



Policy & Procedure for Academic Misconduct

Purpose:

Sydney International Business College upholds the principle of academic integrity and independently achieved acquisition of underpinning knowledge and skills. Failure to comply with this principle will result in appropriate and recorded sanctions based on the extent of the breach of academic misconduct. Sydney International Business College uses Turnitin, which is integrated into our E-learning platform (Moodle), to identify plagiarism / academic misconduct breaches.

The Policy & Procedure for Academic Misconduct provides guidelines for Sydney International Business College vocational staff and students on the procedures for handling allegations of academic misconduct.

Sydney International Business College will ensure that:

- (a) Students present authentic work and not claim ownership of concepts or ideas of another person without incurring consequences.
- (b) All reported incidences of academic misconduct will go through a published process with clearly defined lines of communication to ascertain validity of claims of academic misconduct and appropriate consequences.
- (c) Students will be entitled to representation (not including legal) at all stages of the process of determining academic misconduct.
- (d) All allegations of academic misconduct will be assessed under impartial conditions to ensure fair and equitable outcomes.
- (e) All allegations of academic misconduct will be recorded on student files
- (f) Staff and students will be made aware of the Policy & Procedure for Academic Misconduct through induction and orientation.

Academic misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- (a) using study guide material without acknowledgement.
- (b) paraphrasing the work of another person.
- (c) directly copying any part of another person's work.
- (d) summarising the work of another person.
- (e) using or developing an idea or theme derived from another person's work.
- (f) using experimental results obtained from another person's work; and
- (g) in the collaborative projects, falsely representing the individual contributions of the collaborating students where individual contributions are to be identified.

Definitions:

Academic Misconduct

Involvement in cheating, plagiarism or any other conduct that deliberately or inadvertently claims ownership of an idea or concept without acknowledging the source of the information.

Allegation

A reported suspicion of academic misconduct with supporting evidence that requires investigation.



Appeal

A process whereby a student can formally request further investigation into a decision to possibly change an outcome.

Breach

Where a student has knowingly or unintentionally failed to abide by the guidelines set down by Sydney International Business College.

Cheating

Includes, but is not limited to, copying the work of another under any assessment condition without the other person's knowledge; copying the work of another under any assessment condition with the other person's knowledge; unauthorised collaboration of assessment tasks; speaking under test conditions; leaving test papers exposed under test conditions that enables others to view the contents; bringing in concealed notes under test conditions that have been expressly prohibited; receiving answers from another person under test conditions that have been expressly prohibited.

Collusion

Where two or more students incite, facilitate and conceal involvement in cheating and/or plagiarism.

Course Implications

Implications as a result of the process or proven evidence of academic misconduct such as suspension, termination of studies, loss of student visa, real industry/workplace involvement, etc.

Major Breach

A major breach would constitute an intentional act to deceive or willingly participating in an intentional act to deceive and has serious consequences.

Minor Breach

A minor breach would constitute an unintentional act to deceive which has minor impact and can be rectified with appropriate consequences.

Plagiarism (intentional)

Academic misconduct may be deemed as intentional:

- Where the students in the cohort were given information on how to acknowledge extracts and quotations and the student was present and knew that the use of material without acknowledgement was unacceptable
- Where the student has received a prior warning about academic misconduct
- Where the student has plagiarised a large amount of information or failed to reference large amounts of information
- Where the student has engaged in contract cheating
- Where the student uses unauthorised notes, technology or smart devices in an exam.

Plagiarism (unintentional)

Academic misconduct may be deemed as unintentional:

- Where the student is in the first year of the course and has not received a prior warning
- Where the student has limited previous academic experience and has not received a prior warning



- In cases of plagiarism where the trainer and assessor deem that a negligible amount has been plagiarised
- In cases of plagiarism where the student has made inadequate attempt at referencing

Representative

A person (not legal) who provides support for the student during an investigation and interview process.

Representative Sydney International Business College Staff

In cases of a serious breach of academic misconduct, senior academic staff, such as the Academic Manager, will also be involved in the investigation. Other cases may require another PEO to be in attendance at the direction of the Academic Manager.

Suspension

Where a student has been found guilty of a breach and has been denied access to classes and campus facilities for a period of time.

Tampering

Involves attempts to alter examination scripts, class work, evidence of competent or not yet competent or any other academic records.

Termination of Studies

Where a student has been found guilty of a serious academic misconduct breach and has had their studies terminated at Sydney International Business College.

