in relation to academic or non-academic misconduct and its investigation, including their right to an appeal.

Definitions

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is defined as: *'a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. From these values flow principles of behaviour that enable academic communities to translate ideals to action'* (International Centre for Academic Integrity, 2014).

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct refers to any form of dishonesty by a student relevant to the student's learning experience at the School which may result in the student gaining an unfair advantage over other students. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to:

- any attempt by a student to submit work for an assessment that is not their own (e.g. plagiarism, purloining, non-referencing, ghost writing);
- the reuse of significant portions of one's own work, previously submitted for assessment without acknowledging that one is doing it (self-plagiarism);
- any form of collusion between students or other individuals other than authorised collaboration;
- any act that may impair or hinder the learning or assessment performance of others;
- any action contrary to the study and assessment instructions given by the School; and
- assisting or attempting to assist any other student to act dishonestly in relation to an assessment or part of an assessment.

Assessment

In education, the term "assessment" refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students such as an examination, assignment or another task.

Collaboration

Collaboration refers to authorised methods of cooperative work between students and may include:

- discussion about a subject and/or its materials, or an approach to an assessment task;
- work produced with other students as part of a group exercise or assignment, with acknowledgement of the source and methods used;
- work which incorporates or is based on templates or examples provided by the School, with acknowledgement of the source and methods used.

Collaboration is a desired outcome of education because it supports interactivity and the cross-flow of ideas and knowledge.

Non-academic Misconduct

Non-academic misconduct is any action by a student relating to people or property, which is contrary to the generally accepted standards expected at the School. Non-academic misconduct may include, but is not limited to, a student:

- submitting fraudulent documents to gain admission to a School qualification;
- behaving inappropriately in an activity under the administration or supervision of the School;
- placing others or themselves at potential risk in regards to health and safety;
- altering or defacing any document or record belonging to the School;
- misusing, stealing, destroying or damaging any property (including computer and communications facilities) of the School;
- wilfully disobeying or disregarding any order, direction, rule, penalty or condition made by the School;
- interfering with the freedom of others to pursue their studies or for staff to carry out their work-related functions at the School;
- harassing or intimidating another because of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual preference, disability, age, religious beliefs or political conviction or for any other reason;
- unreasonably prejudicing or undermining the reputation, academic standing, authority, integrity or credibility of the School, its representatives or courses;
- using/ or supplying prohibited substances on the School's premises;
- failure to comply with an applicable law.

Definitions of Terms relating to Academic Misconduct

Cheating

Cheating in the context of this policy refers, but is not limited, to the following:

- not following the lawful directions of an Examinations Supervisor
- communicating in an examination with another student
- bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, written material, digital or electronic device or any other item without the express approval or authorisation from Kaplan
- leaving an examination room without the permission of the Examination Supervisor
- consulting with another person, or referencing materials, outside of the examination room once an examination has commenced
- attempting to read another students' work during an examination
- removing examination papers, answer sheets or written notes from the examination room
- making available to other students' details pertaining to the assessment questions presented in an examination, either verbally or in writing

Collusion

Collusion occurs when a student works with others, contrary to Kaplan's instructions, in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment task. Collusion includes:

- joint effort in an assessment (unless it is authorised collaboration);
- copying of material prepared by another person for use in an assessment;
- undue assistance from any person in an assessment;
- making assessment answers or material available to other students for viewing or copying, either knowingly or unknowingly. It is the responsibility of students to ensure their assessment material is secure and not easily accessible to other students.

Contract Cheating

Contract cheating, otherwise known as ghost writing, occurs when a student engages (or attempts to engage) the services of another individual to author an assignment on the student's behalf. A student can be guilty of contract cheating irrespective of whether payment is made or the services are received. For instance, a student may be investigated for contract cheating where:

- the student posts an advertisement seeking a ghost writer
- a ghost writer forwards correspondence to the School regarding a student's enquiry; or
- a student submits work that is significantly different in style to the student's prior work.
- a student engages the services of another individual to take place in an exam, work placement, internship or other assessment requirements.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism refers to:

- any use of or attempt to use the work, words or ideas of others without acknowledgement of the author or source, or
- any attempt to pass off the work, words or ideas of others as the writer's own.

