

# Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure

## Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to formalise the approach each of the Think: Colleges will utilise towards addressing academic integrity, including plagiarism, and the management of alleged cases. This policy provides a definition of academic misconduct and plagiarism so that there can be no misunderstanding as to a student's roles and responsibilities with regard to their academic conduct whilst studying with Think: Colleges. This policy addresses the issue of alleged and proven misconduct with respect to the ownership or authorship of intellectual property, or the failure to provide due acknowledgement of the ownership or authorship of the intellectual property of others. This policy is consistent with expectations of ethical academic conduct. This statement forms part of Think: Colleges' broader strategy of promoting excellence, rewarding good performance and managing inappropriate student conduct.

## Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Think: Colleges students. When determining the management of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, Think: Colleges takes into account two major parameters: frequency and severity. Think: Colleges values academic integrity and differentiates between initial academic misconduct and repeated academic misconduct; and, significant academic misconduct and minor academic misconduct.

## Definitions

Refer to *Glossary of Terms*.

## Policy Content

Think: Colleges values academic integrity and acknowledges that work submitted by students for assessment as part of their studies should be their own work. Notwithstanding this, where work submitted by a student incorporates material from other secondary sources in order to support their research/arguments, the reference to these sources should be clear and unambiguous.

It is essential that:

- Unauthorised materials are not taken into exams or other assessment tasks
- Students do not copy other students answers in an exam or assessment task
- Students do not allow other students to copy answers in an exam
- Students do not exchange notes in an exam or assessment task
- Students do not inappropriately obtain prior knowledge of an exam's contents and/or expected answers
- Students do not inappropriately obtain prior knowledge of an assignment's expected answers/content
- Quotations from published and unpublished sources are indicated and acknowledged clearly
- Sources of illustrations, photographs, maps and statistics are clearly acknowledged
- Web-based materials are not directly downloaded into an assessment and are fully referenced like any other source material
- Students do not incorporate materials purchased or acquired from internet sites or commissioned from sources that write assignments for payment
- Paraphrasing of material from others is referenced clearly
- Students do not incorporate materials that have been previously submitted for assessment, without so stating. If inclusion of previous work is warranted it should be referenced fully
- Unless students have been instructed to do so, they do not produce a group assignment
- Students produce work which is uniquely their own and sign a declaration on their *Assignment Cover Sheet* obtained from their lecturer or Think: Student Services.
- Where work is done as part of a group, the submission must include a statement about the way in which the submission was written and by whom and be accompanied by a *Group Assignment Cover Sheet* signed by all members of the group obtained from their lecturer or Think: Student Services.
- Students are frequently referred to appropriate sources of information on plagiarism and good practice in the production of assessments. The *Think: Colleges Academic Writing Guide* provides guidance on avoiding plagiarism.

## Procedure for implementation

### 1. Turnitin self-check

Think: Colleges has acquired the Turnitin Plagiarism detection software, and this will allow students to check their assignments for plagiarism and edit them before submitting assignments for marking. Student assignments will only be reviewed for plagiarism by Think: Colleges after submission.

### 2. Detection and, where appropriate, investigation

Where a lecturer believes that academic misconduct has occurred, such a belief may only be acted upon where there is concrete evidence of academic misconduct. Lecturers are to consult with their Program Director on actions to be taken for each case. Think: Colleges will use the Turnitin Plagiarism detection software to assist in detecting alleged cases of plagiarism. Use of this software may make the case of plagiarism readily evident. It may be the case that the scope and source of the plagiarism and/or academic misconduct are not apparent and require further investigation. In either case, no assumption of academic misconduct may be acted upon without clear and documented evidence of the intellectual property plagiarised and/or the other types of academic misconduct and how it is manifested in a student's work. Lecturers are to interview the student(s) involved to clarify details.

### 3. Reporting and recording

The lecturer must present a written report to the Program Director, who will review the evidence. If the Program Director concurs with the lecturer's findings, then the additional comments by the Program Director will be recorded in the report. The report to the Head of College (or delegated nominee) will be filed in the office of the Head of College (or delegated nominee) so that he/ she may monitor what occurs subsequently to ensure that the rights and confidentiality of all parties are upheld, and that due process is followed. The report and the actions taken will be recorded in the student's The Student Records Management System file by the Head of College (or delegated nominee).

The Program Director is required to check the relevant student records to ascertain whether the student has previously been found guilty of academic misconduct, and to inform the Head of College (or delegated nominee).

The Head of College (or delegated nominee) will be informed of the progress and outcome of any subsequent action, and will maintain a record of the case for future reference.

### 4. Review and adjudication

The lecturer and the Program Director will review the alleged academic misconduct to determine its severity. If both the lecturer and the Program Director are in agreement, a decision will be made as to the precise nature of the academic misconduct, its severity, and, based on the advice of the Head of College (or delegated nominee), where it is a repeat occurrence of academic misconduct. Should the lecturer and the Program Director disagree on any of these issues, the Head of College (or delegated nominee) will be called on to participate in the review and to make a finding on each issue.

