

- POLICY -

Academic Integrity

Policy Statement

This policy promotes the core values of academic integrity (honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility) among students and staff. This policy sets out definitions of student academic misconduct and outlines TAFE SA's approach to promoting academic integrity and preventing academic misconduct.

Scope

This policy applies to all TAFE SA staff and students (including contractors, volunteers, hourly paid instructors (HPIs) and casuals).

Policy

TAFE SA intends to create an intellectual environment where academic honesty, critical judgment, and independent scholarly learning are well understood and highly valued by staff, students, employers, schools, and the community. Prevention and education are the primary drivers in achieving this.

Students have an obligation to work independently and apply scholarly academic conventions in examinations and all forms of assessment tasks. TAFE SA academic staff must educate their students to study ethically and understand the policies that govern academic integrity. Any form of cheating, plagiarism or collusion, or other forms of dishonesty, devalues the quality of student learning and undermines the academic standards of TAFE SA.

All staff will act with integrity in accordance with the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector and the TAFE SA Respectful Behaviours Policy. Consequences could include disciplinary action and involvement by the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption.

This policy recognises that a distinction should be drawn between less serious instances of academic misconduct which may be due to inexperience with academic study or writing skills, and more serious instances which may involve intentional misconduct and misrepresentation. The former (Tier 1) require an Educational Response and the latter (Tier 2) will result in an Educational Response and/or Penalties.

TAFE SA's established principles for conducting appeals of decisions are to be followed. The process is outlined in the Academic Integrity Procedure.

The policy and supporting procedure acknowledge there is no statute of limitations for academic misconduct. Discovery of misconduct may be detected and acted upon at any time, before course commencement, during or after course completion, and may have admission, credit, pathway, and qualification issuance implications.

Strategic Plan

The Academic Integrity Policy supports the following focus areas of the TAFE SA Strategic Plan 2019-2022:

Innovation in Teaching and Learning focussed on the needs of our customers

The Academic Integrity policy will ensure that TAFE SA is agile and able to continually respond to the ever-changing landscape of contract cheating, plagiarism and other forms of media that negatively impact the integrity of a student's work.

A culture of leadership and accountability

This policy aims to inspire a culture of accountability amongst students to uphold the integrity of their assessments and academic behaviour and the leadership that is needed by TAFE SA academic staff, in particular, and other TAFE SA staff in general, to ensure the core values of student academic integrity are upheld and reinforced.

Sustainable Performance:

Academic Integrity ensures higher student retention rates and better graduate outcomes, which in turn influence students to be better prepared for sustainable employment.

Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Academic and Quality Committee	The Committee is a sub-committee of the TAFE SA Board. It provides advice to the Board on compliance and quality matters relating to quality teaching and learning and receives reports on academic integrity. It oversees the conduct and outcomes of courses and qualifications provided by TAFE SA to raise quality standards beyond compliance.
Higher Education Academic Board	The Board is a sub-committee of the TAFE SA Board. It maintains TAFE SA wide oversight and initiates action (where necessary) on academic standards and quality assurance processes for higher education accredited courses.
Educational Manager	Ensures an environment of academic integrity. Supports and trains all staff involved in the detection of and response to Academic Misconduct to respond in a fair, consistent, transparent, and timely manner in accordance with TAFE SA's policies and procedures. Reports cases of academic misconduct to the Academic Governance Committee, Academic and Quality Committee and/or the Higher Education Academic Board. Acts as a Tier 2 Decision Maker on allegations of Academic Misconduct and determines the appropriate educative

