

Student Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy

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Scope

1. This policy covers the nature of student academic misconduct, and the sanctions that will be imposed when breaches occur. It has an emphasis on encouraging academic integrity in student work.
2. Nan Tien Institute (NTI) values honesty and integrity and demands ethical behaviour in all aspects of its operations. NTI will investigate and deal with incidents of academic misconduct by its students in a consistent manner in accordance with this policy. This is underpinned by principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, and the imposition of penalties that are appropriate, fair and just.
3. Exemplary student conduct and academic integrity are fundamental to learning, teaching and research at the Institute. The Institute is committed to providing a compassionate approach to responding to instances of student academic misconduct, while upholding high standards of ethical conduct and prioritising the safety of all staff and students.
4. This policy applies to all students who have enrolled in any subject at NTI. It applies to students previously enrolled, not currently enrolled and students on any form of leave from their program where the event forming the basis of the allegation occurred while they were enrolled, or is directly related to their enrolment

PURPOSE OF POLICY

5. This policy sets out NTI's commitment to academic integrity:
 - a) reflecting that ethical conduct is an important component of student life and graduate outcomes;
 - b) reflecting that academic integrity is a shared responsibility between students, staff and the institution;
 - c) outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Institute, staff, and students, in promoting academic integrity; and
 - d) specifying the nature of fair, consistent, transparent and timely responses to student academic misconduct.

Definitions

Academic Integrity	Academic integrity involves upholding ethical standards in all aspects of academic work, including learning, teaching and research. It involves acting with the principles of honesty, fairness, trust and responsibility and requires respect for knowledge and its development. Academic integrity is foundational to the work of the whole academic community, including students, teachers, researchers, coordinators and administrators.
Academic Integrity Officer (AIO)	An academic staff member who is responsible for making (or helping to make) an initial determination of the allegation of academic misconduct, for actioning where appropriate (see Appendix C for Role Statement).
Academic Integrity Committee (AIC)	The Academic Integrity Committee determines the outcome of allegations of major academic misconduct and comprises of the AIO, the Subject Coordinator, the Academic Dean and the Director, Student Services.
Assessment	Assessment means any task required to be undertaken by a student for the assessment of the student's performance in a unit of study provided by the Institute and includes: a) any thesis, dissertation, written report, assignment, essay or other requirement relating to the assignment that is undertaken for the assessment of the student's academic performance; and b) any requirement to be performed by the student for assessment.
Authorised Officer of NTI	For the purposes of this policy the Academic Integrity Officer or the Dean of Studies.
Conflict of interest	A staff member has a conflict of interest in a student academic misconduct investigation if they have a personal relationship with the student or direct or indirect financial or personal interest in the case, even if they do not believe that their interest would affect their duties.
Expulsion	Expulsion means the removal or banning of a student from the Institute.
Generative Artificial Intelligence	Generative Artificial Intelligence means artificial intelligence (AI) capable of generating text, images, videos or other data using generative models in response to prompts. Generative AI tools may be stand-alone (e.g. Chat GPT) or integrated into other software tools (e.g. Grammarly etc.).
Major Academic Misconduct	Major academic misconduct refers to repeated and subsequent acts that constitute academic misconduct or repeated and deliberate use of tools to generate data and written work that is presented as one's own, serious breaches of the code of conduct, falsification of data, tampering with results or grades.
Minor Academic Misconduct	Minor academic misconduct refers to the first instance of an action defined as academic misconduct or an inadvertent or minor contravention of academic standards or requirements
Staff	All persons appointed by the Institute as academic or professional staff regardless of their level of seniority and regardless of the term of their appointment. This includes honorary and conjoint