Responsible Persons:

- Trainer and Assessor (s)
- Student(s)
- Academic Manager
- PEO (where required)
- Sydney International Business College Representatives (where requested)

Documents Involved:

- Evidence of submitted work that involves cheating, intentional plagiarism or unintentional plagiarism
- Supporting evidence of cheating, intentional plagiarism or unintentional plagiarism
- Letter to start investigation process
- Interview form (signed by students and staff)
- Letter informing student of final outcome

Procedures:

Plagiarism:

- a) The trainer / assessor receives a student assignment, test etc with evidence of plagiarism including, but not limited to, the following:
 - i. Work submitted was either entirely or partially done by a person other than the person submitting the assignment



- ii. Does not reference the original author leading to misrepresentation of ideas/concepts
 - iii. Whole work has been copied from another student assignment, article, website, etc. Sydney International Business College will use electronic text matching software called as Turnitin to detect similarities from students' completed assessments.
 - iv. Writing style lacks consistency indicating multiple authors with no reference to the original author
- b) The trainer/assessor must collect all evidence of the breach. Evidence includes:
- i. student submitted work
 - ii. evidence of plagiarism
- c) In cases of a serious breach with verifiable evidence, the trainer/assessor must first consult the Academic Manager to decide upon a possible course of action.
- d) The Academic Manager formally writes to the student to attend an interview. The letter to the student must include:
- i. details of the alleged academic misconduct under investigation
 - ii. summary of evidence of plagiarism
 - iii. provide the student with the opportunity to have a representative attend the interview
 - iv. day, date, time, location and representative Sydney International Business College staff involved in the interview
- e) In cases where more than one student is involved and evidence indicates possible collusion with other students, they will also receive a formal letter to attend an interview conducted on the same day. The interview will not be held at the same time as other students involved in the allegation.
- f) During the interview, the following process will occur:
- i. Trainer/assessor will provide student with details and evidence of alleged plagiarism
 - ii. Student will have an opportunity to present their case with evidence
 - iii. Interview notes must include the issue, discussion and actions required with timeframes
 - iv. Academic manager, trainer/assessor and student all sign the interview form
 - v. Signed copies for both the student and staff at Sydney International Business College.
- g) In cases of collusion, all students suspected of involvement will be interviewed separately by the same representative Sydney International Business College staff following the stated formal interview procedures.
- h) Representative Sydney International Business College staff must then follow the process for confirming allegations or finding that a penalty is not warranted. Refer to sections Confirming Allegations and Allegations not Warranted.



- i) In cases where termination of a student(s) studies has been recommended, final approval must be gained from Sydney International Business College Academic Manager and PEO.
- j) The outcome of the investigation and resulting actions will be formally communicated to the student in writing within 10 working days.
- k) Students may appeal any decision in writing to Academic Manager and activate the appeals process
- l) Where a student has requested an appeal, the same interview process will be implemented. The Academic Manager will refer the matter to the PEO to ensure that students have an opportunity for independent appeal.
- m) All letters, interview notes and evidence of plagiarism must be placed on the student file

Cheating during tests:

- a) Cheating includes but is not limited to evidence of:
 - i. Communicating during an examination, including verbal or written
 - ii. Bringing in unauthorised information into an examination room including written and electronic sources of information.
 - iii. Leaving examination papers exposed for others to view.
 - iv. Persistent attempts to view other students' examination papers
 - v. Receiving unauthorised notes, papers etc that relate to the examination
 - vi. Providing unauthorised notes, papers etc that relate to the examination.
- b) The trainer/assessor must collect all evidence of cheating. Evidence includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Unauthorised written communication
 - ii. Unauthorised electronic communication
- c) In cases where students have verbally communicated or provided/received unauthorised notes, papers etc that relate to the examination, both students will immediately have their papers and communication retrieved and quietly removed from the test room to ensure stability for the other students still doing the test.
- d) The trainer/assessor provides the evidence to the Academic Manager as soon as the examination period has finished.
- e) The Academic Manager formally writes to the student to attend an interview. The letter to the student must include:
 - i. details of the alleged cheating during the examination
 - ii. provide the student with the opportunity to have a representative attend the interview



- iii. day, date, time, location and representative Sydney International Business College Staff involved in the interview
- f) In cases where more than one student is involved and evidence indicates possible collusion with other students, they will also receive a formal letter to attend an interview conducted on the same day. The interview will not be held at the same time as other students involved in the allegation.
- g) During the interview, the following process will occur:
 - i. Representative Sydney International Business College staff will provide student with details & evidence of alleged cheating
 - ii. Student will have an opportunity to present their case with evidence
 - iii. Interview notes must include the issue, discussion and actions required with timeframes
 - iv. Academic Manager, trainer/assessor and student both sign the interview form
 - v. Signed copies for both the student and Sydney International Business College
- h) In cases of collusion, all students suspected of involvement in cheating during the examination will be interviewed separately by the same representative Sydney International Business College following the same interview procedures.
- i) Representative Sydney International Business College staff must then follow the process for confirming allegations or finding that a penalty is not warranted. Refer to sections Confirming Allegations and Allegations not Warranted.
- j) In cases where termination of a student(s) studies has been recommended, final approval must be gained from the Academic Manager and PEO.
- k) The outcome of the investigation and resulting actions will be formally communicated to the student in writing within 10 working days.
- l) Students may appeal any decision in writing to the Academic Manager within 10 working days.
- m) Where a student has requested an appeal, the same interview process will be implemented. The Academic Manager will refer the matter to the PEO to ensure that students have an opportunity for independent appeal
- n) All letters, interview notes and evidence of cheating must be placed on the student file.