	<p>interventions and penalties (excluding suspension and expulsions).</p> <p>Where the recommended penalty is a suspension or an expulsion, the matter shall be referred to the Chief Executive for determination.</p>
Principal Lecturer/Course Coordinator	<p>Promotes academic integrity by supporting learning and assessment good practice and adhering to the Professional Conduct Standards outlined in the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector.</p> <p>Supports lecturers during the process of managing suspected or evident academic misconduct.</p> <p>Analyses trends relating to allegations and findings of academic misconduct and advises the relevant lecturers about appropriate educational interventions.</p> <p>Oversees the development and implementation of appropriate academic integrity education within the program or teaching area in collaboration with the Centre for Educator Practice.</p> <p>Ensures that all cases of academic misconduct are managed consistently with this policy.</p> <p>Ensures that all records relating to allegations of and investigations into academic misconduct are secure and confidential.</p> <p>Acts as a Tier 1 Decision Maker on allegations of Academic Misconduct and determines the appropriate educative interventions and penalties.</p>
Academic Integrity Officer	<p>The program area or faculty staff member who is nominated as the key contact and coordinator responsible for academic integrity matters.</p> <p>This person plays a crucial role in maintaining academic integrity within the program or faculty as outlined in this Policy and helps ensure that allegations of academic misconduct are responded to appropriately and recorded in the Academic Misconduct Register.</p>
Lecturer	<p>Adheres to the Professional Conduct Standards outlined in the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector.</p> <p>Ensures class norms are established at the outset of a course relating to academic integrity and the behavioural expectations as set out in the Student Code of Conduct, along with consequences of not abiding by these norms.</p> <p>Provides agreed and published class norms for greater consistency in response to classroom management issues by different staff working with the same student group.</p>

	<p>Ensures students are aware of acknowledgement and referencing practices that apply to each assessment task.</p> <p>Facilitates and/or provides mechanisms for students to provide a declaration of ownership with each assignment or assessment task submitted.</p> <p>Consistently and diligently uses available tools and methods to detect academic misconduct. This may include the use of TAFE SA approved and supported text matching tools (e.g., Turnitin) to assist in determining if plagiarism has occurred.</p> <p>Investigates and manages cases of academic misconduct with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. an educative approach to suspected academic misconduct b. consistent and fair judgement. <p>Advises the Principal Lecturer (or Academic Integrity Officer) of reportable instances of contract cheating and/or other illegal practices.</p>
Student	<p>Acts honestly and truthfully in all dealings with TAFE SA and ensures academic work is their own.</p> <p>Where another's work is used by consent, the source will be acknowledged according to the referencing guidelines for the course.</p> <p>Where applicable, each submitted assignment or assessment will include a declaration of ownership.</p> <p>Ensures their work is not copied by another student unless they have given specific permission. If it is suspected that work has been copied without permission, inform the lecturer immediately.</p>
Employer	<p>Ensures that the learning environment within the workplace supports academic honesty and integrity.</p> <p>In addition to remunerated employees, the employer's 'staff' can include apprentices, trainees, and students on work experience/vocational placement. Staff may be part of learning and assessment at the work site or external to the work site.</p> <p>If the employer becomes aware or suspects academic misconduct, they must advise their key contact within TAFE SA as soon as possible.</p>
Third party provider	<p>Ensures the requirements of this Policy and the Academic Integrity Procedure are implemented when delivering to students on TAFE SA's behalf.</p>
Support staff (e.g., from Student Experience, International Unit, Admissions, Centre for Educator Practice)	<p>Help students and staff to understand the importance of academic integrity and assist them through the process where academic misconduct occurs.</p> <p>Maintain academic integrity throughout the whole student lifecycle i.e., from admission through to issuance.</p>

Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic Integrity	A commitment, even in the face of adversity, to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (International Centre for Academic Integrity, 2014).
Academic Misconduct	Acting dishonestly in an assessment task or examination in order to gain an unfair advantage for themselves or other students.
Academic Misconduct Register	A central register that records Tier 1 and Tier 2 instances of Academic Misconduct. Findings of Academic Misconduct will also be used to trace cases of repeated misconduct.
Bribery or Coercion	Persuading someone to act in one's favour by a gift of money or other inducement including the use of force or threats in order to gain any academic advantage.
Collusion	A form of cheating where people work together in a deceitful or secretive way to develop a submission for an assessment task which has been restricted to individual effort.
Continuing Student	Any student who does not meet the definition of a New Student.
Contract Cheating	<p>The practice of engaging a third party to undertake part or all of an assessment tasks or other academic work on behalf of a student.</p> <p>Examples include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > outsourcing, purchasing, exchanging, selling, or offering to outsource, purchase, exchange, or sell any whole or part of an assessment task, whether pre-written or specially prepared, including through the unauthorised or improper use of internet or file-sharing sites; > undertaking part or all assessment tasks for another student, or submitting an assessment task produced, in part or fully, by another person, including a friend, family member, current or former student, private tutor or a staff member; or > impersonating another person or allowing a third party to impersonate oneself for the purposes of undertaking an examination or assessment task. <p>Under the <i>Prohibiting Academic Cheating Services Act 2019</i> it is a criminal offence to provide or advertise an academic cheating service on a commercial basis.</p> <p>Contract cheating cases must be reported to Quality Partnerships who will contact the TEQSA Integrity Unit. The</p>

