

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

Policy Statement

Academic integrity, honesty, and respect for truth and knowledge are fundamental values in higher education. Dishonest academic practices devalue the quality of learning, and threaten the standards of teaching and learning at AICM. This policy provides information about academic dishonesty and sets out a systematic approach to dealing with academic misconduct if and when it is detected.

Definitions

Academic misconduct includes any dishonest academic practices such as - *plagiarism, cheating, fraud, collusion and falsifying or misrepresenting information or findings*. It also includes unethical or improper behaviour and the misuse of confidential information.

Plagiarism - is the representation of another person's work or ideas as one's own. It includes the unacknowledged word for word use or paraphrasing of another person's work; and/or the

inappropriate, unacknowledged use of another person's idea/s. It can include working with other people, and then without permission, presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently (also known as *collusion*).

Cheating - is the providing or receiving of information during tests and examinations; or collusion with others by using their work in what should be a student's own work for assessment purposes.

Academic Fraud - is the falsification and fabrication of, or dishonesty in reporting information, findings or research.

Misrepresentation - is the giving of false or misleading information in academic matters. The act may include falsely claiming credit for past study; falsely stating that thesis material has not been used in another thesis or dissertation.

Improper Behaviour - is behaviour that interferes with students or staff in the pursuit of their academic endeavours. It includes disruptive behaviour in class or institutional facilities such as libraries.

Unethical Behaviour - is behaviour that breaches accepted ethical standards. It includes failing to observe the terms of an ethical approval to conduct research, and/or misuse of confidential information obtained in field education.

Policy Objectives

To ensure that –

- All students are clearly informed about academic misconduct, and told that it is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action;
- All students are provided with information on plagiarism and how to avoid it;
- All academic staff have guidelines on strategies to help prevent opportunities for plagiarism;

- All staff have guidelines for dealing with plagiarism;
- The penalties for plagiarism are clear and easy to understand.

Strategies for the Prevention of Academic Misconduct

AICM employs a range of coordinated strategies to encourage academic integrity -

Orientation Information

During orientation period (Week #1 of each semester) students are provided with information on academic misconduct, particularly on the area of plagiarism. They are also taught that plagiarism is a form of cheating that may include copying someone else's work, downloading material from the Internet, or presenting the ideas of a peer as one's own.

Specialised Teaching/Learning Unit

Students are clearly made aware of safe and appropriate practice in the compulsory first year, first semester unit Academic Writing. This unit is conducted by *Dr Stephen Snook*.

Expectations as per Unit Outlines

Students receive outlines for each unit which specify clearly what the assessment expectations are, and are in turn, reminded of the penalties for academic misconduct.

Assessment Approaches

Lecturers attempt to devise assessment approaches that increase students' engagement with their study and build their confidence in submitting their own original work for assessment. Staff will explain the aims and purposes of assessment tasks, provide prompt, copious, and constructive feedback to assignments and examinations, and act as role models in encouraging students to follow sound practice in both protecting intellectual property and sustaining their own academic integrity.

Detection of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is essentially an ethical issue rather than a legal one. AICM views dishonest plagiarism as a grave offence against universal academic convention.

Academic staff distinguishes between unintentional plagiarism which has occurred from a student's lack of understanding, preparation, skill or care, and that which arises from an intention to deceive.

Unintentional plagiarism may result in a mark awarded based on the non-plagiarised content of the work submitted; a fail mark being awarded; a resubmission of the assignment with a penalty of downgrading the mark based on the degree of plagiarism; formal warning; and recommended academic counselling.

Intentional or significant plagiarism is treated as academic misconduct and subject to more serious penalties including: failing the assignment; an opportunity to resubmit the assignment with a penalty of downgrading the marks based on the degree of plagiarism; a letter of warning that a subsequent finding of plagiarism may result in expulsion; and recommended academic counselling.

Where academic misconduct is detected, the process used to address it will offer a scale of successive stages for its management; not disadvantage one group of students over another;

and be consistent with information provided to all students. Students will be given an opportunity to respond to any allegations and proposed disciplinary action.

The Plagiarism Policy and Guidelines of RMIT University, the University of the Sunshine Coast Student Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy, and the Wesley Institute Policy on Academic Misconduct are gratefully acknowledged in this 2009 review.

Students are referred to the web site of **Perdue University**, Indiana, USA, as an exemplar of safe practice in academic writing

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html

Staff are referred to the excellent resources of –

RMIT University: Plagiarism: Guidelines for Teaching Staff

<http://mams.rmit.edu.au/ru69i233p72.pdf>

Plagiarism: Resources for Staff

<http://mams.rmit.edu.au/z8ual42k4e2.pdf>,

Assessing Learning in Australian Universities website

<http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/>

References and related documents used to develop this policy

Wesley Institute Academic Misconduct Procedure

Australian Universities Teaching Committee Assessing Learning in Australian Universities

University of the Sunshine Coast Student Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

RMIT University Plagiarism Policy

RMIT University Plagiarism: Guidelines for Teaching Staff

RMIT University Plagiarism: Resources for Staff