Plagiarism also extends to reusing significant portions of one's own work, previously submitted for assessment, whether at the School or otherwise. This is known as self-plagiarism.

In the context of assessment, plagiarism occurs when a student:

- presents any phrase or extracts verbatim from any source (including one's self and the School's subject material), without appropriate use of quotation marks or reference to the author;
- presents an assessment as their own work when it has been produced, in whole or part with other people, for example, with other students, practitioners or work colleagues without appropriate recognition;
- presents all or part of an assessment which has previously been submitted or published by the student or another student (past or present) in their assessment.

Guidelines for Alleged Cases of Misconduct

Stage 1: Alleged act of misconduct reported

Where a staff member reasonably believes or suspects that a student has committed an Act of Misconduct that person must submit a *Report of Alleged Act of Misconduct* to the relevant School manager within five (5) working days of the matter being detected.

The *Report of Alleged Act of Misconduct* must contain specific details of the alleged act of misconduct. This includes:

- the details and position of the person submitting the report, when the alleged misconduct occurred,
- the nature of the alleged misconduct and other information as deemed relevant such as other people involved and any action already taken, etc.

Confidentiality is to be maintained by all parties during this process.

Stage 2: Investigation

An investigation of the allegation will be conducted by the School and the student will be notified of the case against them with an opportunity to provide comments on the allegations. The investigation will normally take no longer than ten (10) working days and may involve an interview with the student and/or other relevant parties to discuss the allegations and the evidence presented. Should an interview take place with the student, the student is entitled to be supported by another person, other than a legal professional, but the student must advise the School in writing of the name of the support person prior to the interview. Where the investigation relates to assessment results, the student's results will be withheld until all proceedings relevant to the allegation have been finalised.

No misconduct identified

Where it is determined that there is no case of misconduct the student will be notified in writing of the outcome of the investigation within five (5) working days of the conclusion of the investigation, and where relevant assessment results will be released.

Misconduct identified

Where misconduct is determined, the student will be notified in writing of the outcome of the investigation and any penalty that is to be imposed within (5) working days of the conclusion of the investigation. The student will also receive information about the appeal process. (See the *Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy* for further information).

Note: Any overseas student who is suspended or excluded due to an Act of Misconduct will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs through the Department of Education and Training reporting system PRISMS.

Admission of misconduct by a student

A student may formally admit to the alleged Act of Misconduct, at any time. Where this occurs, all further investigation, hearing or referral of the allegation ceases and a determination will be made as to an appropriate penalty. See Stage 3 - Determination of penalty.

Misconduct cannot be resolved or established

Where a determination is unable to be reached after investigation, the matter will be referred to a Review Panel. See Stage 4 Hearing of misconduct by Review Panel.

Stage 3: Determination of penalty

Penalties imposed are to be appropriate to the nature and gravity of the Act of Misconduct established by the evidence. The "Academic Integrity Penalty Rubric" (see below) provides guidance as to how to determine the appropriate penalty. The decision on the penalty will take into account, but is not limited to:

- the type of misconduct involved, whether academic or non-academic
- the previous discipline record of the student concerned
- whether the student admitted to the alleged misconduct
- whether the student assisted or hindered the investigation process
- whether or not there were any extenuating circumstances or mitigating factors
- the number of students affected by or involved in the misconduct
- the benefit derived from the misconduct by the student
- similar cases of student disciplinary action and their outcomes.

Penalties for proven Acts of Misconduct

One or more of the following penalties or conditions may be imposed on the student:

- a formal caution or reprimand, to be recorded on the student's record with the School
- a probationary period to be placed on the student and recorded on the student's record with the School
- suspension from a course of study for a period of time
- expulsion from a course of study
- a deduction of all or a specific number of marks for the assessment event/item (or part thereof)
- the imposition of a maximum allowable grade (i.e. 'Pass' grade) for the assessment item or overall mark
- a requirement to undertake supplementary assessment with the costs associated with marking and evaluating the additional assessment item to be borne by the student
- the annulment of all marks and the awarding of a 'Disciplinary fail' on the student's record, and as a 'Fail' grade on any public record relating to that assessment item or subject as relevant
- the exclusion of the student from School courses permanently or for a period of time as specified
- to make good any damage caused by the student to the property, standing of the institution or reputation of a staff member or another student.

