

## Academic Integrity & Conduct Policy

Collarts has a strong commitment to ensuring and upholding academic integrity, as academic integrity is integral to maintaining academic quality and the academic standing of its qualifications.

### Purpose

This policy establishes the principles and processes by which Collarts will deal with allegations and breaches of academic integrity, such as plagiarism, cheating and collusion. The Academic Integrity and Conduct Policy provides:

- Information regarding academic integrity and expected conduct aimed at preventing incidences of misconduct
- Principles that underpin the investigation and reporting of misconduct, and
- A fair, equitable and confidential framework for investigating and resolving alleged cases of academic misconduct

### Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in a course of study at Collarts. This policy also applies to staff, including those who teach, mark and grade assessments, when dealing with allegations of academic integrity breaches.

### Definition of Key Terms

**Academic Misconduct** means all circumstances where students attempt to cheat, plagiarise or act dishonestly when undertaking assessment tasks, or assisting fellow students to do so.

**Cheating** means seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in an examination or in other written or practical work required to be submitted or completed by a student for assessment, including contract cheating (see later) or paying for another person to prepare who or part of an assessment task.

**Collaboration** refers to *authorised* methods of cooperative work between students and may include:

- Discussion about a subject and/or its materials, or an approach to an assessment task.
- Work produced with other students as part of a group exercise or assignment, with acknowledgement of the source and methods used.
- Work which incorporates or is based on templates or examples provided by Collarts, with acknowledgement of the source and methods used.

Collaboration is a desired outcome of education because it supports interactivity and the crossflow of ideas and knowledge.

**Collusion** is when a student works with others, contrary to instructions, in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment task, and then presents that work as their own, including knowingly allowing personal work to be copied by others. Collusion includes:

- Joint effort in an assessment (unless it is authorised collaboration).
- Copying of material prepared by another person for use in an assessment.
- Undue assistance from any person in an assessment.
- Making assessment answers or material available to other students for viewing or copying, either knowingly or unknowingly. It is the responsibility of students to ensure their assessment material is secure and not easily accessible to other students.

**Contract cheating**, also known as ghost writing, occurs when a student engages (or attempts to engage) the services of another individual to author an assignment on the student's behalf. A student can be guilty of contract cheating irrespective of whether payment is made, or the services are received. For instance, a student may be investigated for contract cheating where:

- The student posts an advertisement seeking a ghost writer.
- A ghost writer forwards correspondence to Collarts regarding a student's enquiry.
- A student submits work that is significantly different in style to the student's prior work.
- A student engages the services of another individual to take their place in an exam, work placement or internship

**Deferment** means postponement of the commencement date of study which allows the student's place in a Collarts course to be held for a nominated period of time, usually a period of twelve months

**Cancellation** means withdrawal from the enrolled course of study at Collarts which may be voluntarily activated by the student or forced by Collarts as a result of misconduct.

**Suspension, Voluntary** means to take a leave of absence from studies which is activated by the student, usually for a period of up to twelve months.

**Misconduct** means any behaviour which is contrary to a policy of Collarts or to generally accepted social or academic standards, for example but not limited to:

- Harassment or plagiarism;
- Falsifying documents, results or information; and
- Offering or accepting bribes.

**Plagiarism** refers to:

- Any use of or attempt to use the work, words or ideas of others without attribution of the author; or
- Any attempt to pass off the work, words or ideas of others as the writer's own.

Plagiarism also extends to reusing significant portions of one's own work that has previously submitted for assessment (known as self-plagiarism).

In the context of assessment, plagiarism occurs when a student:

- Presents any phrase or extracts verbatim from any source (including Collarts unit or lecture material), without appropriate use of quotation marks or reference to the author
- Presents an assessment event as their own work when it has been produced, in whole or part with other people, for example, with other students, practitioners or work colleagues without appropriate recognition
- Presents all or part of an assessment event which has previously been submitted by the student or another student (past or present) in their assessment in another unit or course

Self-plagiarism is treated as acceptable at Collarts under strict conditions:

- The student is repeating a previously attempted unit and assessment
- Both the assessment and assessment criteria have not changed since the last time the student attempted the assessment
- No plagiarism existed in the original submission, and it was wholly the work of the student
- Students resubmitting an assignment are advised to revise it based on previous feedback and consult with their teacher before submitting a previously submitted assignment
- The student is re-using material with appropriate acknowledgement
- No other form of self-plagiarism is acceptable (for example, copying material from one unit's assessment for another unit, re-using material without proper acknowledgement)

## Principles

### Academic Misconduct

All students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. Collarts sets an assessment task for completion with the expectation that it is either:

- the sole effort of the student; or
- the sole efforts of a designated group of students who hand in a joint piece of work.

