



STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

1. Overview

Skyline Higher Education Australia (“SHEA”) upholds the principle that academic integrity by requiring students to act with honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility as they engage in learning and relies on applying honesty in all scholarly endeavours at SHEA. Students of SHEA are expected to conduct themselves in their academic studies honestly and ethically and carefully acknowledge the work of others in all their academic activities. All students must attend an academic integrity workshop in their first trimester and each academic year.

This policy describes academic misconduct among students¹ and outlines SHEA’s proposed response to instances of academic misconduct that are detected.

2. Types of academic misconduct

Breaches of academic integrity, also called ‘academic misconduct’ or ‘academic dishonesty,’ can include plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, recycling work, fabricating information, and inappropriate use of generative AI which can be deliberate or unintentional.

2.1 Plagiarism occurs when students fail to acknowledge that the ideas of others are being used. Examples include:

- a) other people’s work and/or ideas are paraphrased and presented without a reference;
- b) other students’ work is copied or partly copied;
- c) other people’s designs, codes or images are presented as the student’s own work;
- d) phrases and passages are used verbatim without quotation marks and/or without a reference to the author or source;
- e) lecture notes are reproduced without due acknowledgement.

2.2 Collusion (unauthorised collaboration) involves working with others without permission to produce work which is then presented as work completed independently by the student. Collusion is a form of plagiarism. Students should not knowingly allow their work to be copied.

2.3 Cheating occurs when a student seeks an unfair advantage in an assessment or other written or practical work required to be submitted or completed to receive a grade. Contract cheating, where a student pays a third party to complete an assessment (often called cheating mills), is considered serious academic misconduct. Those who provide or advertise academic cheating services in higher education in Australia (offered in Australia or outside Australia) are breaking Australian law and face penalties of jail and substantial fines².

2.4 Recycling or self-plagiarism is where the student has reused their own work in another subject, at another university or any other institution. Copying from your own work is the same as copying from someone else.

2.5 Fabricating information occurs when a student misquotes or misrepresents what the source claims. Alternatively, the student may have deliberately taken the author's ideas out of context.

2.6 Misusing generative AI, such as ChatGPT, could be a form of cheating. Examples include using generative AI without acknowledgement or verification, including using a third party who uses generative AI. See Appendix A for Guidelines for Generative AI.

2.7 SHEA proactively monitors course delivery and emerging issues to maintain academic integrity.

¹ The expectation of academic integrity in relation to SHEA’s staff is contained in the *Academic Freedom, Integrity and Free Intellectual Enquiry Policy*

² See <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-standards-panel-hesp/tackling-contract-cheating>

3. Notification to students

This policy is explained during the student orientation. In addition, all students must attend an academic integrity workshop in their first trimester and each academic year. During compulsory student orientation, students are provided with information on the culture of SHEA, where students are expected to behave with integrity, and why academic integrity is essential for their course and future. Students will receive guidelines and an explanation of academic integrity and what constitutes academic misconduct and other emerging threats to academic integrity throughout their study at SHEA.

The academic integrity workshops and assessment design mitigate the risk of breaching academic integrity. Assessments, such as presentations, quizzes, peer review activities, and case studies submitted in class, are designed to be resistant to academic misconduct. All subject guides will provide students with clear instructions on avoiding academic integrity issues

4. Prevention and detection of academic misconduct

Academic staff include good scholarly practice, academic integrity, and generative artificial intelligence literacy in the curriculum. Resources on avoiding breaching academic integrity, including referencing techniques, are available through SHEA's Library.

Students must submit all written assessments using the plagiarism and AI detector tool Turnitin. If an educator suspects academic misconduct, they must first investigate, identify, and obtain supporting evidence. For example, an educator will need to further investigate the evidence provided by Turnitin.

5. Allegation of academic misconduct

The Course Coordinator will be notified when academic misconduct, with evidence, is suspected by educators. The Course Coordinator is expected to discuss the matter with the student(s) and allow them to respond to the allegation of academic misconduct.

The student(s) will be informed of the penalties that may be applied if the allegation of academic misconduct is upheld. In cases where it is impracticable for a student to attend a meeting, the alleged academic misconduct will be documented via email to the student. The student will respond in writing within five working days from receipt of the written communication.