	appointments. For the purposes of this policy, it also includes all persons engaged by the Institute as casual employees.
Student Academic Misconduct	<p>Conduct of a student when undertaking the preparation, presentation or submission of coursework that is in breach of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy • Student Misconduct Policy • Subject Learning and Assessment Guides • NTI Code of Conduct <p>Other NTI policy documents or requirements setting out student academic requirements</p>
Subject Coordinator	The academic staff member responsible for the subject.
Suspension	Suspension means the cancellation of enrolment of a student in a course or a subject. This may include the withdrawal for a specified time of all rights and privileges as a student of NTI, including the right to re-enrol and the right to enter or to be on-campus. Unless otherwise advised by NTI, the student has the right to recommence their studies at the end of the period of suspension.
Turnitin	An online plagiarism detection service integrated with the NTILearn platform that provides an automated process for assessing student submissions and for providing feedback. It also provides a text-matching tool to assist in preventing and identifying poor academic practice, plagiarism and cheating.

Policy Statement

GENERAL POLICY PRINCIPLES

6. NTI will respond to student academic misconduct in a fair, consistent, transparent and timely manner.
7. NTI will maintain records of investigations and outcomes. These will be securely stored in accordance with recordkeeping requirements.
8. NTI will maintain a continuous cycle of quality improvement to monitor the occurrence and nature of instances of student academic misconduct and will act in a timely way to address underlying causes.
9. NTI is committed to providing a safe, equitable and orderly environment for the Institute community, and expects each member of that community to behave responsibly, ethically and compassionately. NTI is committed to:
 - a) Promoting the abilities and personalities of students in a harmonious Buddhist-informed environment.
 - b) Developing a community of scholars, academics, skillful practitioners and students.
10. The values of NTI, which we seek to nurture in our students, and express in the business of NTI are:
 - a) Compassion – openness to and awareness of our interdependence with others; being present to others; empathy with and kindness to others, especially those who are suffering.
 - b) Wisdom – inquiry, understanding and appreciation of the history and insights of traditions and disciplines of knowledge, not least Buddhism and the social and health sciences; contemplation and deep reflection; the prudent application of what we learn.

- c) Committed Service – a sense of vocation in the service of all living beings, and an ordering of our priorities and energy towards the needs of and opportunities for our community, our country and our world.
- d) Practice – time for reflection and development of ourselves; mindfulness and concentration, moment to moment, day to day, to bring compassion and wisdom to each interaction with others; communicating truthfully, working harmoniously, doing no harm, and acting ethically in our professional roles.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

11. Academic misconduct means any action or attempted action by a student that may result in an unfair academic advantage to one or more students. This covers a wide range of behaviour and activities, including but not limited to:
- a) Plagiarism - the presentation of work, ideas or data of others as one's own, without appropriate acknowledgement or reference to the original source.
 - b) Deliberate use of generative artificial intelligence tools (AI)(e.g. Chat GPT, Grammarly) unless the use of such tools is explicitly directed by the subject coordinator and appropriately acknowledged;
 - c) Self-Plagiarism – the use of all or part of one's own work for more than one assessment;
 - d) Collusion – where students present work as independent work when it has been produced with others, unless prior permission for joint collaborative work has been given by the Subject Coordinator;
 - e) Cheating – fraud, dishonesty or deception of any kind in relation to an academic assessment;
 - f) Tampering with assessment results or grades;
 - g) Providing forged or falsified academic, medical or other documents;
 - h) Use of translation software;
 - i) Falsification of data or results of a research project or scholarly investigation;
 - j) Completing an individual assessment for another person, or having someone else complete all or part of your individual assessment and submitting it as your own work;
 - k) Making changes to an assignment that has been marked then returning it for re-marking claiming that it was not correctly marked; or
 - l) Deliberate attempts to deceive about assessment submission times.
12. Instances of student academic misconduct may be classified as a minor or major infraction (see definitions).

Identification and management of alleged student academic misconduct

IDENTIFICATION OF MISCONDUCT

13. All allegations of academic misconduct will be reviewed and investigated following a staged approach:
- a) Preliminary review and investigation conducted by the subject coordinator

- b) Formal review and investigation conducted by the Academic Integrity Officer (AIO)
- c) Formal review and investigation conducted by the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC)

The associated procedures are described in Appendix A Student Academic Misconduct Procedures and a Flowchart of the process at Appendix B.

