



Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure for managing academic misconduct informs minimum academic standards for producing work-ready graduates for the ICT sector in Australia.

ACS defines academic misconduct as:

- presenting someone else's work or idea as your own, in part or in full, also known as plagiarism
- not following assessment instructions
- falsification of documents such as academic records
- less than 80% attendance
- not progressing enough to successfully complete a course
- professional misconduct
- disrupting another students' learning.

ACS regards academic misconduct as a serious form of professional misconduct. ACS' *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure* represents academic and professional standards for students presenting and submitting work and for student attendance.

It is the students' responsibility to understand the meaning of the *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure* and the severity of the consequences for academic misconduct.

Lack of awareness of this *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure* does not excuse any form of academic misconduct.

The *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure* is a requirement of:

- ACS
- Users' guide to the Standards for RTOs 2015
- CRICOS requirements incorporating ESOS Framework
- Other statutory obligations.

Definitions

Plagiarism	Presenting another person's work, in part or whole, as your own, intentionally or not
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
CRICOS	Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students
ESOS	Education Services for Overseas Students
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority is the regulator
Attendance	The student actively participating in a minimum of 80% of learning and assessment activities, either online, face-to-face or remotely, including group activities
Academic progression	Successful completion of one module, including all assessments, prior to the commencement of the next
Students	Domestic and overseas students



ACS education partners	RTOs delivering education services on behalf of ACS
Compliance	Requirement to meet or exceed legislated minimum standards
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Student Management System
Complaints and Appeals Tribunal	External arrangement of third-party Tribunal agreed by both parties. Department of Home Affairs - When you are planning to visit Australia, there are important things you should know such as what visas to apply for and requirements for the visa application, your obligations while in Australia and information about complying with the conditions of your visa. For further information https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/
Department of Education	The Department of Education is responsible for national policies and programmes that help Australians access quality and affordable early childcare and childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training, international education and research. For further information www.education.gov.au
Overseas Students Ombudsman	The Overseas Students Ombudsman investigates complaints about problems that intending, current or former overseas students have with private schools, colleges and universities (education providers) in Australia, further information can be found https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/

Responsibility

- The Director of Career is responsible for this policy, its maintenance.
- The Education Operations Manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to ensure ACS responds to and manages academic misconduct by a student.

This Policy and Procedure applies to current and prospective students who are enrolled in a course delivered by ACS.

ACS is located across multiple states and territories across Australia.



Academic Misconduct Policy

ACS regards academic misconduct as a serious form of professional misconduct and will not accept unfamiliarity with this *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure* as reason to lessen penalties.

ACS promotes academic integrity and professional behaviour when implementing this *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure*.

ACS views academic misconduct in the context of risk to damage to its reputation as *the Professional association For Australia's ICT Sector* and its ability to produce work-ready graduates for Australia's ICT sector.

ACS supports its students to behave with academic integrity by providing online recommendations for academic support prior to each course such as:

- essay and report writing skills
- referencing
- how to participate in online discussion forums
- developing thinking and reading skills.

Such recommendations do not form part of any course offered by ACS and, in recognition that students come to ACS from a range of academic backgrounds, it is the student who decides whether they utilise the academic support offered or not. ACS students declare they are familiar with minimum academic integrity standards upon commencement of their course.

In the event students have any questions relating to academic integrity throughout their course, they are encouraged to seek advice from their trainer/tutor.

Plagiarism is a common form of academic misconduct within the education sector. To manage this, ACS utilises plagiarism detection software and students are required to declare the work they submit is their own.

Student progress is regularly monitored by their dedicated trainer/tutor. ACS trainers/tutors actively support students' academic integrity throughout the duration of their course. It is routine for ACS trainers/tutors to reach out to students who may be at risk of academic misconduct to support them through the course while maintaining ACS' minimum standards of academic integrity.

The Education Operations Manager reserves the right to remove a student from their course without a result, in the event the student does not comply with minimum academic standards. The negatively impacted student has the right to appeal the decision as per *ACS Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Students removed from a course due to academic misconduct are not eligible for a refund on the course they are removed from.

Academic Misconduct Procedure

The Academic Misconduct Procedure involves four stages:

1. Preliminary Enquiry
2. Academic Warnings
3. Appeals
4. Records



1. Preliminary Enquiry

In the event an ACS trainer/tutor suspects academic misconduct has occurred, the ACS trainer/tutor will initiate an investigation commencing with contacting the student to request clarification. The ACS trainer/tutor will advise the student why they are concerned about the academic integrity of their work.

The student is then offered an opportunity to explain their actions. For example, a student may have extenuating circumstances regarding absenteeism or may need to develop their referencing skills further. ACS trainers/tutors offer students' academic support according to individual student needs.

The ACS trainer/tutor will:

- a) provide the student with academic counselling including advising the student to take advantage of the academic support offered by ACS in the form of online resources available for:
 - essay and report writing skills
 - referencing
 - how to participate in online discussion forums
 - developing thinking and reading skills.
- b) arrange re-submission of any work that the student and the ACS trainer/tutor deem necessary due to the questionable academic integrity of previously submitted work
- c) remind the student of their responsibilities as an ACS student and the severity of the penalties of academic misconduct.

In the event the ACS trainer/tutor is satisfied academic integrity has been maintained after communicating with the student, no further action is required.