Based on the evidence and the student's response, the Course Coordinator must decide whether the allegation of academic misconduct is upheld or rejected, including if the academic misconduct was likely intentional or unintentional. If the student does not respond to the Course Coordinator within the time frame provided, the Course Coordinator will progress the matter according to section 6.2.

The following factors can be taken into consideration when deciding whether the alleged academic misconduct was unintentional, including:

- a) the student is in the first year of the course and has not received a prior warning;
- b) the student is from an educational background where different norms apply for the acknowledgement of sources;
- c) a negligible amount has been plagiarised;
- d) the student has made an inadequate attempt at referencing.

An indication that alleged academic misconduct was intentional may be:

- a) that the students in the cohort were given information on how to acknowledge extracts and quotations, and the student was present and received written information and knew that the use of material without acknowledgement was unacceptable;
- b) that the student had received a prior warning about academic misconduct.

6. Penalties

Once an allegation of academic misconduct has been investigated and upheld, a determination will be made within five working days of the appropriate penalty. Each finding of academic misconduct will be treated on its merits. To detect repeated infringements of academic misconduct, reference to the student's record will be made before the penalty is determined (refer to section 6.3).

6.1 Unintentional Academic Misconduct

Where the Course Coordinator determines that academic misconduct was not intentional, they may take one of the following possible actions:

- a) warn the student and mark the assessment item without penalty (deduction of marks);
or
- b) warn the student and mark the assessment item with a penalty; or
- c) warn the student, request resubmission, and mark the assessment item with or without penalty.

Warnings and penalties must be communicated in writing to the student and will be kept on the student's file. The student shall also be advised of their right to appeal the finding of academic misconduct and the penalty imposed.

6.2 Intentional Academic Misconduct

Before the Course Coordinator determines that the finding of academic misconduct was intentional, they must consider the student's response (if any) to the allegation. If the student fails to respond to an allegation of intentional academic misconduct or cannot convince the Course Coordinator that the academic misconduct was unintentional, the Course Coordinator will determine the appropriate penalty for the finding of intentional academic misconduct, which may be one or more of the following:

- a) the student may be required to undertake additional or alternative assessment (the maximum mark possible being a Pass grade);
- b) a grade of Fail may be recorded for the assessment item;
- c) a grade of Fail may be recorded for the subject;
- d) the student may be withdrawn from the course for a period of specified time;
- e) the student may be excluded from the course and expelled from SHEA.

The most serious penalties (withdrawal or exclusion) will usually be reserved for cases of repeated academic misconduct.

The basis on which the academic misconduct has been determined to be intentional and the penalty that has been determined must be communicated in writing to the student and a copy kept on the student's file. The student shall also be advised of their right to appeal the finding of academic misconduct and the penalty imposed.

6.3 Recording incidences of academic misconduct

All proven cases of academic misconduct are entered into the student’s record in Meshed to allow for verification of repeated infringements.

6.4 Further education

If a finding of academic misconduct has been determined and the student is not expelled from SHEA, the student will be required to receive professional development on appropriate academic behaviour, which may include further academic integrity training.

7. Review of decision

A student may request a review of a decision made under this policy. The grounds for a review are that the decision is inconsistent with this policy. Requests for a review must be made in writing and lodged with the Dean within five working days of the student receiving written notification of the decision. The Dean will respond in writing to the request within ten working days and may confirm or vary the decision. All decisions of the Dean in regard to requests for the review of a decision made under this policy will be reported to the Learning and Teaching Committee.

If a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their request for a review, they may use the SHEA’s Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure.

8. Related Documentation

- POL024 Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure

9. Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Details
1.0	Academic Board	4 November 2022	Document creation and initial approval
2.0	Academic Board	07 June 2023	Amendments that clarify plagiarism in the context of generative AI. Addition of Appendix A Guidelines for AI (e.g. ChatGPT)
3.0	Academic Board	11 September 2024	Updates after review of updated TEQSA guidance note: https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-academic-and-research-integrity Removed procedural details to a separate procedure/workflow. Revised Appendix 1 Guidelines for using Generative AI

Document owner: Dean

Appendix A

Background and Guidelines for Generative AI

The TEQSA Academic integrity toolkit was released in 2020 and is being updated as of September 2024, (see <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/protecting-academic-integrity/academic-integrity-toolkit>). The toolkit includes resources on academic integrity including generative AI, Learning and Teaching, Assessments and other resources.