### 5. Penalty

#### Intention of academic misconduct

Where a Think: Colleges staff member determines that a student has an intention of academic misconduct, the staff member may use their discretion to determine if the matter of the student's misconduct can be managed with a verbal warning to the student to change their behaviour and/or surrendering any unauthorised materials.

#### Initial and minor academic misconduct

The penalty is to downgrade the marks or deem the student Not Yet Competent for item(s) of assessment. The degree of academic misconduct should be considered when applying the penalty and any mark awarded is to be based on the content of the submitted work that has not been part of the academic misconduct. The penalty percentage to be applied is to be reported to the Head of College (or delegated nominee).

The offending assessment will be returned to the student, together with a *letter of warning* signed by the Program Director and copied to the Head of College (or delegated nominee) that a subsequent

finding of academic misconduct may result in a failure/Not Yet Competent result of a unit of study or in expulsion. This letter will include a statement that the student should undertake relevant reading including a review of the *Academic Writing Guide* to ensure the student understands the value of academic honesty.

#### Initial and significant academic misconduct

The penalty is to fail/deem Not Yet Competent the offending assessment. The penalty will be reported to the Head of College (or delegated nominee).

A *letter of warning* signed by the Program Director and copied to the Head of College (or delegated nominee) will be sent to the student informing the student that a subsequent finding of significant academic misconduct may result in failure of the relevant unit of study and/ or expulsion. This letter will include a statement that the student should undertake relevant reading including a review of the *Academic Writing Guide* to ensure the student understands the value of academic honesty.

#### Repeated and minor academic misconduct

The penalty for a second instance of academic misconduct deemed as minor is to fail the offending assessment. The penalty will be reported to the Head of College (or delegated nominee). A *letter of warning* signed by the Program Director and copied to Head of College (or delegated nominee) will be sent to the student informing the student that a subsequent finding of minor or significant academic misconduct will result in failure of the relevant unit of study and expulsion. This letter will include a statement that the student should undertake relevant reading including a review of the *Academic Writing Guide* to ensure the student understands the value of academic honesty. A third instance of academic misconduct deemed as minor will be processed according to the *Repeated and significant academic misconduct* process below.

#### Repeated and significant academic misconduct

Cases of repeated and significant academic misconduct must be brought to the attention of the Head of College (or delegated nominee). Where the Head of College (or delegated nominee) is of the opinion that the offence warrants expulsion, the Head of College (or delegated nominee) may put a report recommending expulsion to the Group Colleges Director, refer to the *Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedure*. The penalty will be failure of the relevant unit of study and expulsion from the course. The Group Colleges Director approves or rejects expulsion of the student. Think: Student Services issues an *Expulsion Letter* to the student copied to the Head of College (or delegated nominee) and the Group Colleges Director.

Expulsion here means exclusion from any Think: Colleges course for a minimum of two years. The Head of College (or delegated nominee) may decide that the student should fail the unit and be put on probation for two years. If the student is found to have committed significant academic misconduct once more during this period, then expulsion will be automatic.

#### **Overseas Students**

1. If the Head of College (or delegated nominee) intends to cancel a student's enrolment, the student is notified in writing. The notification includes a statement that the student has 20 working days to lodge a complaint or appeal as per the *Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*.
2. The student will be permitted to continue his/her studies until either:
  - a. 20 days have passed and the student has not lodged a complaint or appeal as per the *Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*; or
  - b. The student's appeals through the *Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure* are unsuccessful; or
  - c. extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student applyat which point the student's enrolment will be suspended or cancelled
3. If an overseas student is suspended or expelled, the Head of College (or delegated nominee) must inform the student that the suspension or expulsion may affect his or her student visa and inform Think: Student Services of the change. Think: Student Services must

notify DEEWR via PRISMS within 14 days when the student's enrolment is temporarily suspended or cancelled.

## **6. Appeal**

A student may appeal the decision of the Head of College (or delegated nominee), and lodge a formal academic grievance as per the *Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*. The outcome of the grievance as per this procedure will be final.

## **Publication**

These procedures are to be published for students on the Think: Colleges website and in the Student Handbook to ensure current and prospective students have up to date and accurate information publicly available to them.

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| Responsibility       | Lecturer, Program Director, Head of College, Group Colleges Director, Think: Student Services   |
| Record Management    | Student File<br>The Student Records Management System<br>Committee Meeting Minutes  |
| Reference            | Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure<br>Glossary of Terms  |
| Policy Developed By  | Academic Director   |
| Policy Endorsed By   | Academic Board  |
| Policy Approved By   | CEO   |
| Policy Complies with | AUQA, AQTF 2007, ESOS Act, National Code 2007   |
| Version Number       | 3.0   |
| Revision Date        | Issued - 5 February 2008<br>Revised - 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2008<br>Revised - 26 July 2008<br>Revised - 24 October 2008<br>Revised - 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2012 Header and Footer only |