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ACS
Australian Computer Society
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Academic Misconduct Policy



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Preamble

ACS regards academic misconduct as a serious form of professional misconduct and will not accept unfamiliarity with academic conventions as reason to mitigate penalties.

However, ACS recognises that appreciating the significance of appropriate academic conduct is for some students a learning process and will therefore treat instances of academic misconduct as opportunities to promote professionalism and professional behaviour.

As part of assessment information provided to students on commencement of each unit, trainers will draw the attention of students to the ACS view on, and procedures for, academic misconduct and, where appropriate, give examples of what would constitute academic misconduct in their subjects.

Policy Statement

ACS will consider academic misconduct in light of:

- the extent of the misconduct;
- the student's intention and/or motivation;
- contextual factors such as: stage/level in a program and the student's learning background;
- information provided to the student about academic integrity as part of their program; and
- where applicable, information about a student's prior academic misconduct.

In the event of academic staff suspecting academic misconduct by a student, a preliminary and informal enquiry will be undertaken by academic staff in consultation with ACS Education Program Manager. If the preliminary enquiry fails to discover a satisfactory explanation for the student's behaviour, or a satisfactory response to the behaviour, a formal enquiry will be undertaken involving the Academic Misconduct Committee. A possible outcome of a formal enquiry can be suspension from the subject and/or program in which a student is enrolled or the student can be exonerated.

A student has a right of appeal against the outcomes of preliminary or formal enquiries; first, to ACS internally (see ACS Complaints and Appeals Policy); and subsequently, if the student so wishes and is;

- a) studying a program accredited under the Australian Qualifications Framework, to the relevant education registration authority, or
- b) studying a non-accredited program, to the local consumer affairs office.

This document is included in the online orientation for all ACS programs and enrolling students are required to make a declaration that they have read and understood it. This declaration must be completed before the orientation quiz can be accessed, so students are not able to complete orientation without making this declaration.

Definitions

Academic misconduct includes actions such as plagiarism; breaches of assessment procedures; falsification or misrepresentation of academic records; behaviour disruptive to the learning of other students; inadequate progress through a program of study; and other actions that contravene the principles of academic integrity.

Plagiarism is a specific form and serious act of academic misconduct. For the purposes of this policy, ACS defines plagiarism as:

- a) direct copying of the work of other persons, from one or more sources, without clearly indicating the origin. This includes both paper-based and electronic sources of material;
- b) using close paraphrasing of sentences or whole clauses without due acknowledgment in the form of reference to the original work;
- c) submitting another student's work in whole or in part, where such assistance is not expressly permitted in the subject's information materials;
- d) use of another person's ideas, work or research data without acknowledgment;
- e) submitting work that has been written by someone else on the student's behalf;
- f) in any way appropriating or imitating another's ideas and manner of expressing them where such assistance is not expressly permitted in the subject's information materials.¹

Inadequate progress through a program of study refers to repeated failure, including failure-to-complete, of a particular subject.

Academic Misconduct Committee consists of Director of Education or another operational Director in lieu of the Director of Education, plus 2 other senior members of the Education Team.

¹ Derived from; UniSA Learning and Teaching Unit, "Academic Integrity for Students", <http://www.unisa.edu.au/ltu/students/study/integrity.asp> (viewed 28 October 2009).

Procedures

Preliminary enquiry into alleged academic misconduct

Where faculty have concerns that the action of a student may involve academic misconduct they will discuss the issue with the ACS Education Program Manager.

If the ACS Education Program Manager believes the issue warrants further explanation, the Senior Administration Officer (or, in place of the Senior Administration Officer, another member of the admin team) will notify the student by email of a date, time and other details for a meeting, teleconference, or similar.

The student may invite a faculty, administrative staff member or student of ACS to participate in the discussion.

