Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy

1. Purpose

Lincoln Institute of higher Education Australia (LIHE) is committed to deliver high quality higher education and protect the integrity and reputation of its courses and qualifications.

This policy sets out the principles for ensuring academic integrity and provides frameworks for both the promotion of academic integrity among students and staff and for dealing with instances of alleged academic misconduct.

LIHE has developed a framework for explicitly communicating the importance of academic integrity for staff and students, and for identifying and addressing instances of academic misconduct in a manner that is proportionate to the incident.

The policy also outlines the procedures for identifying, investigating, and taking appropriate action in relation to academic misconduct by staff and students, in a manner proportionate to the severity of the incident. It also outlines avenues for appeal and specific obligations of LIHE towards students.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all students enrolled at LIHE and to staff dealing with matters related to misconduct.

3. Principles

Academic integrity is fundamental to the academic quality and the reputation of LIHE and requires students and staff to act in accordance with the principles of honesty, fairness, trust and responsibility.

It is about upholding ethical standards in all aspects of academic work and having respect for knowledge and its development including teaching, learning and assessments. Dishonest practices contravene academic values, compromise and devalue the quality of learning.

LIHE's overall policy framework promotes academic integrity throughout the student lifecycle including student enrolment, teaching, assessments, progression and grades, and graduation.

LIHE's approach to academic integrity is primarily aimed at educating students about expectations for academic writing and the appropriate use and acknowledgement of

intellectual material, including authorship

LIHE classifies breaches of academic integrity into two categories – Minor Breaches (***Poor Academic Practice***) and Major Breaches (***Academic Misconduct***) but does not set down strict rules on when a particular breach of academic integrity might be considered minor or major.

Minor breaches are generally inadvertent or because of inexperience or lack of understanding, whilst serious breaches are committed with dishonest intentions.

Academic misconduct is conduct that allows an individual or group to obtain an unfair advantage through unethical practices. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, actions such as:

- plagiarism (including self-plagiarism)
- collusion
- cheating in exam
- inappropriate use of generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI)
- contract cheating, and
- providing documents which are false, misleading or deceptive (e.g. altered medical certificates and falsified academic records)

LIHE will provide academic staff with the necessary support to monitor and detect academic misconduct.

LIHE will provide students with the necessary support and information to prevent instances of academic misconduct and avoid repeat instances of engaging in academic misconduct.

All instances of alleged misconduct will be:

- dealt with on its merits in consideration of the circumstances surrounding the case and in accordance with this policy
- confidentially investigated, and no record of misconduct will be associated with a student or staff member until the investigation is complete, and
- dealt with fairly and equitably and with due regard to the students' privacy and the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness

Students will be informed of their rights and responsibilities in relation to academic misconduct and its investigation, and no guilt will be assigned to the students unless they admit to the misconduct, or the investigation determines that they have engaged in misconduct.

Students are also made aware (e.g. through policies, orientation, student handbook, subject outlines) of the disciplinary measures that may be applied in response to academic misconduct, as well as the mechanism for appeal available to students, to dispute decisions on academic misconduct cases.

When a student is determined to have committed academic misconduct, the determination and penalty will be recorded on the student's record.

4. Promoting Academic Integrity

LIHE promotes academic integrity through its academic governance, policies, processes and activities. LIHE academic governance arrangements and policies support academic integrity across teaching, learning and assessments. The Academic Board has oversight responsibility for academic integrity through the Teaching and Learning Committee, and has approved:

- Policies (e.g. Assessment Policy, Examinations Policy)
- Training for academic staff to monitor and identify potential academic misconduct
- Software for detecting plagiarism and academic dishonesty, and
- Information and training for students on academic integrity and misconduct

LIHE adopts a proactive and educative approach to academic integrity through student and staff training, assessment design, assessment security measures, and ongoing communication. Preventative measures are designed not only to deter misconduct, but also to build student understanding of academic expectations and reduce the likelihood of repeat breaches.

4.1. Staff Training

LIHE recognises that academic staff play a pivotal role in promoting responsible academic behaviour in students. LIHE will provide academic staff with training and guidance on academic integrity expectations, assessment design that supports integrity, the identification of poor academic practice and academic misconduct, the appropriate and inappropriate use of Gen AI, and the consistent application of this Policy. Staff training will also support academic staff to educate students about responsible academic conduct and to respond to suspected breaches in a fair, proportionate and educative manner.