- 14. Any person may lodge a written allegation of academic misconduct to the Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) or the subject coordinator.
- 15. Normally, alleged cases of student academic misconduct will be reported to the subject coordinator (or an AIO if the staff member making the allegation is the relevant subject coordinator). The allegation report will include supporting evidence.

INVESTIGATION OF MISCONDUCT

- 16. Following an allegation of academic misconduct, reasonable means will be employed to determine whether the work constitutes academic misconduct. This may include, but is not limited to, the use of plagiarism detection software, web search engines, comparison with other assignments from the same course, and consultation with colleagues.
- 17. The subject coordinator will conduct a preliminary review to ensure that there is evidence to support an allegation of academic misconduct. This may involve informally meeting with the student to discuss his/her work.
- 18. Upon making a positive determination, the matter will be referred to the AIO. If no case is found for academic misconduct, the allegation will be dismissed and no further action will be taken.
- 19. In the event that the preliminary investigation determines that there is a case for potential academic misconduct, the incident will be managed by the AIO in accordance with the attached Procedures.

If the allegation is upheld by the AIO, the AIO will determine the outcome in cases of minor misconduct or refer the matter to the AIC in cases of major misconduct.

- 20. When an allegation of academic misconduct is considered by the AIC, members will apply the balance of probabilities test in determining whether academic dishonesty has taken place, and will:
 - a) Apply an open, impartial and unprejudiced mind to their considerations;
 - b) Base findings and recommendations solely on relevant evidence;
 - c) Maintain confidentiality about all matters before them;
- 21. AIC members will not be involved in a case or have any involvement in the finding and recommendation of a case before them if they have a personal relationship with the student, or direct or indirect financial or personal interest in that case, or otherwise have a conflict of interest in the case.

IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS

- 22. Where an alleged case of academic misconduct is found to have occurred, a penalty will be determined and imposed.
- 23. The outcome and penalty for all cases of minor academic misconduct will be determined by the AIO in accordance with the Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.
- 24. The outcome and penalty for all cases of major academic misconduct will be determined by the AIC in accordance with the Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.

25. The nature of the penalty will be determined by the severity of the act of academic misconduct (i.e. whether it is deemed a minor or major breach of this policy).
26. Students will have the right of appeal against the decision. The process is described in Appendix B Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.

EXTERNAL REVIEW OR REFERRAL

27. Where a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of an internal appeal, they have a right to appeal to an external agency. Similarly, a matter may be referred to an external agency by NTI. Where this occurs, NTI will cease any internal process pending the outcome of external investigation. External agencies may include:
 - a) The NSW Ombudsman
 - b) The Anti-Discrimination Board
 - c) The Australian Human Rights Commission
 - d) The Independent Commission against Corruption
28. If the external appeal or review results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the student, NTI will immediately implement that decision or recommendation and advise the student in writing.

MISCONDUCT AND GRADUATION

29. In a situation where misconduct is not identified until sometime after it has occurred, it must be investigated in a similar manner as if it had been identified immediately.
30. Where a student has received an award from NTI and serious misconduct is proven, consequential action may include rescinding the award. In such a case, the student's name shall be deleted from the Register of Graduates and the student will be required to return the testamur and final transcript to NTI.

RECORDS

31. The Director, Student Services will provide a report on misconduct cases to the Academic Dean for each meeting of the Academic Board.
32. All reasonable efforts will be made by staff of NTI to ensure that the principles of confidentiality, security and privacy of student information are maintained while dealing with cases of student academic misconduct. All records relevant to these procedures are to be maintained in a recognised Institute record keeping system.
33. NTI is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles (AIPs) under the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 with respect to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

Legislation and Regulation

Higher Education Support (HES) Act 2003

Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012

Attachments

Appendix A Student Academic Misconduct Procedures

Appendix B Academic Integrity Officer Role Description

Appendix C Flowchart