

## ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

### 1. Policy Statement and Purpose

Study Group Australia Pty Limited (SGA) upholds the principle that academic integrity relies on the application of honesty in all scholarly endeavour. Students of the Institution will conduct themselves in their academic studies honestly and ethically and are expected to carefully acknowledge the work of others in all of their academic activities.

This policy defines academic honesty/dishonesty and outlines the College's response to alleged instances of academic dishonesty which are detected.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1.1 set out the principles underpinning SGA's approach to academic honesty;
- 1.2 identify the line of responsibility for ensuring that the principles of academic honesty are implemented;
- 1.3 be a resource document relating to academic honesty; and
- 1.4 be a resource document containing the procedures relating to the handling of allegations relating to academic misconduct, pursuant to SGA rules and regulations and Academic Board policies.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in a VET unit of study with SGA and its trading divisions and with SGA Licensed Partner Organizations or with a unit of study with our pathway Colleges. All of the above from here-on referred to as 'the College'.

### 3. Definitions and Abbreviations

**Academic Dishonesty** – Is where students act dishonestly or unethically in relation to any academic task or activity and includes:

**Plagiarism** – When students fail to acknowledge that the ideas of others are being used. Specifically, plagiarism occurs when:

- other people's work and/or ideas are copied or paraphrased and presented without due acknowledgement;
- other students' work is copied either wholly or in part;
- other people's designs, codes or images are presented as the student's own work;
- phrases and passages are used verbatim without quotation marks and/or without a reference to the author(s) or an electronic or other source web page;
- there is no obvious attempt to use standard referencing and citation tools (e.g. Word) to demonstrate understanding of scholarly practice
- lecture notes are reproduced without due acknowledgement.

**Cheating** – Seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in an examination or in other written or practical work required to be submitted or completed for assessment.

**Collusion** – Unauthorised collaboration on assessable work with another person or persons. In the case of collusion, the word student in this policy may be read in the plural as well as the singular.

**Academic Misconduct** – In the context of this policy, misconduct represents a breach of the conventions of academic honesty. Student behaviour that undermines the academic integrity of the learning and assessment processes includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, failing to properly acknowledge sources; taking unauthorised material into examinations; permitting another student to copy answers in an assessment task; exchanging notes in an examination; inappropriately obtaining or disseminating information about the contents of an examination or other assessment task before or during the conduct of that task

**Unit of study or Unit** – A subdivision of a course, subject, or program of study or training.

#### **4. Policy Provisions and Procedures**

The overarching principles for judging a breach of academic honesty:

- Each case will be treated on its merits.
- The level of intent to deceive, the extent of the plagiarism and the student's history in regard to plagiarism will be the principal criteria.
- Judgments should be more lenient for students in their first semester of study.

##### 4.1 Intention to Deceive

Central to the processes surrounding any breach of academic honesty is the determination of intention to deceive. It is reasonable to consider that the student has intended to deceive the assessor where:

- substantial portions of the work submitted for assessment were copied from another student, or from the work of a former student, to an extent that clearly exceeds the boundaries of legitimate co-operation or group work;
- written work contains a substantial body of material copied from published work (including from the Internet) without any attribution of the source(s) and in a manner which cannot readily be explained by poor referencing, language difficulties or lack of confidence in using original language;
- there is evidence that the student has engaged another person to write the assignment, either partly or wholly, whether for payment or otherwise;
- the student has previously received a formal warning in relation to plagiarism or other academic misconduct and the plagiarism in the work submitted for assessment cannot be explained by continuing difficulties in understanding the College's requirements for written work.

##### 4.2 Notification to Students

All unit outlines will explain the importance of academic honesty and will give students clear instructions regarding group work and academic collaboration as to whether they are permitted to work on an assignment jointly. The unit outline will also refer students to this policy. The policy will be made available on the public website of the College.

##### 4.3 Suspected breaches of academic honesty policies

- Where a breach of the academic honesty policy is suspected the Lecturer or Exam Invigilator will discuss the matter with the student.