4.2. Student Academic Integrity Module

LIHE requires all students to complete an online Academic Integrity Module in the first 4 weeks of the commencing semester. The training module is aimed at assisting students gain understanding and awareness of academic integrity and develop a culture of academic integrity.

Completion of the module will be recorded and monitored. Students who do not complete the module within the required timeframe may be subject to follow-up action and directed to complete the module before further assessment submission. Students identified as having engaged in poor academic practice or academic misconduct may also be required to complete further academic integrity training or a refresher module.

4.3. Orientation

LIHE's Orientation Program incorporates a dedicated section on Academic Integrity as part of its effort to create awareness on the importance of academic integrity and the consequences of misconduct. The orientation program clarifies student responsibilities about academic integrity and provides information on breaches and consequences of breaches.

Orientation materials will include guidance on academic writing, referencing, collaboration, examination conduct, and the responsible use of Gen AI tools.

4.4. Student Handbook

LIHE Student Handbook has a dedicated section on academic integrity. The Student Handbook will provide practical guidance on academic integrity expectations, examples of poor academic practice and academic misconduct, the appropriate use of Gen AI, available support services, and the consequences of repeat misconduct.

4.5. Regular announcements to students through LMS and Notice Boards

To promote a culture that values academic integrity, LIHE will provide regular reminders through the LMS and notice boards regarding academic integrity expectations, referencing practices, examination rules, the appropriate use of Gen AI, support services available to students, and the consequences of repeat misconduct. These communications will be used at key points in the semester, particularly before major assessments and examinations.

4.6. Monitoring and Reducing Recurrence of Misconduct

LIHE will monitor trends in academic misconduct, including the type, frequency and recurrence of breaches, through reports to the Teaching and Learning Committee, Academic Board and Corporate Governance Board. This information will be used to identify areas of risk and inform improvements to orientation, student learning support, academic integrity training, assessment design, invigilation, and academic staff development.

Where a student has engaged in poor academic practice or academic misconduct, LIHE may require the student to undertake additional academic integrity education, attend support workshops, or comply with other educative interventions aimed at reducing recurrence.

4.7. Invigilation and Examination Rules

LIHE will have internal and external invigilators for final exams and conduct exams in accordance with the *Examinations Policy* to deter and prevent cheating.

5. Student Responsibilities

Students are required to:

- familiarise themselves with LIHE Student Code of Conduct, Student Handbook and the policies and processes, and know the conduct expected of them
- act in accordance with this policy on academic integrity in the preparation, conduct and submission of assessment tasks
- submit only work which is their own, or which properly acknowledges the thoughts, ideas, findings and/or work of others. This may include:
    - stating clearly in the appropriate form where they found any material on which they have based their work, using an appropriate referencing system
    - acknowledging the people whose thoughts, ideas, designs, data, computer programs or other creative work they have extracted, developed or summarised, even if they put these into their own words, data or designs
    - avoiding excessive copying of passages or works of another author, even where the source is acknowledged. The student should use another form of words to show that the student has thought about the material and understood it, but state clearly where they found the ideas
    - the appropriate use of Gen AI technologies including but not limited to ChatGPT, Gemini, Phind. Students are expected to use these as tools to generate and/or explore ideas and cite any work copied or paraphrased
- retain materials which would demonstrate evidence of their authorship of assessable work (e.g. record of library borrowings, addresses of internet sites accessed, notes compiled, drafts of an assessment task),
- retain as evidence and include in a bibliography, links to chat histories with Gen AI used to develop assessments and
- complete assessment guidelines and submission instructions for all non-examination assessment tasks.

6. Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct may refer to any form of academic dishonesty by a student relevant to the student's learning. This may include plagiarism or any other dishonest conduct by a student to gain academic or general advantage; Dishonesty in the preparation or presentation of any assessable work is regarded as student academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- any action contrary to the study and assessment instructions given by LIHE academic staff
- any attempt to submit work for an assessment that is not the student's own (e.g. plagiarism, paraphrasing, non-referencing, ghost writing)
- misrepresenting data or information incorrectly, improperly or falsely
- falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise
- re-using one's own work without appropriate acknowledgement

