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## Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy

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### Definitions (if required):

**Academic Integrity:** Demonstrating the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in all academic endeavours, including preparing and presenting work for assessment as part of coursework or research.

**Plagiarism:** Using another person's ideas, designs, words or works without appropriate acknowledgement.

**Review Period:** Three years from commencement

**Revision No:** 7

**Date of Revision:** 29 October 2014

**Date Approved:** 2 February 2015

**Date Commenced:** 2 February 2015

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out EIT's position on academic integrity and honesty and the consequences resulting from failing to adhere to these expectations.

### 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Institute's higher education community.

### 3.0 Objectives

The nature of scholarly endeavour, dependent as it is on the work of others, binds all members of EIT community to abide by the principles of academic honesty. Academic honesty is an integral part of the core values and principles contained in EIT's Academic Freedom and Code of Ethics Policy. Its fundamental principle is that all staff and students act with integrity in the creation, development, application and use of ideas and information.

EIT regards academic honesty as the foundation of teaching, learning, research and scholarship. It requires its academic staff and students to observe the highest ethical

standards in all aspects of academic work. EIT demonstrates its commitment to these values by awarding due credit for honestly conducted scholarly work, and by penalising academic dishonesty and all forms of cheating.

EIT expects that:

- all academic work claimed as original is the work of the author making the claim
- all academic collaboration is acknowledged academic work and is not falsified in any way (such as when the ideas of others are used, and that these ideas are acknowledged appropriately).
- all academic and professional staff involved in learning, teaching and research are expected to display leadership in this area.

One of EIT's objectives is to produce ethically and socially aware graduates, capable of applying the skills and knowledge they have developed at EIT to all aspects of their lives, as well as to their academic work. Academic dishonesty undermines the integrity of EIT's academic awards and assessment processes, and damages EIT's reputation. It also reduces the effectiveness of a student's time at EIT.

The key principles of this policy are that EIT will:

1. Require all students and staff to undertake their academic work honestly
2. On a continuous basis, use a range of approaches to educate students and staff to practise honesty in their academic work and raise awareness of the importance of ensuring ethical behaviour with respect to scholarship and research
3. Take consistent and equitable action to manage dishonest student behaviours by:
  - a. communicating to students that any piece of academic work can be checked at any time using an appropriate process
  - b. implementing a common remedial and penalty framework across EIT.
  - c. establishing and applying appropriate, consistent procedures for detecting and investigating alleged academic dishonesty, including plagiarism
  - d. providing and communicating the appeal process
4. Apply the appropriate processes of EIT's staff contract agreements to manage alleged academic dishonesty by staff.

#### **4.0 Implementation**

This is a particularly challenging issue with online learning due to the virtual nature of all activities and is of enormous concern to governments and accreditation agencies throughout the world; and thus has to be dealt with firmly and effectively at all times.

EIT regards plagiarism and cheating as serious misconduct. While EIT encourages students to communicate with each other and share ideas and experiences, all assignments (other than specifically denoted group assignments) must be completed independently.

Any established instance of plagiarism or cheating will result in the determination of a penalty in consultation with all relevant academic and administrative staff.

EIT will engage staff and students by:

- using appropriate mechanisms to advise staff and students of the Policy
- developing educational strategies to promote academic honesty
- developing strategies that reduce opportunities for academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism
- designing strategies to increase student engagement with their study, and their ability to submit their own work
- reviewing these strategies at appropriate intervals.

### ***Student Responsibility for Academic Integrity***

When students submit any piece of work they are agreeing that:

- The work is their own work or the work of the group
- They may be subject to student discipline processes in the event of an act of academic misconduct - an act of plagiarism or cheating.
- They further grant to EIT or any third party so authorised the right to reproduce and/or communicate (make available online or electronically transmit) the work submitted by that student for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

### ***Plagiarism***

This refers to the reproduction of someone else's words, ideas or findings and presenting them as one's own ideas without proper acknowledgement and includes:

- Direct copying or paraphrasing from someone else's published work (either electronic or hard copy) without acknowledging the source (or authors)
- Using facts, information and ideas derived from a source without acknowledgement
- Assisting another person to commit an act of plagiarism
- Submit a paper to be graded or reviewed that you have not written on your own.
- Copy answers or text from another classmate and submit it as your own.
- Cite data without crediting the original source.
- 'Reworking' data from another source (such as another student's lab results) without acknowledgement or to pass it off as your work.
- Propose another author's idea as if it were your own.
- Fabricating references or using incorrect references.
- Submitting someone else's presentation, program, spreadsheet, or other file with only minor alterations.
- Falsifying lab or experimental data or observations.

### **Intentional and Unintentional Plagiarism**

The seriousness of the misconduct is determined, in part, by whether the conduct is regarded as intentional or unintentional. Intentional plagiarism is carried out knowingly with an intent to deceive, and is therefore considered as serious misconduct. Unintentional

plagiarism may occur due to lack of familiarity with academic writing practices, and is therefore considered to be less serious the first time that it occurs.

### ***Cheating***

This is taken to include producing assignments (required explicitly or implicitly to be independently produced) in collaboration with and/or using the work of other people.