Stage 4: Hearing

If a misconduct matter cannot be resolved after investigation, a Review Panel will be convened to hear the case of alleged misconduct within five (5) working days of the student being informed that no decision has been reached.

The Review Panel will consist of the Vice President, Academic or nominee, an external independent person nominated by the Vice President, Academic, and the relevant School manager who will chair the panel. The Review Panel will determine the conduct of investigations into the alleged Act of Misconduct, and determine the procedures to be adopted at a hearing, consistent with principles of procedural fairness.

Notice of misconduct hearing

Students will be provided with:

- details of the hearing
- details relating to the alleged Act of Misconduct
- notification that the student may attend the hearing in person or by electronic means and to contact the School if they cannot attend the hearing
- notification that the student may have one support person (other than a legal professional) attend the hearing with them
- any other information that the Panel deems necessary to provide
- notification that the student has five (5) working days after receipt of the Notice of Misconduct Hearing to make any queries or objections in relation to the hearing or composition of the Panel.

Student's confirmation

The student will be required to confirm their attendance at the hearing in writing (via email/letter). Failure to confirm their attendance/non-attendance at least two (2) working days prior to the hearing day may result in the hearing going ahead without the student's input which may result in a disciplinary fail.

Conduct of the hearing

The Review Panel will review all evidence presented and may make inquiries as it thinks fit prior to and during the hearing. The student and institution will be entitled to provide any evidence, present a defence, correct any information and explain their conduct and any mitigating factors or extenuating circumstances relevant to the allegation. The Review Panel may also call on a person to give evidence or examine or cross-examine any person giving evidence at the hearing when reasonably necessary to do so.

The hearing will be minuted and minutes reviewed by the Review Panel or the student. The minutes may also be referred to by the Appeals Committee in the event of an appeal of the Review Panel's decision by the student.

The Review Panel will determine whether or not the student has committed an Act of Misconduct has occurred and will submit a written report to the relevant Manager with the findings and recommendations of the Panel for any further action and record management. The Review Panel's decision will be provided within five (5) working days of the hearing.

Stage 5: Appeals process

Right to appeal

Following the final outcome of a hearing or formal complaint having been lodged by the student, any student subject to a determination or penalty in relation to an Act of Misconduct is entitled to appeal the decision to the Academic Board Appeals Committee. within ten (10) working days of the determination being made.

If a student wishes to appeal against a determination, they must lodge a written *Notice of Appeal* form within ten (10) working days of the determination being made.

Students on an Overseas Student Visa have twenty (20) working days to access the appeal process.

Please refer to the *Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy* for more information.

Academic Integrity Penalties Rubric

VIOLATION	POSSIBLE PENALTIES*		
	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense
Cheating Offenses			
Unauthorised assistance with academic work.	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Copying from another student's work or allowing another student to copy one's work.	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
The use or possession of unauthorised materials such as textbooks, notebooks, electronic devices etc. during an assessment.	MEDIUM	HIGH	EXTREME
Collaborating with another person to complete academic work, e.g. a formal assessment.	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

Obtaining by any means, possessing, or soliciting in whole or in part, items such as the contents of an un-administered assessment or solutions without permission.	MEDIUM	HIGH	EXTREME
Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself in a formal assessment, including contract cheating.	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME
Altering initial answers/responses and then claiming the assessor inappropriately graded the examination or assessment.	MEDIUM	HIGH	EXTREME
Plagiarism Offenses			
Referencing or attribution of work is not clear or adequate, or has numerous errors. Fabrication of sources in a bibliography.	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Inappropriate paraphrasing, or miss-representation of work which appears accidental, unintentional or due to lack of knowledge.	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Significant appropriation of work which appears deliberate and planned.	MEDIUM	HIGH	EXTREME
Unauthorised submission of the same written assignment and/or failure to cite previous work by the same student.	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

*In determining the applicable penalty, regard should be taken to the type and nature of the misconduct and to the educational experience of the student.