- misleading ascription of authorship (including claiming authorship of parts of a group assignment prepared by other students)
- behaving deceitfully or dishonestly in examinations, in the preparation of assessable items and during in-class tests
- using unauthorised equipment (e.g. smart watches) or material in an assessment item
- deceitful behaviour to gain unfair or dishonest advantage either for self or for another person
- any form of collusion between students or other individuals other than authorised collaboration
- any act that may impair or hinder the learning or assessment of others
- using another person to undertake an examination or assessment item in your name
- assisting or attempting to assist any other student to act dishonestly in relation to an assessment or part of an assessment
- unacknowledged use of Gen AI and/or without supporting evidence such as chat histories

7. Procedure for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct

LIHE manages allegations of academic misconduct through a staged process that includes identification of potential misconduct, investigation where required, determination of outcome, application of any educative or disciplinary response, recordkeeping, reporting, and appeal. Coursework-only matters are managed under this Policy. Research-related matters are managed under the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy and Procedure.

7.1. Identifying Academic Misconduct

Academic staff involved in teaching and learning at LIHE will monitor student work for academic misconduct throughout the semester, but particularly during the assessment process.

Where the breach is 'poor academic practice', the goal is to try and educate the student to succeed in their studies and not repeat a mistake. If academic misconduct is found, the penalties are ‘punitive’ rather than ‘educative’.

If a breach of academic integrity is detected, the staff member will report the matter to the ‘Course Coordinator’ along with evidence to support their claim. Evidence may include:

- A copy of the student’s work and the work from which they have plagiarised or work by another student with whom they appear to have colluded
- A plagiarism report from the plagiarism detection software linked with the LMS

The Course Coordinator will review the evidence provided by the academic staff member and determine whether:

- a breach has occurred; or

- poor academic practice has occurred; or
- it appears to be more serious than poor academic practice and could potentially be academic misconduct.

In making the above determination, the Course Coordinator will consider the following:

7.1.1. Mitigating circumstances

If there are mitigating circumstances that are provided in an explanation from the student, these can be considered along with other factors. Examples include where the student:

- is at an early stage of an undergraduate program of study, and was not aware that their actions constituted a breach of academic integrity
- is at an early stage of their studies and has previously studied in a foreign culture that may have had different approaches to academic integrity, and
- had a personal, emotional, or health issue that can go some way to explaining the actions, and/or is likely to make the breach a one-off

7.1.2. Significance of the breach

If the breach is plagiarism, the extent of plagiarism. Few short sentences not appropriately referenced might be poor academic practice. However large amount of text, especially that form the core part of the argument, in an essay or the response to a set of questions might be seen as more serious.

7.1.3. Intention and past record

It can be hard to establish if the breach was intentional. If it appears the breach was unintended, careless, inadvertent or uninformed then it could be poor academic practice. However, if it appears that the breach might have been intentional, it is quite possible that it might be more significant than poor academic practice.

In addition to intent, it is also worth considering how contrite or remorseful a student appears to be regarding their actions. If they appear surprised and apologetic, and willing to engage in redemptive behaviour, then an educative approach may be more appropriate.

However, if the student is simply distressed because they were caught and are argumentative, then it strengthens the case for it to be academic misconduct. Additionally, if the student has breached academic integrity previously, then it is more likely to be academic misconduct rather than poor academic practice.

7.1.4. Grounds for potential academic misconduct

It may be appropriate to escalate a case as potential academic misconduct, rather than find poor academic practice, where one or more of the following appear to apply:

- there is evidence that the student's conduct was knowing, intentional, reckless, willful, or premeditated
- the student's conduct was a repeat breach
- there are no compelling or adequate mitigating circumstances to explain the conduct
- the student's explanation is inconsistent with other compelling evidence, or
- the student's conduct is otherwise inexcusable.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting work with substantial content of plagiarism
- Cheating in an examination
- Collusion
- Contracting another person to complete an assessment task.
- Inappropriate and/or unacknowledged use of Gen AI

In case of a student who is deemed to have inadvertently breached academic integrity, will be counselled by an academic staff member on what is the correct behaviour, and referred to the Course Coordinator.

7.2. Investigation of Academic Misconduct

Where an academic staff member identifies a matter as a potential case of academic misconduct and refers it to the Course Coordinator, the Course Coordinator will review the evidence and determine whether the matter should proceed to formal investigation.