Possible outcomes of the preliminary enquiry:

If, as a result of discussion with the student, the ACS Education Program Manager determines that:

- no academic misconduct has occurred, no further action will be taken and the student will be notified accordingly; or
- the action of the student constitutes academic misconduct, ACS Education Program Manager will provide academic counselling to the student and may decide on a further course of action, including re-submission of an assessment item, awarding zero marks for an assessment item; or another outcome appropriate to the case; or
- a more serious outcome is appropriate; ACS Education Program Manager will request the Director, Education to initiate a formal enquiry.

If the student chooses not to participate, the ACS Education Program Manager will decide on the most appropriate outcome.

If the student does not agree to the course of action proposed by the ACS Education Program Manager, the student may initiate an appeal against the decision (see Academic Appeals Policy).

Formal enquiry into alleged academic misconduct

The Director, Education, upon receipt of advice from the ACS Education Program Manager following an initial enquiry, will review the case and the evidence provided to determine whether the case should proceed to formal enquiry.

Where the Director, Education concludes that:

- the evidence in the case is insufficient to proceed, they will advise ACS Education Program Manager, the affected faculty, and the student accordingly. No further action will be taken and no information about the case will be recorded in the student's records.
- the action of the student lacked intent, but constituted academic misconduct, the student will be permitted to continue their involvement in the program and the



student, affected faculty and ACS Education Program Manager will be advised accordingly. Information about the case will be recorded in the student's records (see "Recording information about academic misconduct" below).

- there is sufficient evidence to proceed to formal enquiry, they will establish a formal enquiry committee consisting of: ACS Director, Education, ACS Education Program Manager, the Senior Administration Officer (or, in place of the Senior Administration Officer, another member of the Education team). The quorum for a formal enquiry will be three, but must include the Director, Education and ACS Education Program Manager. The formal enquiry committee might meet at a physical location or communicate by teleconference, exchange of emails, or similar.

The documentation that is provided to the formal enquiry committee in considering the matter must be provided to the student who is the subject of the enquiry.

Faculty who made the allegation may present their case to the enquiry but will not serve as a member of the committee. The Senior Administration Officer (or, in place of the Senior Administration Officer, another member of the admin team) will write by email to the student providing details of the alleged misconduct and inviting the student to provide evidence to the formal enquiry committee regarding the allegation. The student may be assisted or represented at the enquiry by an ACS nominee or any faculty, staff member or student of ACS.

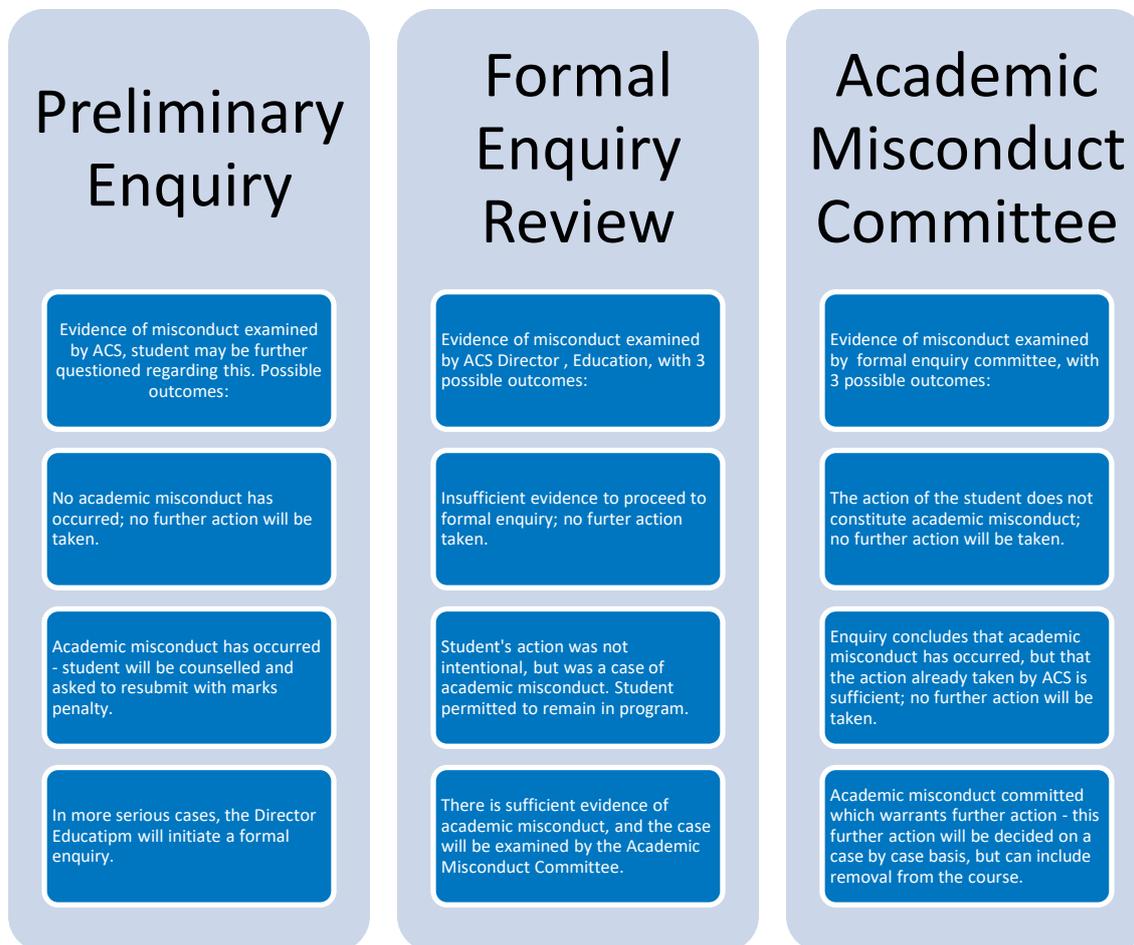
The formal enquiry may proceed whether or not the student responds or attends.