A student may discuss general principles with others in order to understand a topic or base their assessment on an outline in the course material but is responsible for submitting an individual piece of work. If a student works with another student to complete an individual assessment task and submits that work as their own work, it is considered to be collusion.

It is the responsibility of the student to acknowledge all sources used in an assignment or work submitted for assessment. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism. In group assignments each member of the group is jointly responsible for the integrity of the assignment.

Students are considered guilty of cheating if they act in a way that gives them an unfair academic advantage. Students may be guilty of this if they copy another student's work, or in any way mislead their teachers or Program Leader about their ability, knowledge or skills.

The penalty for confirmed instances of collusion, plagiarism and cheating, will be dealt with according to the severity of the instance and any damage, or potential damage, to the reputation of Collarts.

The electronic text-matching software Turnitin will be used to check all written assessments for plagiarism and referencing issues. It highlights any common text and provides a similarity score with other submitted documents. All submitted written assessments will be saved in the Turnitin library for future cross checking. The lecturer will decide whether the text that has been identified as matching constitutes plagiarism (not Turnitin).

### **Principles of dealing with alleged cases of misconduct**

1. Collarts' approach to academic integrity is primarily aimed at educating students about expectations for academic writing and creative practice, and the appropriate use and acknowledgement of intellectual material, including authorship.
2. Honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility are the core values that underpin the learning aims around academic integrity and conduct at Collarts.
3. Where a breach of academic integrity has occurred, it is dealt with in progressive and proportionate manner that balances education and fairness against punitive measures.

To this end:

4. Each case of alleged misconduct is dealt with on its merits, in consideration of the circumstances surrounding the case and in accordance with this policy.
5. Students will be treated fairly and equitably and with due regard to their privacy and the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
6. Students will be regarded as not having committed the alleged Act of Misconduct unless they admit to the misconduct, or an investigation/hearing determines that they committed an Act of Misconduct on the balance of probability.
7. Knowledge of a student's previous behaviour will not be assumed to be evidence that they have acted in the same manner again. However, such knowledge will be considered relevant to the level of penalty that may be imposed where an Act of Misconduct is determined to have occurred, such that repeated offences incur a more severe penalty.
8. Students are to be informed of their rights and responsibilities in relation to academic misconduct and its investigation.

### **Expectations**

Collarts sets work for assessment with the expectation that it is:

- The sole effort of the student; or
- The sole effort of a designated group of students who hand in a joint piece of work; or
- The effort of an individual student who may have discussed general principles with others in order to understand the topic, but who is responsible for submitting an individual piece of work; or
- The sole effort of the student based on an outline answer given as part of the course material.

It is the responsibility of the student to acknowledge all sources used in an assignment or work submitted for assessment for any program offered by Collarts. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism.

Work not completed by a student and intentionally submitted as that student's work is cheating.

Students are encouraged to develop sound study and note-taking practices to avoid unintentional plagiarism that is considered an academic misdemeanour of failing to reference a source correctly.

## Procedures

### Guidelines for alleged cases of misconduct

#### Stage 1: Reporting an allegation of misconduct

Where a staff member reasonably believes or suspects that a student has committed an Act of Misconduct, that person must, within five (5) working days, notify the Head of the course who will assemble such documentation as will be needed to make a determination if there is Academic Misconduct to investigate.

#### Stage 2: Investigation

An investigation of the allegation will be conducted by Collarts (typically by the Head of the course and the Associate Dean or Dean) and where there is a case to answer, the student will be notified of the case against them with an opportunity to provide comment on the allegations. The investigation will normally take no longer than ten (10) working days and may involve an interview with the student or other relevant parties to discuss the allegations and the evidence presented. Should an interview take place with the student, the student is entitled to be supported by another person, other than a legal professional, but the student must advise Collarts in writing of the name of the support person prior to the interview. Where the investigation relates to assessment results, the student's results will be withheld until all proceedings relevant to the allegation have been finalised.

#### No misconduct identified

Where it is determined that there is no case of misconduct the student assessment results will be released where relevant.

#### Misconduct identified

Where misconduct is determined, the student will be notified in writing of the outcome of the investigation and any penalty that is to be imposed within (5) working days of the conclusion of the investigation. The student will also receive information about the appeal process. (See the *Grievances and Appeals Policy* for further information).

