

Academic Integrity and Conduct Policy

Version number	4
Approved by	Academic Board
Date of approval	23/10/2023

Purpose

Sydney Institute of Higher Education (SIHE) shall uphold the principles of academic conduct and integrity as a fundamental value.

This policy establishes principles, procedures, and responsibilities with which all staff and students at SIHE are expected to abide to ensure an institutional culture of respect for academic conduct and integrity is maintained and protected.

Scope

This policy applies to all applicants seeking admission to SIHE and currently enrolled students.

This policy applies to all academic and professional staff engaged in teaching and learning, research, curriculum development, delivery, administration of courses or units of study, and other academic programs and offerings.

This policy is also applicable to third party arrangements or contexts.

Principles

Staff and students of SIHE will uphold an academic culture that values fairness and honesty in all aspects of teaching, learning, and research.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Dishonest behaviour
- Engaging in collusion
- Submitting work for an assessment task that is not the student's original work (e.g. plagiarism, paraphrasing, ghost writing)
- Fabricating answers through use of artificial intelligence (AI) software to write assignments.
- Reusing own work (self-plagiarising)
- Non-compliance with examination rules (e.g. use of forbidden materials, sharing exam questions and/or answers)
- Any act that impairs the learning or study of others

- Any act that is conflicting to study or assessment instructions
- Fabricating research data

Non-academic Misconduct

Non-academic Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, a student:

- submitting fraudulent documents to gain admission
- behaving inappropriately in an activity under the administration or supervision of SIHE
- placing others or themselves at potential risk in relation to health and safety.
 - altering or defacing any document or record belonging to SIHE.
 - misusing, stealing, destroying or damaging any property (including computer and communications facilities)
 - wilfully disobeying or disregarding any order, direction, rule, penalty or condition made by SIHE
 - interfering with the freedom of others to pursue their studies or for staff to carry out their work-related functions at SIHE.
 - harassing or intimidating another because of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender, marital status, sexual preference, disability, age, religious beliefs or political conviction or for any other reason.
 - being in possession of, using or supplying prohibited substances on SIHE premises.

For further information on non-academic misconduct, see the *Student Code of Conduct*.

Preserving Academic Integrity

SIHE is committed to preventing and mitigating the risk of breaches to academic integrity. SIHE will stay abreast of technological developments and emerging trends that increase the risk of academic misconduct.

Any allegations of academic misconduct will be addressed and investigated fairly, equitably and confidentially.

Academic Conduct Training

Academic staff, students, and those seeking enrolment are provided with resources to support the development of best practice for maintaining academic integrity in their scholarly work and learning contexts.

Academic staff are required to complete training and professional development on academic integrity and misconduct that is provided to them. Vital to upholding SIHE's academic integrity values is staff compliance with identifying, responding, and recording academic misconduct. SIHE will provide training to all academic staff on academic integrity and misconduct procedures.

Professional staff will be trained in the internal academic integrity processes and how to assist decision makers.

SIHE students are required to complete a non-assessed online activity at the beginning of their program, to familiarise themselves with SIHE academic integrity and misconduct practices.

The Academic Learning Support Coordinator will develop and deliver workshops on academic integrity and skills for all students at the start of each term and throughout the program and will be available for consultation throughout the program (see *Academic Support Policy*).

Student Rights

SIHE will ensure that students are aware of the disciplinary measures that may be employed in response to conduct breaches, as well as the mechanism for appeals available to students to dispute decisions on misconduct cases.

During any investigation of allegations of misconduct, SIHE will ensure the following rights of the student(s) involved:

- Fair, equitable, and confidential treatment
- The right to have their case heard and their evidence seriously considered
- The right to be accompanied by the support person
- The right to remain enrolled in their program until the outcome of the investigation process is determined
- The right to appeal any outcome of the process.

International students

SIHE will act in accordance with the *ESOS Act* in handling cases of academic misconduct involving international students.

International students are subject to the same processes for all students described above, with additional academic language and learning support services available. However, SIHE has specific obligations in the case that the enrolment or program progression of an international student will be affected, SIHE shall:

- Notify international students of the intention to alter their enrolment in any way and advise them of their avenues for appeal
- Give the student 20 business days to lodge an appeal with the Overseas Student Ombudsman
- Maintain the students' enrolment until the investigation and appeals processes are complete
- Notify the Department of Education of changes to the student's enrolment via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).