The Course Coordinator will issue an email notification of the allegation of academic misconduct. The email notification will include:

- Information about the investigation process and avenues for appealing the decision made
- A request for the student to attend a meeting with the Course Coordinator to discuss the allegation
- The date, time, and location of the meeting
- Advice that the student has the right to bring a support person to the meeting
- A request that the student confirms receipt of the email notification and their attendance at the meeting.

A copy of the email notification and details of when it was sent will be kept in the student's record.

If the academic misconduct involved more than one student, the students will be notified individually and confidentially. The support person for the meeting with the Course Coordinator shall not be another student involved in the case.

The meeting with the Course Coordinator will be carried out fairly, impartially, and confidentially, with two academic staff members in attendance. The student will be given the opportunity to review and response to the evidence supporting the allegation of academic misconduct.

The Course Coordinator will ensure that meeting minutes are recorded and stored appropriately.

Following this meeting, the Course Coordinator will decide on a proportionate response as per the section on penalties below. The response must be approved by the Course Coordinator. The student in question will be notified of the outcome within 5 working days of the meeting.

Records and reports of outcomes in academic misconduct cases will be provided to the Teaching and Learning Committee, Academic Board, and Corporate Governance Board as required for monitoring and improvement of activities.

7.3. Penalties for Academic Misconduct

Penalties for academic misconduct will be determined based on the form and extent of the misconduct, the level of knowledge expected of the student, and whether the student has engaged in misconduct previously.

In any semester, serious academic misconduct will result in zero marks for the assessment task in question. Second instances of serious academic misconduct by the same student will result in a 'Fail' grade for the relevant subject, and further instances will result in suspension or termination of enrolment.

Academic misconduct of less serious nature will be handled differently based on the student's semester of study, as outlined below.

7.3.1. First semester of study

For less serious instances of academic misconduct in the first semester of study:

- The student's grades will not be affected unless the grading rubric specifies so
- A relevant academic staff member will inform the student of how their work constituted academic misconduct, and how to avoid similar instances in future
- The student will have one opportunity to revise and resubmit their work in accordance with the advice given
- The student will be required to attend a workshop or information session on academic integrity
- The student will be informed of what penalties may be applied if they engage in academic misconduct again in future.

For less serious instances of collusion in the first semester of a course of study:

- The works of the students involved will be given no more than a pass grade for the assignment
- The Subject Coordinator will inform the students involved of how their work constituted academic misconduct, and how to avoid similar instances in future
- The students will have one opportunity to revise the resubmit their work in accordance with the advice given
- The students will be informed of what penalties may be applied if they engage in academic misconduct again in future

7.3.2. After the first semester of study

Less serious instances of academic misconduct, including collusion, after the first semester of study:

- A marking penalty shall be applied to the student's grade for the work
- The student shall revise and resubmit the assessment task in order to pass the subject
- The student shall be referred to the Course Coordinator and shall be required to attend a workshop or information session on academic integrity

7.4. Appeals

Students may appeal decisions made regarding the academic misconduct procedures as per the *Student Grievances and Appeals Policy*.

The appeal is to be submitted to the Appeals Committee within 15 working days from notification of the outcomes of the investigation.

Students who wish to appeal a decision are required to specify one of the following grounds for appeal, and provide evidence that:

- the decision was made in breach of procedural fairness
- the allegation and resulting decision were based on incorrect information and evidence
- new evidence has arisen since the conclusion of the investigation that should be considered by the Course Coordinator in order to make a decision

When an appeal is made on legitimate grounds, the Appeals Committee shall arrange a meeting with the student within 10 working days of receiving the appeal.

If the matter is still not resolved, students have the right to accessing external complaint platforms as provided in *the Student Grievances and Appeals Policy and* available on the LIHE website.

7.5. International students

International students are subject to the same processes as domestic students, described above, with additional academic language and learning support services available.

However, LIHE has specific obligations in case the enrolment or course progression of an international student may be affected. LIHE will:

- Notify international students of the intention to alter their enrolment in any way and advise them of their avenues for appeal
- Give the student 20 business days to lodge an appeal with the 'Overseas Student Ombudsman'
- Maintain the students' enrolment until the investigation and appeals processes are complete
- Notify the Department of Education of changes to the student's enrolment via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS)

8. Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The Academic Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Academic Board shall review all periodic reports from relevant committees and staff members.

Additionally, the Academic Board will review all relevant student complaints, concerns raised by staff members, and instances of student misconduct on an ongoing basis.