A report of the misconduct will be made in the official Student Management System which will contain specific details of the alleged act of misconduct. This includes; the details and position of the person submitting the report, when the misconduct occurred, the nature of the misconduct and other information as deemed relevant such as other people involved and any action already taken. Confidentiality is to be maintained by all parties during this process.

#### Admission of misconduct by a student

A student may formally admit to the alleged Act of Misconduct at any time. Where this occurs, all further investigation, hearing or referral of the allegation ceases and a

determination will be made as to an appropriate penalty. See Stage 3 - Determination of penalty.

### **Stage 3: Determination of penalty**

Penalties imposed are to be proportionate and appropriate to the nature and gravity of the Act of Misconduct established by the evidence.

The decision on the penalty will consider, but is not limited to:

- The type of misconduct involved, whether academic or non-academic.
- Whether it was intentional or unintentional.
- Whether it is a first offense or a repeat offense.
- The severity of misconduct involved, whether it is a serious or minor offence.
- The previous discipline record of the student concerned.
- Whether the student admitted to the alleged misconduct.
- Whether the student assisted or hindered the investigation process.
- Whether or not there were any extenuating circumstances or mitigating factors.
- The number of students affected by or involved in the misconduct.
- The benefit derived from the misconduct by the student.
- Similar cases of student disciplinary action and their outcomes.

### **Penalties for proven Acts of Misconduct**

One or more of the following penalties or conditions may be imposed on the student, the intent is to apply an appropriate and proportionate penalty to dissuade acts of misconduct:

- A formal caution or reprimand, to be recorded on the student's record with Collarts.
- A probationary period to be placed on the student and recorded on the student's record.
- Suspension from a course of study for a period of time.
- Expulsion from a course of study.
- A deduction of all or a specific number of marks for the assessment event/item (or part thereof).
- The imposition of a maximum allowable grade (e.g. 'Pass' grade) for the assessment item or overall mark.
- A requirement to undertake supplementary assessment, possibly with the costs associated with marking and evaluating the additional assessment item to be borne by the student.
- A requirement to undertake an online module on Academic Integrity. Final grades may be withheld if the student doesn't satisfactorily complete the module.
- The annulment of all marks and the awarding of a 'Disciplinary fail' on the student's record, and as a 'Fail' grade on any public record relating to that assessment item or subject as relevant.
- The exclusion of the student from Collarts courses permanently or for a period of time as specified.
- To make good any damage caused by the student to the property, standing of the institution or reputation of a staff member or another student.

The procedures to be followed are outlined in the flowchart at the end of this document.

## Stage 4: Appeals process

### Right to appeal

Students will be notified of any penalties which are the result of proven academic misconduct. Students may appeal a decision about Academic Misconduct on the basis of procedural anomalies or factual errors. As per Collarts' *Grievance and Appeals Policy*, students should first informally discuss their concern with their Program Leader. Where the informal approach is not appropriate, or the student wishes to take the matter further, the matter may be escalated to the formal grievance stage by lodging a '*Formal Grievance Form*' within five (5) working days from the date of notification of the decision in relation to the instance of academic misconduct. A '*Formal Grievance Form*' can be downloaded from the Student Resources section of the MyCollarts Student Portal and the completed application should be lodged with the Office of the Registrar.

For more information on the grievance and appeals process at Collarts, please refer to the ***Grievance & Appeals Policy*** in the Student Handbook or at the Student Resources section of the MyCollarts Student Portal.