Tampering:

- a) Tampering includes but is not limited to evidence of unauthorised tampering of:
 - i. Test papers
 - ii. Class work
 - iii. grades
 - iv. class records
- b) The trainer must collect all evidence of tampering.
- c) In cases of a serious breach with verifiable evidence, the trainer/assessor must first consult the Academic Manager to decide upon possible course of action and representative Sydney International Business College.
- d) The Academic Manager formally writes to the student to attend an interview. The letter to the student must include:
 - i. details of the alleged tampering under investigation
 - ii. summary of evidence of tampering
 - iii. provide the student with the opportunity to have a representative attend the interview
 - iv. day, date, time, location and representative Sydney International Business College staff involved in the interview
- e) In cases where more than one student is involved and evidence indicates possible collusion with other students, they will also receive a formal letter to attend an interview conducted on the same day. The interview will not be at the same time as other students involved in the allegation.
- f) During the interview, the following process will occur:
 - i. Trainer/assessor will provide student with details & evidence of alleged tampering
 - ii. Student will have an opportunity to present their case with evidence
 - iii. Interview notes must include the issue, discussion and actions required with timeframes
 - iv. Academic Manager, trainer/assessor and student all sign the interview form
 - v. Signed copies for both the student and Sydney International Business College.
- g) Representative Sydney International Business College staff must then follow the process for confirming allegations or finding that a penalty is not warranted. Refer to sections Confirming Allegations and Allegations not Warranted.
- h) In cases where representative Sydney International Business College staff is comprised of trainers/assessors, they will meet with the Academic Manager to present the degree of the breach and recommended course of action based on confirmation of allegation prior to gaining the Academic Manager approval for implementation.
- i) In cases where termination of a student(s) studies has been recommended, final approval must be gained from the Academic Manager and PEO.



- j) The outcome of the investigation and resulting actions will be formally communicated to the student in writing within 10 working days.
- k) Students may appeal any decision in writing to the Academic Manager within 10 working days.
- l) Where a student has requested an appeal, the same interview process will be implemented. The Academic Manager will refer the matter to the PEO to ensure that students have an opportunity for independent appeal.
- m) All letters, interview notes and evidence of tampering must be placed on the student file

Confirmation of Allegations:

- a) Where there is confirmation of academic misconduct, the following may be applied
 - i. written warning
 - ii. reprimand
 - iii. formal apology if more than one student is involved and coercion is a key factor
 - iv. resubmit work so that it meets required academic standards
 - v. new assessment item
 - vi. resit a different version of the exam
 - vii. adjustment of grade
 - viii. fail grade and the student is required to repeat the unit of study (awarding zero marks in assignment)
 - ix. a fine
- b) If it is a student's second major breach, the following may be applied:
 - i. suspension
 - ii. termination of studies / exclusion from the college
- c) In all cases, details of the academic misconduct will be kept on the student's record/file.

Allegations not warranted:

- a) In cases where there is insufficient evidence, no penalty may be imposed but suspicions of academic misconduct can be kept on the student's record/file.
- b) If the student is involved in academic misconduct again at a later date, then the first allegations will form a valid part of the investigation and can be regarded with the seriousness of a second breach.



Factors to Consider:

The following factors need to be considered when deciding the degree of seriousness of academic misconduct and the level of consequence to be implemented:

- a) Degree of the breach and if it was a major or minor breach
- b) Whether the breach was intentional or unintentional
- c) Course level of the student and what stage of their studies they are at the time of the offence
- d) Consider the implications such as cancellation of student visa under disciplinary grounds
- e) Where there is evidence of collusion, ascertain degree of coercion (if any), leaders, followers, etc.
- f) Extent of remorse shown by the student
- g) History of serious or unsatisfactory course progress patterns
- h) Take into account the cultural background of students, where appropriate
- i) Consequence must be dealt with in relation to the breach to ensure fairness and equity.
- j) Consistent handling to ensure that roles carried out by representative Sydney International Business College staff is consistent across all cases of academic misconduct.

Appeals:

A student may appeal against a decision made under this policy. Appeals must be made as prescribed in the appeals process outlined in the Sydney International Business College Policy for Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.



Document Control

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Person Responsible for implementation:	Academic Manager
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