Options available to the formal enquiry committee

- a) Where the formal enquiry concludes that the action of the student does not constitute academic misconduct, no further action will be taken and no information about the case maintained in the student's records.
- b) Where the formal enquiry concludes that the action of the student constitutes academic misconduct, but warrants disciplinary action equivalent to or less serious than the value of the relevant item of assessment, the matter will be referred back to ACS Education Program Manager for implementation. Information about the case will be maintained in the student's records (see "Recording information about academic misconduct" below).
- c) Where the formal enquiry concludes that the action of the student constitutes academic misconduct warranting disciplinary action more serious than the value of the relevant item of assessment, the Director, Education will determine an appropriate outcome and notify the Student Support Officer (or, in place of the Student Support Officer, the ACS Education Program Manager). If the student is also a member of the Australian Computer Society (ACS), the formal enquiry committee may also refer the case to the ACS Disciplinary Committee.

The Senior Administration Officer (or, in place of the Senior Administration Officer, another member of the admin team) will provide confirmation by email of the outcome of the formal enquiry to the student and affected faculty.

Academic Misconduct Process for Accredited Courses



Appeals against outcomes of a formal enquiry

If the student does not agree to the course of action determined by the formal enquiry committee, the student may initiate an appeal against the decision (see Academic Appeals Policy).

Students may continue their program of study pending the outcome of an appeal, unless ACS Education Program Manager is of the view that to do so places the student, other students or faculty at risk (where this occurs, appropriate documentary evidence is to be maintained on the student's file).

Recording information about academic misconduct

ACS will maintain information about academic misconduct for a minimum of seven years from the date of the last incident recorded.

ACS Education Program Manager and the Director, Education will have access to all information recorded about a student when determining whether the actions of that student constitute academic misconduct and when determining an appropriate outcome. No information relating to the case will be recorded if ACS Education Program Manager or the Director, Education determines that no academic misconduct occurred.

Where a student appeals the outcome of a preliminary or formal enquiry, the Appeals Committee (see Academic Appeals Policy) will have access to all information relating to the case and to any other cases recorded against the student.

Professional Year Warnings Procedure

In the case of the PE Online course, which is the part of the Professional Year conducted by the ACS, there is a very specific system of warnings and removal of students.

Academic Misconduct

What constitutes academic misconduct is outlined in this policy. In cases of academic misconduct for the ACS, there is a three-strike policy.