Information gathered during the initial determination by the Subject Coordinator and/or the investigation by the Course Coordinator could inform improvements to Student Handbook, Orientation and other educational materials.

Based on these monitoring activities, the Academic Board will provide advice to the Corporate Governance Board and ensure that findings are considered in planning, quality assurance and improvement processes.

9. Compliance

All staff and students at LIHE are required to comply with this policy and its procedures, and with related policies and respective procedures. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

File Number	LEA-GEN-COR-70003-D
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Contact Officer	Academic Dean

Legislative Compliance	• *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* • *Australian Qualifications Framework (2013)* • *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*
Supporting Documents	
Related Documents	• *Assessment Policy* • *Student Learning Support Policy and Procedures* • *International Student Services Policy and Procedures* • *Examinations Policy* • *Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy* • *Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy and Procedure*
Superseded Documents	
Effective Date	28 November 2024
Next Review	3 years from the effective date

10. Definitions

Academic Board: Governing body responsible for academic matters, including learning and teaching, course approval, workforce planning, academic staff appointments, research and professional development, academic policies and procedures, overseeing student grievances and appeals processes.

Academic Integrity: Upholding ethical standards in all aspects of academic work, including teaching, learning and assessments. It involves acting with the principles of honesty, fairness, trust and responsibility and requires respect for knowledge and its development.

Academic Misconduct: Any action or attempted action that may result in an unfair academic advantage to one or more students, and compromises or undermines the academic integrity of LIHE.

Academic Staff: Staff employed at LIHE in a teaching and learning

Appeals Committee: Committee of the Academic Board that reviews students' academic appeals regarding admission, retention, dismissal and other academic matters such as grade appeal and determine whether to grant or dismiss the application.

Cheating: Behaving deceitfully or dishonestly in examinations, in the preparation of assessable items and during in-class tests.

Collusion: Form of cheating in which one or more students work together to submit an assessment task, when they were required to work individually. If students were asked to work together in pairs or groups, their work is not considered collusion. Students are permitted to work and study together for an assessment task but shall ensure that the work they submit is solely their own.

Contract Cheating: When students employ or use a third party to undertake their assessed work for them. These third parties may include essay writing services, friends, family or other students, private tutors, editing services, and agency websites.

Course Coordinator: Senior academic staff member responsible for the delivery of a course of study at LIHE.

***Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)*:** Australian federal legislation establishing legislative requirements and standards for the quality assurance of education and training institutions offering courses to international students who are in Australia on a student visa.

International Student: Individual enrolled in a course at LIHE who is not a citizen of Australia or New Zealand, or an Australian Permanent Resident, and has been granted a student visa by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to study full-time in Australia.

Overseas Student Ombudsman: Person appointed by the Commonwealth to investigate complaints from international students about an action or decision taken by their private registered education provider in Australia.

Plagiarism: Presenting the work of others as one's own. It involves adapting any part or the whole of another's work and submitting it for assessment without referencing the original work through citations and a reference list. The work could be derived from any source - staff, students or the Internet, published and unpublished works. It includes:

- Direct copying and paraphrasing
- Superficially rewording the original work while the ideas and concepts are retained
- Re-using the work of other students for the same or similar assessment task
- Re-using previously submitted work.

Proofreading: Checking a student's work for the purpose of identifying errors and suggesting corrections to a text. A proof-reader is not permitted to rewriting passages of text to clarify meaning; amend the words used by the author (except to identify the correct spelling of the word used); rearrange passages of text or code, or reformat other material; contributing additional material to the original; and checking calculations or formulae. Proofreading is acceptable when conducted in accordance with the above definition.

Subject Coordinator: Senior Academic responsible for managing the work of the lecturer/ tutors/ speakers for the subject, and for the design, development, delivery, and student engagement for the subject.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI): AI systems that create new content, such as text, images, or music, by analysing and learning from large datasets. These technologies offer significant potential for enhancing educational tools and resources but also require careful consideration regarding their ethical use, implications for academic integrity, and adherence to data privacy standards.

11. Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	17/12/2020	New policy
1.1	Academic Board	22/02/2023	TEQSA and CRICOS requirements incorporated
1.2	Academic Board	28/11/2024	Incorporated Gen AI
1.3	Academic Board	11/06/2026	Clarified academic misconduct procedures and added reference to the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy and Procedure.