It also includes cheating in examinations or tests by:

- copying or attempting to copy from another student (or external party)
- attempting to use unauthorised material either in written or electronic format
- verbally communicating with another student or attempting to communicate with another student, fabricating information, data, research or other elements

### ***Levels and Penalties for Student Academic Misconduct***

It is understood that students in their first year of higher education study may make trivial errors as part of their academic learning process. These errors do not constitute academic misconduct if the relevant unit coordinator believes that this is part of the regular learning process.

#### **Factors**

Levels of academic misconduct are determined based on a number of factors that determine the seriousness of the academic misconduct. These factors are:

- The type of misconduct
- Whether the misconduct was intentional or unintentional
- The knowledge and experience of the student
- Whether the misconduct has occurred before

#### **Levels**

The level of academic misconduct has been divided into three categories:

- Level 1 – minor

The conduct is judged to be unintentional and due to lack of knowledge or experience. Examples include plagiarism of less than 10% due to poor referencing and using paraphrasing that is too close to the original; copying of a few sentences without referencing.

- Level 2 – moderate

The conduct is judged to be possibly unintentional or intentional; the student should have sufficient knowledge and experience to understand academic misconduct; but only constitutes a moderate breach rather than a major breach. Examples include moderate plagiarism of between 10-20%, other than a thesis or dissertation; fabricating or falsifying data in an assessment other than a thesis or dissertation; colluding with other students and submitting work as individual work, other than group work that has been stated as acceptable.

- Level 3 – major

The conduct is judged to be intentional and constitutes a serious and substantial breach. Examples include cheating in examinations; major plagiarism of more than 25%, and particularly in a thesis or dissertation; fabricating or falsifying data in a thesis or dissertation.

### **Penalties**

Penalties should take into account the level of academic misconduct and the factors. In particular the experience of the student and whether academic misconduct has occurred before should be taken into account when determining the penalty.

The decision-makers for academic misconduct are:

- Level 1 – Course Coordinator (in conjunction with lecturer) and Deputy Dean
- Level 2 – Dean
- Level 3 – Academic Board

The available penalties may include one or more of the following:

1. A student warning.
2. Requiring a student to undertake learning support or other counseling.
3. An opportunity to resubmit the assessment item or undertake supplementary assessment, with a maximum achievement of a pass grade.
4. Requirement to undertake another form of examination which has improved integrity.
5. A reduction in the marks allocated to the relevant assessment component consistent with the level of academic misconduct.
6. A mark of zero allocated to the assessment item.
7. A Unit fail, with the option to re-enroll at a future date.
8. Exclusion from the Course with the option to re-enroll at a future date.
9. Withdrawal of an awarded degree or diploma.

### **Process**

1. The lecturer or marker refers the alleged academic misconduct issue to the Level 1 decision-maker in the first instance to determine the level of misconduct, together with any evidence, such as an assignment. The issue will be forwarded to each level of decision-maker until the relevant level decision-maker has been notified.
2. The student's record should be checked to determine if there have been any other instances of academic misconduct recorded.
3. The decision-maker conducts an initial investigation of the allegation. The student is invited to attend a meeting to discuss the issue and may bring a support person, or the relevant decision-maker drafts and sends a letter formally notifying the student of the concern in writing and asking them to respond to the allegation within 14 days. The Dean receives a copy of all correspondence regarding academic misconduct.
4. If the student does not respond within the 14 day timeframe, the decision-maker makes a decision on whether a penalty will be imposed; defines the penalty; and determines if any supports are required.
5. A formal notice of the decision is sent to the student together with information outlining their right to appeal the decision.

6. Copies of the notice and subsequent actions are sent to relevant administrative and academic personnel to ensure that it is recorded on the student's file, and assessments are adjusted accordingly.

### **Appeals**

A student who has been judged to have committed an act of misconduct can appeal the penalty decision in the following ways:

1. A written appeal to the Dean (Level 1) or Academic Board (Level 2 or 3) dependent on the level of the academic misconduct..
2. If the first option fails, then an appeal in writing to the Academic Board, who will make a decision; or to the Governance Board if the Academic Board made the initial decision.
3. If a student is still unhappy with the decision, they make appeal to an external party, such as:
  - a. An academic member of staff at the level of Professor who can mediate or arbitrate based in a local university in the country in which the student resides;
  - b. The Administrative Appeals Tribunal can provide an independent review in certain circumstances for higher education students residing in Australia.
  - c. A Mediator service which EIT subscribes to (LEADR) for both local and internationally based students.

Students may also refer to the Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

### **6.0 Related policies and procedures**

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- Academic Freedom and Code of Ethics Policy
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Detection Policy and Software Guidelines
- Integrity and Security in Assessment and Testing, Policy and Procedures – Computer Based Testing
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy
- Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Procedure

### **7.0 Accountabilities**

The Academic Board is responsible for review and approval of this policy.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution to students and the Institute's community via the website and other publications.

*Acknowledgement is accorded to the University of Western Australia in the development of the levels and penalties of student academic misconduct in this policy.*