Warnings for Academic Misconduct

First warning

The first time the student commits academic misconduct, this is reported to the ACS and the student is sent a first formal warning by email, with the provider and tutor copied in, explaining the reason for the warning.

Second Warning

If the student commits academic misconduct for a second time, they are sent a second formal warning by the ACS with the provider and tutor copied in, and again the reason is explained.

Third and Final Warning

If a third instance of academic misconduct occurs, the student is sent a third and final warning. This warning informs the student of the action necessary to avoid removal from the PE Online course and a date by which this action must be taken. If the student fails to take the necessary action by the deadline set out in this warning, they will be removed from the course on that date, and they will be notified of this removal, with the provider and if necessary the tutor copied in.

The student can appeal this decision (see Appeals Policy) if they have evidence that they did not commit academic misconduct.

If a student wishes to remain part of the program, they will then be required redo the entire PE Online course at their own expense.

If the student needs to be moved to a later cohort to complete the PE Online course (and therefore the Professional Year) the ACS **cannot** guarantee that the student will be put in the next cohort to start the course again. Students will be put in the next *available* cohort, but this may not be for several weeks because there is a limit to the size of cohorts, so if the cohort is full, no more students can be added. This means that the completion and graduation dates can be delayed for a significant period of time.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a very serious form of academic misconduct, and as such has its own policy and warning procedure in Professional Year.

Extensive guidance is provided to students regarding plagiarism; what it is and how it can be avoided, both in the ACS Online Orientation and in the PE Orientation Week, at the beginning of the PE Online course. Therefore, plagiarism is not tolerated in the PE Online course, just as it is not tolerated in the professional workplace. This is one measure that the ACS has put in place to ensure that students do not intentionally or unintentionally commit plagiarism. In fact, students must complete an assignment cover sheet to submit with each assignment, which declares the work to be all their own with the following declaration:

“I declare that the assignment is based on my own work and that all material previously written or published in any source by any other person has been duly acknowledged in the assignment. I have not submitted this work, or a significant part thereof, previously as part of any academic program.”

Another measure the ACS has put in place to ensure that plagiarism does not occur, is that once discussion posts are posted or assignments are submitted, a program called Vericite checks them for plagiarism against all previous submissions. This alerts the tutor of any similarities between discussion posts or assignments of any current or past students.

In addition to this, if tutors suspect that a student has copied something from the Internet for a discussion post or assignment, they check the content themselves, and are usually able to track down the source.

Warnings for Plagiarism

There is a one-strike policy for plagiarism in the Professional Year. This means that if a student plagiarises and there is proof either through Vericite or through the tutor finding the original source of the information, the student will be given **ONE** warning. The student will be notified of this via email and their PYear provider and tutor will be copied in to that email to alert them that the student is at risk of failing PYear.

If the student then commits plagiarism again, they are removed from the course.

Alternatively, if a student is found to have repeatedly or wilfully plagiarised multiple times they may be subject to immediate removal with no warning.

In both cases students will then be deemed to have failed PYear. Students will be informed of this decision by email with the PYear provider and tutor copied in. The student can appeal this decision (see Appeals Policy) if they have evidence that they did not plagiarise their work.

If a student wishes to remain part of the program, they will then be required to complete the entire PE Online course at their own expense. This will affect their completion and therefore graduation date.

For more information regarding reenrolment fees students should contact their PY provider.

**End of Document
Academic Misconduct Policy**

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Version History

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12/10/15	4	DIT Coordinator replaced by Education Program Manager	DS
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08/17	6	Updates as specified in <i>Internal Quality Compliance Audit Checklist - Academic Misconduct Policy V5 - March 2017</i> document	DS
12/10/17	6.1	Updated accredited and non-accredited courses relating to appeals, removing appeals committee and replacing with relevant bodies. Adding definitions of academic misconduct and academic misconduct committee. Further clarification of warning procedure of Professional year plagiarism.	Glanyce Attard Derinda Smith Dennis Sango Elizabeth Gregg

Approvals

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