In the event the ACS trainer/tutor is not satisfied academic integrity has been maintained after further communications with the student, the ACS trainer/tutor will notify the Lead Trainer/Tutor or Education staff and seek advice on next steps depending on the student circumstances.

In the event the ACS trainer/tutor and the Lead Trainer/Tutor are satisfied academic integrity can be maintained by working with the student, the ACS trainer/tutor will work with the student to satisfy ACS minimum academic integrity standards, after which, no further action is required.

If the ACS trainer/tutor and the Lead Trainer/Tutor are not satisfied academic integrity has been maintained, the ACS trainer/tutor will inform the student they are the subject of an academic misconduct investigation and why. Academic Warnings are then initiated.

NOTE: Plagiarism may result in immediate course exclusion.

This Preliminary Enquiry stage ensures students are aware of the support offered by ACS to enable them to successfully complete their studies and be work-ready upon the successful completion of their course. It also serves as a warning to the student to behave with academic integrity as the consequences of not doing so leads to course exclusion.

The ACS trainer/tutor and the Lead Trainer/Tutor exercise discretion throughout the Preliminary Enquiry.

A Preliminary Enquiry may occur more than once.

2. Academic Warnings

Academic Warnings are initiated only after a Preliminary Enquiry has occurred.

There are three Academic Warnings.

Once Academic Warnings are initiated, the Lead Trainer/Tutor may revert to a Preliminary Enquiry any time using discretion. This ensures all relevant individual student circumstances are taken into consideration.



To initiate Academic Warnings, an ACS trainer/tutor advises an ACS Education Program Administrator to send an Academic Warning to a student via email. The Academic Warning is informed by the ACS trainer/tutor and Lead Trainer/Tutor and includes a detailed description of the:

- academic misconduct that has occurred
- actions the tutor has taken during the Preliminary Inquiry to support the student
- actions required by the student to prevent a further Academic Warning being issued, including details of work to be completed and/or re-submitted and the extended due date
- right of the student to appeal the issuing of an Academic Warning and how to instigate the appeal

Details of the Academic Warning are recorded in VETtrak by the Education Program Administrator sending the Academic Warning email.

A second Academic Warning is issued as per the first Academic Warning if the ACS trainer/tutor and Lead Trainer/Tutor are not satisfied with the level of academic integrity demonstrated by the student in response to the first Academic Warning. The student is offered a further extension on the due date of any work to be completed and/or resubmitted.

A third Academic Warning is the final warning prior to the student being removed from a course due to academic misconduct. The third Academic Warning outlines the details of the first and second Academic Warnings including dates sent and responses received. The student is advised this is the final warning and that they will be removed from the course if they have not met the minimum academic integrity standards as outlined in the first and second Academic Warnings. The timeframe is extended for the third and final time.

If, after the third Academic Warning the ACS trainer/tutor and Lead Trainer/Tutor are not satisfied with the level of academic integrity demonstrated by the student, the Lead Trainer/Tutor will inform the Education Operations Manager and the student is removed from the course.

An Education Program Administrator on behalf of the Education Operations Manager will advise the student they have been withdrawn from their course and remind them of their right to appeal the decision and instructions as to how to appeal the decision. The details of the withdrawal are recorded in VETtrak by the Education Program Administrator who sent the email to the student being withdrawn on behalf of the Education Operations Manager.

3. Appeals

If a student does not agree with the outcome of the Preliminary Enquiry or feels they have not been treated fairly with regards to the Academic Warnings, they have the right to appeal at any time throughout the procedure.

If the student does not agree with their trainer/tutor's assessment that they have not acted with academic integrity, they have the right to discuss their situation with the Lead Trainer/Tutor. The Lead Trainer/Tutor may work with the student and the tutor to find a way for the student to more clearly demonstrate academic integrity.

If the student does not agree with the Lead Trainer/Tutor's assessment that they have not acted with academic integrity, they have the right to discuss their situation with the Education Operations Manager. The Education Operations Manager may work with the Lead Trainer/Tutor, the tutor and the student to more clearly demonstrate academic integrity.

If the student does not agree with the Education Operations Manager that they have not acted with academic integrity, they have the right to complain or appeal using the *ACS Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.





The student may continue their course pending the outcome of a complaint or appeal, unless the Education Operations Manager deems it necessary for the student to stop attending classes due to:

- disruption or potential disruption to other students
- reputational damage to ACS
- continued academic misconduct demonstrated by the student.

4. Records

ACS maintains student records, including allegations of academic misconduct and the outcome of investigation(s) for a minimum of seven years.



Academic Misconduct Policy

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Version History

Date	Document Version	Revision History (reason for change)	Author /Reviser
09/10/14	3	Original document completed	Asheley Jones/Derinda Smith
12/10/15	4	DIT Coordinator replaced by Education Program Manager	Derinda Smith
07/16	5	Addition of "3 strike" warning process	Derinda Smith
08/17	6	Updates as specified in <i>Internal Quality Compliance Audit Checklist - Academic Misconduct Policy V5 - March 2017</i> document	Derinda Smith
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
20/08/20	7.0	Updates reflect changes in operations. Addition of changes as result of changes to Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure (v9)	Rosemary Dore, Glanyce Attard, Ciaran Doherty
26/04/25	8.0	Updates to reflect new government department name and websites. Replaced Education Operations Manager and Education Product Development Manager with Director of Careers.	Mark Cohen

Approvals

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