	Unit will instigate further investigation in accordance with the <i>Prohibiting Academic Cheating Services Act 2019</i>.
Educational Response	<p>A response by the relevant Business Unit.</p> <p>Reflects the consequence of a Tier 1 (Minor) Academic Misconduct where a student will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > discuss their work with academic staff if they are uncertain about how to avoid subsequent breaches of academic integrity; > undertake an alternative form of assessment to provide evidence of attaining the requirements of the component of study; and/or > receive the lowest level of pass for the assessment activity.
Fabrication or Falsification	<p>Altering or making untrue statements in an academic context such as about academic records of attendance, participation or identity. Changing data or other information that is not one's own.</p>
New Student	<p>A student enrolled in a TAFE SA courses at the time of the alleged academic misconduct who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > has been enrolled for two or fewer teaching periods at TAFE SA in either a full-time or part-time capacity; and > has not been found to have committed an act of academic misconduct at TAFE SA previously.
Penalty	<p>Reflects the consequence of a Tier 1 (Concerning) or Tier 2 (Serious) Academic Misconduct where a student can be subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > failing the assessment; and/or > suspension (suspends the enrolment as a student for a temporary period); or > exclusion (restricts a student from class or use of a facility for a temporary period); or > expulsion (terminates a student's right to enrol in TAFE SA). <p>The application of the above penalties depends on the severity of the misconduct.</p>
Plagiarism	<p>Intentionally or unintentionally presenting someone else's academic work or ideas as your own without attributing appropriate acknowledgement and reference to the true author or creator. It is a type of intellectual theft.</p> <p>Plagiarism includes copying either identically, substantially or in essence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > sentences or whole passages of written text or material from electronic resources without appropriate paraphrasing and referencing the original source or writer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > another person's ideas, creative work, images, sounds, computer code or software > another student's assessment tasks in whole or in part, unless this is specifically allowed in the course outline > work completed by several people or in a group and submitting it as your own individual work.
Procedural Fairness	A just and proper decision-making process that is appropriate to the circumstances, where decisions are made without bias, are supported by evidence, and communicated with adequate notice and with valid reasons.
Program Area	An area within TAFE SA which has ownership and responsibility for delivery and supervision of a course or a unit.
Type of Misconduct	<p><u>Tier 1a (Minor)</u></p> <p>An unintentional offence. The academic misconduct could be by a first year or new student to TAFE SA. This could also be their first misdemeanour (requires an Educational Response).</p> <p><u>Tier 1b (Concerning)</u></p> <p>Negligence or recklessness where the issue should have been foreseen; or an intent to gain advantage (requires an Educational Response and/or Penalty).</p> <p><u>Tier 2 (Serious)</u></p> <p>A deliberate and planned attempt to gain academic advantage where otherwise marks would not have been awarded (requires an Educational Response and/or Penalty).</p>

Associated Documents and References

Document Number	Document/Reference Title
PPMF TAFESA 136	Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy
PPMF TAFESA 1012	Assessment Policy
PPMF TAFESA 140	Information Management – Records Management Policy
PPMF TAFESA 70	Course Admissions Policy
PPMF TAFESA 148	International Students: Admissions and Enrolment
PPMF TAFESA 1019	Privacy Policy
PPMF TAFESA 126	Parchment Policy
PPMF TAFESA 188	Fraud and Corruption Policy and Procedure
PPMF TAFESA 1010	Respectful Behaviours Policy
<i>TAFE SA Rules</i>	https://in.tafesa.edu.au/office_of_ce/documents/Attachment2-ConfirmedTAFESARules.pdf Note item 2.5
<i>Student Code of Behaviour</i>	https://www.tafesa.edu.au/apply-enrol/before-starting/student-policies/student-code
<i>Academic Integrity Guidance Note</i>	https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-academic-integrity
<i>TEQSA Academic Integrity Toolkit</i>	https://www.teqsa.gov.au/academic-integrity-toolkit
<i>Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector</i>	https://publicsector.sa.gov.au/policies-standards/code-of-ethics/
<i>TEQSA Act Amendment</i>	The Prohibiting Academic Cheating Services Act 2019 amends the <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i>

Document Control

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