### Documentation

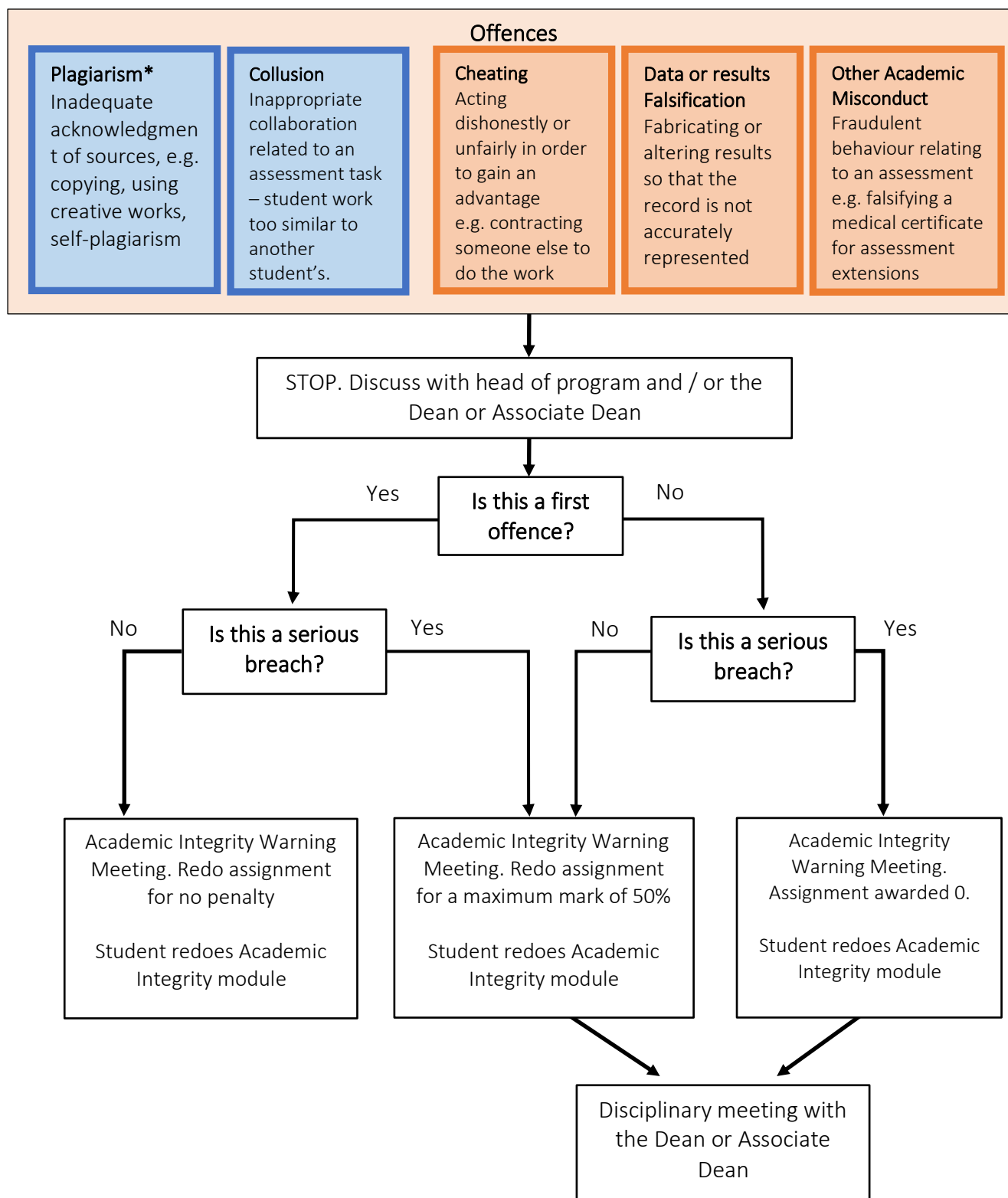
The details relating to allegations of Acts of Misconduct, will be documented in writing and recorded on a Misconduct Register by Collarts and in the student's individual file. All records of the alleged Act of Misconduct will be retained on file for a period of five (5) years, or for at least two (2) years from the time the student ceases to be enrolled with Collarts. The retention time will be longer in the case of an appeal (See Student Record Management Policy).

### Reporting

Incidents of Academic Misconduct will be reported to the Academic Board in a summary report each trimester and tracked for historical comparison.

## Collarts Academic Integrity Breach Flowchart

Marker or teacher suspects misconduct because of:



\* Note that plagiarism is more complex than simply a high similarity score on a plagiarism checker such as Turnitin. If a high similarity score is noticed, then the person marking the work must read it to determine the type of similarity – the high value could be because of the cover sheet, valid quotes, and so on. A high similarity number on its own is not evidence of plagiarism.



## Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- *Assessment Policy*
- *Grievances & Appeals Policy*
- *Misconduct Policy*
- *Student Code of Conduct*

All policies referenced in this document can be accessed via the *Student Resources* section of the MyCollarts student portal at <http://mycollarts.edu.au/login/index.php>.

## Further Information

This policy may be reviewed from time to time.

Author/Reviewer:	Peter Barnard – Quality & Compliance Manager Paul Doornbusch (Head of Teaching and Learning)
Policy owner:	Academic Board
Approver:	Academic Board
Approval date:	27 October 2021
Next review due:	October 2024
Current status:	Active