

Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure HEPP01

PURPOSE

This Academic Integrity Policy details the Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education) approach to ensuring academic integrity among its staff and students to uphold high academic standards. This policy also addresses the appropriate use of generative AI and other emerging technologies in academic work to ensure integrity and transparency in research and assessment. This policy complies with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, particularly Standards 5.2 (Academic and Research Integrity), 5.3 (Quality Assurance), and 6.2 (Corporate Monitoring and Accountability).

SCOPE

This policy and procedure are for all Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education) staff and students, in respect of their preparation, dissemination and submission of any form of academic and scholarly work. This policy also applies to external teaching staff, contractors, and any third parties engaged in course delivery or assessment on behalf of SCEI-HE.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Integrity	The capacity to undertake study and research and to communicate findings and knowledge, in a manner appropriate to that particular discipline's conventions and scholarly standards expected at higher education.
Academic Misconduct	Intentional or reckless conduct by which a student seeks to gain an unfair or unjustified academic advantage. Includes, but is not limited to: collusion, inappropriate collaboration, cheating (including contract cheating), plagiarism (including use of AI-generated content where not permitted), misrepresenting or fabricating data or results, inappropriate data sourcing or collection, breaching examination rules, offering or accepting bribes, and using false identities.
Cheating	Collaborating with someone else on an assessment intended to be one's own work, or assisting someone else to commit plagiarism.
Collusion	Collusion is the act of collaborating with someone else on an assessment that is intended to be wholly one's own work, or the act of assisting someone else to commit plagiarism.
Major Breach	Major breaches of academic integrity include the following: 1. Intentional violation of academic integrity policies. 2. Deliberate and planned breaches. 3. Significant scale of misconduct.
Minor Breach	Minor breaches of academic integrity include, but are not limited to the following: 1. Inadequate, incorrect, or inconsistent citation. 2. Paraphrasing that closely resembles the original material.
Plagiarism	Taking and using another person's work, ideas, style and/or creations and presenting them as one's own by failing to give appropriate acknowledgement. This includes presenting AI-generated content (e.g., from ChatGPT or similar tools) as original work without attribution, where such use is not permitted.
Research Integrity	The commitment to honesty, rigour, transparency, and accountability in the conduct of research. This includes the responsible design, conduct, reporting, and dissemination of research findings, avoiding fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other forms of research misconduct.
AI Use in Research and Assessment	The use of generative artificial intelligence (e.g., ChatGPT, DALL-E, or similar tools) in assessment or research must be explicitly acknowledged and must align with the specific guidance and permission set by the academic staff or course/unit requirements. Use of AI without acknowledgement, where not permitted, constitutes academic misconduct
SCEI-HE	Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education)

POLICY

1. SCEI-HE requires its staff and students to observe the highest ethical standards in every aspect of their academic work. This value has been set out clearly in the organisation's Strategic Plan. These standards apply to all staff and students, and the Institute actively demonstrates its commitment to them by recognising scholarly work and addressing all forms of academic dishonesty.
2. SCEI-HE is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity. Its staff are therefore required to adhere to the following protocols, where appropriate, when formally teaching or otherwise engaged with students:
 - 2.1 offer formal induction to students to increase their awareness of ethical academic conduct; and
 - 2.2 teach students ethically sound reasoning, research practice and independent scholarship according to ethical standards.
3. SCEI-HE's students are responsible for the following:
 - 3.1 having a clear understanding of academic integrity and academic dishonesty;
 - 3.2 fully integrating this understanding into any work submitted for assessment, including:
 - 3.2.1 ensuring that their work is in no way falsified or plagiarised;
 - 3.2.2 acknowledging appropriately the work of others by using approved referencing conventions as per the requirements of each assessment;
 - 3.2.3 taking reasonable steps to prevent other students from copying or plagiarising their work, including:
 1. not leaving their work unattended and accessible to others;
 2. logging off computers and removing USB Flash Drives from computer ports when finished;
 3. if working on computers and stepping away temporarily, ensure the computer is locked and work is not accessible by others.
 - 3.2.4 recording all bibliographic information for referencing when using other resources.
4. SCEI-HE's academic and teaching support staff are responsible for the following:
 - 4.1 considering the design of assessment tasks so that opportunities for plagiarism, collusion and/or cheating are minimised; and
 - 4.2 providing students with clear guidelines of what constitutes plagiarism, collusion and/or cheating and how to avoid it.
5. SCEI-HE as a whole is responsible for the following:
 - 5.1 Providing appropriate education about academic integrity and academic dishonesty, and to integrate these into its course design practices where appropriate; and
 - 5.2 Having appropriate measures in place to detect fraudulent or unethical research, plagiarism, cheating or collusion.
 - 5.3 Academic integrity principles will be embedded in course and unit design, assessment structures, and orientation programs, to ensure a consistent approach to prevention.
 - 5.4 SCEI-HE staff and students must uphold the highest standards of research integrity, including proper ethical clearance where required, transparency in research methods and data, and adherence to discipline-specific standards. Breaches of research integrity (e.g., data fabrication, falsification, unacknowledged use of AI) are treated as academic misconduct.
 - 5.5 SCEI-HE uses plagiarism detection software, including Turnitin, as a core part of its academic integrity assurance process. All text-based assessments must be submitted through Turnitin. The use of this software assists in identifying potential breaches, educating students, and ensuring fairness and transparency in academic assessment.
 - 5.6 Course/unit coordinators will provide clear instructions regarding permitted use of AI tools in assessments. Unauthorised or undisclosed AI use is considered a breach of academic integrity.
6. Relationship to Academic Misconduct:
 - 6.1 Academic teaching staff and students who engage in academic dishonesty, plagiarism, cheating, collusion or fraudulent or unethical research and teaching practices will be subject to disciplinary procedure of the Institute.
 - 6.2 Academic misconduct will be addressed under the Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP02.
 - 6.3 Students and staff must ensure the use of AI tools complies with academic and research integrity expectations. Where permitted, use of AI-generated content must be clearly acknowledged. Unauthorised or undisclosed use of AI, especially to generate or modify academic or research work, will be classified as academic misconduct.

7. Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 Given the importance of academic integrity in maintaining the reputation of SCEI-HE and the higher education sector generally, ongoing monitoring will occur at each assessment interval, with a more structured reporting event as part of the moderation process.
- 7.2 The institutional systems used to monitor academic breaches include the use of TurnItIn on all text-based assessments, feedback from placement partners, Moodle discussion boards and other areas that offer insight into student and staff research and assessment processes. General academic breach information (deidentified) will be used to inform the process of educating students about academic integrity and to improve learning and teaching practices.
- 7.3 Documentation developed and held by SCEI-HE regarding academic breaches will include the number and type of incidents and student case management files that will assist in providing a strong assurance that each incident has been effectively resolved and that continuity across cases has been maintained.
- 7.4 As part of the staff development process, academic teaching and teaching support staff will be supported in participating in academic integrity training.
- 7.5 Where SCEI-HE engages with other parties within academic boundaries, clear accountability guidelines will be established from the outset, followed by a documented record of implementation and monitoring. The Academic Board will have oversight of the processes and protocols established and how they are applied. The register of incidents will be provided to the Academic Board for their confirmation that correct protocols have been followed and their direction on any corrective actions. Where third parties are involved in teaching, academic services, or research support, SCEI-HE will ensure contracts explicitly include academic integrity obligations. Ongoing monitoring and compliance reviews will be conducted.
- 7.6 The Institute will monitor the use of AI tools and technologies in assessment and research activities. Academic staff are encouraged to include clear guidance about permitted use of AI in their units. Misuse will be recorded and analysed through the same processes as other breaches of academic integrity.

PROCEDURE

1. Failure to maintain academic integrity

- 1.1 If an academic teaching staff member suspects that a student may have breached the Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure HEPP01, the Course Coordinator is to be notified within 48 hours.
- 1.2 To assist in the identification of potential breaches, the academic teaching staff member or the Course Coordinator must notify the student within 5 working days of receiving the suspected breach. The student will be provided the opportunity to respond within a further 5 working days to authenticate their development of the assessment by providing notes, drafts, and reference materials used. For group work, students may also be required to provide materials that substantiate authorship of sections of an assessment. A formal record of all decisions and communications will be retained.
- 1.3 The use of text-matching software (TurnItIn) is a mandatory part of assessment submission. The Course Coordinator may refer to the TurnItIn authentication report to assist in verifying that original work has been submitted. Where AI-generated content is suspected in a breach, academic staff may request that the student provide process notes, prompts, or AI interaction logs to verify authorship and compliance.
- 1.4 For dealing with cases of failure to maintain academic integrity, it must be determined whether the incident represents a minor or major breach.
- 1.5 The Academic Director, in consultation with the Course Coordinator, will rule whether an incident is minor or major.
- 1.6 Procedure for dealing with incidents of breaches of academic integrity at the minor or major level is outlined in the Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP02.
- 1.7 Internal auditing and moderation is incorporated into the quality assurance system.
- 1.8 Operational transparency should be encouraged and protected to maintain an environment of academic integrity.

2. Appeals

- 2.1 A student upon whom a penalty has been imposed under this policy is entitled to appeal to the Standing Appeals committee on the grounds listed in Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP02 and in accordance with the Student Complaint and Grievance Policy and Procedure HEPP03.
- 2.2 Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of the decision. The Standing Appeals Committee will respond with an outcome within 15 working days. Members must not have been involved in the original decision.

2.3 The Academic Board will authorise a Standing Appeals Committee to manage appeals. The chairperson of the Standing Appeals Committee will be appointed by the Academic Board and should be independent from the management.

3. Record keeping

All cases of failure to maintain academic integrity are to be listed on the Academic Misconduct Register, and in accordance with Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP02, all records of cases must be maintained for a minimum of 7 years or until the parties have graduated, whichever is longer. Records of AI-related breaches will be maintained as part of the Academic Misconduct Register.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure HEPP05
Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure HEPP02
Academic Misconduct Register
Assessment Policy and Procedure HEPP04
Examinations Policy and Procedure HEPP31
Student Code of Conduct HEPP07
Student Complaint and Grievance policy and procedure HEPP03
[TEQSA – Reporting a suspected academic cheating service form](#)
[TEQSA Artificial Intelligence](#)
[TEQSA Guidance Note – Academic Integrity](#)
[TEQSA Guidance Note – Protecting academic integrity](#)

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Australian Qualifications Framework
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011

RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic Director, Academic teaching staff, CEO, Course Coordinators and Students

DOCUMENT AND RECORD CONTROL

Created	Feb 2016 (V1.0)
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