- If, after speaking informally with the student, the Lecturer or Exam Invigilator believes that a breach has occurred, the relevant Course Coordinator will be notified in writing.
- The Course Coordinator (or nominee) will assess the allegation of academic dishonesty and also refer to the student's file to see if any previous offences of academic dishonesty have been recorded. If the Coordinator believes the student has a case to answer, the student will be notified in writing of the allegation, including full details of the alleged breach, and invited to respond in writing or in person within 5 working days. Where interviews occur between the Course Coordinator (or nominee) and the student, the student should be accompanied by a support person.
- If, following the student's response, the Course Coordinator (or nominee) is satisfied that academic dishonesty has occurred the student will be notified within 10 working days of any decision including particulars of the offence, the penalty imposed, the date of determination and the student's right to appeal.

#### 4.4 Penalties

Depending on the nature of the breach, the penalties may include:

- warning the student and marking the assessment without penalty;
- warning the student and marking the assessment with penalty;
- warning the student, requesting a resubmission, and marking the assessment with or without penalty;
- requiring the student to undertake additional or alternative assessment (the maximum mark possible being a Pass grade);
- allocating zero marks for the assessment task;
- recording a grade of Fail for the unit of study;
- suspending the student from the course for a specified period of time;
- terminating the student's enrolment and expel the student from the Institution.

In the case of course suspension or expulsion, the matter must be discussed with the Academic Director, or another appropriate authority within the College,, before making the final decision.

#### 4.5 Register of breaches of the academic honesty policy

A register of incidents of academic misconduct will be maintained by the Head of College/Academic Director. For each instance of academic misconduct, the following is recorded:

- details of the parties involved and the documents lodged
- details of the academic misconduct
- details of the action taken and the outcome

#### 4.6 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 Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

### 5. **Roles and Responsibilities**

### 5.1 SGA Responsibilities

SGA has an obligation to:

- publicise its policies on academic honesty to all academic staff and students;
- implement and apply its policies on academic honesty consistently;
- assist academic staff and students in understanding clearly the different dimensions of academic honesty;
- use fair and well-publicised procedures to consider any cases where students are accused of academic misconduct;
- develop procedures which :
  - ensure timely investigation and resolution of allegations of academic misconduct
  - increase student and staff awareness of their responsibilities in the area of academic honesty;
  - incorporate into the orientation of new students a program to inform students of good academic practice with regard to their academic performance;
  - design and deliver an appropriate program of communication to first year students regarding their obligations for meeting the requirements of academic honesty in all facets of their academic performance; and
- implement appropriate security practices for submission and return of assignments.

### 5.2 Responsibilities and obligations of Academic Staff

All members of the academic staff are required to:

- familiarise themselves with the policies of SGA with respect to academic honesty including plagiarism, co-operation and group work, and to apply them consistently;
- incorporate the principles of academic honesty into course outlines and assessment criteria;
- model and teach appropriate referencing styles/conventions for all assessment tasks;
- provide feedback to students which identifies gaps in knowledge and skills and refer students to appropriate sources of assistance to improve their skills;
- provide clear written instructions about legitimate co-operation between students on academic tasks.

### 5.3 Responsibilities and rights of students

Students have a responsibility to:

- act in accordance with the principles of academic honesty as set out in this Policy regarding the preparation, conduct and submission of academic work;
- become familiar with the expectations of academic writing, especially the conventions of referencing;
- seek assistance from appropriate sources in respect of academic writing in areas where they are aware they need more knowledge and skills; and
- retain a copy of all assignments submitted.

Students have a right to:

- be informed of SGA’s policy with respect to academic honesty, including plagiarism, co-operation and group work;
- be provided with clear guidelines on academic styles and conventions required by SGA;
- expect consistent application of policies and practices by academic staff;
- receive practical comments which assist them to review their work;
- expect fair warning in any case where an academic staff member believes a student or group of students may be at risk of breaching guidelines relating to plagiarism, group work and co-operation;
- participate in learning experiences specifically designed to improve their competency in research, writing and referencing skills,
- understand the requirements of group work and the development of personal attributes, in particular, ethical behaviour;
- expect a consistent definition of academic honesty and consistent application of procedures for dealing with suspected academic misconduct;
- receive clear guidelines relating to all aspects of group work;
- receive clear assessment information in each course outline, especially in relation to individual and group work ;
- receive clear written instructions on the level of co-operation permitted within each assessment component; and
- appeal decisions consistent with SGA’s *Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures*.

## 6. Supporting Documents

*SGA Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures*

*ACPE Academic Honesty Policy*

### Approval and Review

<b>ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY</b>	
<b>ELT Custodian</b>	Executive Directors VET and Pathway Colleges
<b>Policy owner</b>	Head of Quality and Governance
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