Procedures

Identifying academic misconduct

Academic staff involved in learning and teaching at SIHE will monitor student work for academic misconduct throughout the term, but particularly during the assessment moderation process.

Types of academic misconduct, or breaches of academic integrity, fall under the following two categories:

- Minor breaches, which are inadvertent, or as a result of inexperience or ignorance.

- Serious breaches, which are premeditated and committed with dishonest intentions.

Serious academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Large scale plagiarism
- Cheating in an examination (refer to *Examinations Policy*)
- Collusion
- Contracting another person to complete an assessment task.

If a student appears to have inadvertently engaged in academic misconduct, the academic staff member will provide feedback to the student on how to correct their behaviour, refer the student to the Academic Learning Support Coordinator, and notify the incident as a minor incident in the *Integrity Register*.

If following this, a student continues to engage in academic misconduct, it will be treated as a serious breach.

If anything above inadvertent misconduct is detected, the staff member will report it to the Program Director along with evidence to support their claim. Evidence may include:

- A copy of the student's work and the work from which they have plagiarised, or work by a student with whom they appear to have colluded.
- A plagiarism report from the plagiarism detection software linked with the Learning Management System (LMS).

The Program Director will review the evidence provided by the academic staff member and determine the appropriate response.

Investigation of academic misconduct

The following process will be applied in the event that a student engages in serious academic misconduct, or repeatedly engages in minor academic misconduct, despite the educative approach taken by academic staff. The Program Director will issue an email notification of the allegation of academic misconduct. The email notification will include:

- Information about the allegation including supporting evidence
- Information about the investigation process and avenues for appealing the decision made
- A request for the student to attend a meeting with the Program Director to discuss the allegation
- The date, time, and location of the meeting
- Advice that the student has the right to bring a support person to the meeting
- A request that the student confirms their receipt of the email notification and their attendance at the meeting.

A copy of the email notification and details of when it was sent will be kept in the student's record and in the *Integrity Register*.

If the academic misconduct involved more than one student, the students will be notified individually and confidentially. The support person for the meeting with the Program Director cannot be another

student involved in the case.

The meeting with the Program Director will be carried out fairly, impartially, and confidentially, with two academic staff members in attendance. The student will be given the opportunity to review and respond to the evidence supporting the allegation of academic misconduct.

The Program Director will ensure that meeting minutes are recorded and stored appropriately.

Following this meeting, the Program Director will decide on a proportionate response as per the penalties outlined in this Policy. The student in question will be notified within 10 working days of the meeting.

Confirmed incidents will be recorded in the *Integrity Register* and on the student's file.

Records and de-identified reports of outcomes in academic misconduct cases will be provided to the *Student Academic Success Committee*, the *Academic Board*, and the *Corporate Governance Board* as required for monitoring and improvement activities, in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*.

Penalties for academic misconduct

Penalties for academic misconduct will be determined based on the form and extent of the misconduct, the level of knowledge expected of the student, and whether the student has engaged in misconduct previously.

Minor instances of academic misconduct

SIHE ensures that responses to minor academic misconduct focus on educating the student.

Relevant academic staff will inform the student of how their work constituted academic misconduct, and how to avoid similar instances in future. In the first instance, the student's grades will not be affected unless the assessment criteria specifies so.

The student will have one opportunity to revise and resubmit their work in accordance with the advice given.

The student will be referred to the Academic Learning Support Coordinator and will be required to attend a workshop or information session on academic integrity. The student will be informed of what penalties may be applied if they engage in academic misconduct again in future.

Serious instances of academic misconduct

Serious academic misconduct will result in zero marks for the assessment task in question.

Second instances of serious academic misconduct by the same student will result in a fail grade for the relevant unit.

Further instances will result in suspension or termination of enrolment.

Staff misconduct

Misconduct by staff includes, but is not limited to:

- Falsifying qualifications and experience to obtain a position or a promotion at SIHE
- Plagiarising or falsifying data in teaching and learning or research and publication contexts
- Accepting bribes from students for admission or grades

Falsifying student results SIHE staff that engage in academic misconduct will receive a warning, demotion, or have their contract terminated, depending on the severity of the incident.

Appeals

Students may appeal decisions made in the academic misconduct procedures as per the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

The appeals are to be submitted within 21 working days from notification of the outcomes of the investigation process.