All SHEA academic staff are the Australasian Academic Integrity Network (AAIN) members. According to the AAIN is a network of over 900 academic and professional staff in approximately 125 higher education institutions in Australia and New Zealand. Members work in diverse roles linked to student academic integrity policy, practice and research. The Network focuses on sharing good practice and resources, seeking advice from other institutions, and developing effective responses to new and emerging threats to academic integrity (<https://academicintegrity.edu.au/>).

In July 2024, TEQSA asked all higher education providers to respond to a request for information on their approach to mitigating the risks to academic integrity of generative AI (refer to PLN010 Generative AI Action Plan).

The Plan addresses the following three strategic objectives:

Objective 1: Proactively provide training and resources to students and staff on the opportunities and risks of generative AI.

Objective 2: Critically review the design of learning, teaching, and assessment strategies and methodologies in the context of generative AI.

Objective 3: Promote and uphold good practices and adopt technologies that support and maintain academic integrity.

TEQSA has provided significant resources and guidance (see <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/higher-education-good-practice-hub/artificial-intelligence>). It is unclear to what extent generative AI will disrupt learning and teaching; however, approaches to learning and teaching must adapt. Academic staff are members of the Australasian Academic Integrity Network (AAIN), a network of over 870 academic and professional staff in approximately 125 higher education institutions in Australia and New Zealand (<https://academicintegrity.edu.au/>).

Technology can assist students by providing them with tools to support their learning. Generative Artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT, has disrupted education and work because it can prepare or produce graduate-level essays, answer multiple-choice questions, write computer programs, write marketing copy instantly, and write poems and sonnets (D'Agostino, 2023; Bowers, 2023).

The ability of generative AI to complete assessments raises the issue of academic integrity. Although some technology detected the use of AI using a probability score (e.g. GPT-2 Output Detector and GPT-zero), possible cheating utilising this technology is unlikely to be the solution (Bowers, 2023). However, SHEA uses the Turnitin AI detector tool for submitted student assessments to support the Educators and Course Coordinator in detecting possible inappropriate use of generative AI.

Academics believe that AI literacy is critical for students and their teachers. AI tools' capabilities and limitations, and consequences are competencies that will be valued in the workplace (D'Agostino, 2023).

Guidance

Generative AI is unlikely to be the last technological development that will disrupt how students learn and how we teach. Employers are using AI for many applications and will need graduates who know how to use AI tools and understand the implications.

Educators and support staff, such as librarians, will also need to be able to use AI and other tools and know their capabilities in learning and teaching and their limitations. The only way students can critically assess tools such as ChatGPT is to use and evaluate them (Tang, 2023).

The teaching philosophy at SHEA is to develop competencies that require higher-order thinking skills, like critical evaluation and creativity. The role of SHEA is to help students understand how to use AI ethically by developing their critical thinking skills and what it means to be an IT Professional. Generative AI, for example, doesn't know if something is true or false, reification where it treats everything, regardless of how abstract, as real. Generative AI responses can provide completely incorrect answers but sound very convincing (Tang, 2023).

Assessments should be personalised and contextualised, making it more difficult for ChatGPT and other similar AI to answer. Multimedia instead of written responses may be another solution (Bowers, 2023). Students should cite AI outputs in the same way they cite other sources. Students should be taught to fact-check AI-generated output. Finally, reflection should be used so that students can understand their own thought processes and motivations for using AI, and the impact it has on their assessment tasks (D'Agostino, 2023).

Review websites such as Washington University in St. Louis (2023) ChatGPT and AI Composition Tools <https://ctl.wustl.edu/resources/chatgpt-and-ai-composition-tools/> for guidance and resources.

Many AI tools are free to use but may eventually be behind a paywall, raising equity issues for students (Swift, 2023).

References

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