KEY	
LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Intervention Re-Submission (for Possible full points)
MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-Submission (penalty to points applied) Automatic Zero Applied to Assessment
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure of Course Removal from Course
EXTREME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusion

Record Keeping

The details relating to allegations of Acts of Misconduct, both academic and non-academic will be documented in writing and recorded on a Misconduct Register in the relevant School office and in the student's individual file. All records of the alleged Act of Misconduct will be retained on file for a period of five years, or for the period of the student's enrolment. The retention time will be longer in the case of an appeal (See *Student Record Management Policy*).

A summary report on academic misconduct will be provided to the Academic Board on a quarterly basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

Both staff and students of the School have a role in maintaining a positive culture that supports the values of academic integrity. The following roles employed with the School have a direct responsibility in relation to Acts of Misconduct:

- College Director
- Academic Manager
- ELICOS Director of Studies
- Student Services Manager
- External Practitioners

It is the responsibility of staff to:

- regularly review and update assessments
- distinguish original work from work obtained through others
- report suspected breaches of academic integrity in accordance with this policy.

It is the responsibility of students to:

- ensure that they do not commit, or collude with another person to commit, Acts of Misconduct
- comply with this policy and the School's Student Code of Conduct

Privacy and Confidentiality

All investigations into Acts of Misconduct, whether proven or dismissed, will remain confidential and will not be disclosed outside of the School. Information will only be provided to another party in the following circumstances:

- the student gives their express consent;
- the investigation gives the School reasonable grounds for concern regarding the student's safety; and
- details of the investigation, including supporting material, is required by law.

Relevant Legislation

As a registered education provider, the School operates under strict laws and regulations. Policies and Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with such laws. Below, please find the most relevant legislation which apply to this policy:

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00271>

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2015L01639>

Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act 2000)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00210>

Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2019L00571>

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182>

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00241>

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies, currently to be found at:

<https://www.murdochinstitute.wa.edu.au/policies/>

- Assessment Policy
- Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Policy

- Graduate Attributes Policy
- Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

Version Control and Accountable Officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Responsible Officer and the Implementation Officer(s) to ensure compliance with this policy.

Policy Category		Academic		
Responsible Officer		Vice President, Academic		
Implementation Officer(s)		College Director and Academic Manager		
Review Due Date		March 2023		
Approved by				
KHE Academic Board				
Version	Authored by	Brief Description of the changes	Date Approved:	Effective Date:
1.0	Quality & Standards Group	Unpacking of one document into existing document	01.01.2014	01.01.2014
1.1	Quality & Standards Group	Format and wording changes to align across all businesses	22.05.2015	15.06.2015
1.2	Academic Quality and Standards Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy retitled to Academic Integrity and Conduct Policy. • Clarifications made to more accurately reflect scope of policy. • Inclusion of contract cheating as well as self-plagiarism as academic misconduct. • Introduction of Appendix 2 – penalty rubric for guidance on how academic misconduct penalties are determined. 	1.12.2016	15.12.2016
1.3	Quality, Regulations and Standards Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On pg 2 under “Non-Academic Misconduct” added the last item “Failure to comply with an applicable law”. 	7.03.2019	11.03.2019
2.0	Quality, Regulations and Standards Team	<p>Policy review.</p> <p>Expanded on the Scope of the policy to clarify to whom this policy applies to.</p> <p>Added to the Purpose to outline the School's principles and commitment to academic integrity.</p> <p>Included a “Policy Statement”.</p> <p>Added more terms to “Definitions”.</p> <p>Updated timelines for various processes.</p> <p>Moved the “Academic Integrity Penalties Rubric” from an appendix to a section within the policy.</p> <p>Included sections on Roles and Responsibilities, Privacy and Confidentiality, Relevant Legislation, Related Policies.</p> <p>Removed Appendix 1, “Report of Alleged Misconduct” to be used as a form.</p>	26.03.2020	01.04.2020