Students who wish to appeal a decision should specify one of the following grounds for appeal, and provide evidence:

- The decision was made in breach of procedural fairness.
- The allegation and resulting decision was based on incorrect information and evidence.
- New evidence has arisen since the conclusion of the investigation that should be considered by the Dean in order to make a decision.

When an appeal is made on legitimate grounds, the Dean will arrange a meeting with the student within 10 days of receiving the appeal.

If the matter is still not resolved, students have the right to external complaint and appeal as per the *Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

Responsibilities

The Corporate Governance Board

The *Corporate Governance Board* is responsible for higher education at SIHE, including the monitoring of and addressing any threats to academic integrity. The *Corporate Governance Board* delegates responsibility for approving and implementing this policy to the *Academic Board*.

The Academic Board

The *Academic Board* is responsible for oversight and monitoring over various academic conduct and integrity processes, including but not limited to:

- Appropriate entry requirements and admissions (refer to the *Admissions Policy*)
- Employing qualified and experienced academic staff (refer to the *Workforce Policy*)
- Program content (refer to the *Program Development and Approval Policy* and the *Program Review and Continual Improvement Policy*)
- Assessment integrity (refer to the *Assessment Policy*, *Moderation Policy* and *Examinations Policy*)
- The identification and investigation of academic misconduct

- Secure storage of sensitive information (refer to the *Data and Records Integrity Policy*).
- Assessment tasks must be submitted online. The Learning Management System is linked to a text matching and authorship detecting software that will provide academic staff with reports to assist with monitoring academic integrity and detect any instances of plagiarism.

The *Academic Board* will advise the *Corporate Governance Board* accordingly.

SIHE Staff, students, and prospective students

Academic staff, students, and prospective students will:

- refrain from engaging in plagiarism, collusion, cheating, or contracting another person to write their work, or falsifying research data.
- acknowledge the work of others and use the work of others in a way that reflects the author's actual intentions.
- apply correct referencing and citation practices to all work.
- remain ethical and impartial in academic inquiry.
- support their work with sound scholarship and research drawn from legitimate sources.
- respect the worth, confidentiality and academic freedom of other staff and students.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The *Academic Board* delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Dean and senior teaching staff.

The *Academic Board* will review all periodic reports from relevant committees and staff members, in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*.

Based on these monitoring activities, the *Academic Board*, in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*, will provide a report to the *Corporate Governance Board* and ensure that findings are taken into account in planning, quality assurance and improvement processes.

Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed by the *Academic Board* every three years.

Version History				
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval date:	Revision notes:	Next review date:
1	Academic Board	01/03/2018		01/3/2021
2	Academic Board		Review postponed pending finalisation of TEQSA Guidance Notes concerning integrity and contract cheating	01/12/2022
3	Academic Board	05/07/2022	Review of policy carried out alongside review of Misconduct Policy on publication of the Sector Update: Maintaining up to date academic	28/10/2025


			integrity policies and procedures	
4	Academic Board	23/10/2023	Review and clarification of staff and student responsibilities. Added prospective students to the scope. Refer to misconduct policy for breaches. Combined Misconduct Policy and Academic Integrity Policy to clarify misconduct and breaches. Action item 12.b. if Academic Board meeting.	23/10/2026

End of document: "Academic Integrity and Conduct Policy"

Document ID: 8443, Revision No : (10), Created : January 5, 2020 4:05 pm, By : Nigel Finch, Last updated : October 3, 2023 4:37 pm, Updated by : courtney.nelson@sydneyinstitute.edu.au, Next Review by : Nigel, Review Scheduled For : March 1, 2021

Produced & Printed : Tuesday 24th of October 2023 11:43:38 PM "Sydney Institute of Higher Education ABN 49 618 742 813 TEQSA PRV14323 CRICOS 03866C"

Related Documents

		Academic Freedom Policy
		Academic Support Policy
		Misconduct Policy
		Admissions Policy
		Assessment Policy
		Program Development and Approval Policy
		Program Review and Continual Improvement Policy
		Data and Records Integrity Policy
		Examinations Policy
		Workforce Policy
		Moderation Policy
		Complaints and Appeals Policy
		Third Party Arrangements Policy
		Corporate Governance Board - Terms of Reference
		Academic Board - Terms of Reference