

# Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Policy and Procedure

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**Document History**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>Date of Implementation</b>	<b>Change(s)</b>
1.0	-	Jul 2010	-
1.1	Oct 2013	22 Oct 2013	Re-approved with no changes.
1.2	Apr 2015	1 May 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reformatted to RCDC Standard Policy template</li> <li>• Amend "Registrar" to "Student Services Director"</li> <li>• Updated and rearranged sequence of policy and procedure content.</li> <li>• Inclusion of the definition of procedural fairness under Section 3.</li> <li>• Inclusion of implications on international students holding student visa of the suspension or termination of enrolment under Section 8.</li> <li>• Inclusion of student's rights to external appeal under Section 9.</li> </ul>
1.3	May 2016	3 Jun 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated the policy principles (section 4)</li> <li>• Updated the procedure (section 6)</li> </ul>
1.4	June 2017	June 2017	Non-substantive changes made to the Policy to change the position title from 'Head of Department' to Dean.

**Approved by:**            **Academic Board**            on            **3 June 2016**

**Distribution List**

To:     RCDC Academic Staff  
          All Student Services Staff  
          Associate Colleges, College Directors

Cc:     Chair, Council  
          Chair, Senior Management Committee

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## 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to define the actions and behaviours that constitute academic misconduct and plagiarism at the College, and how they are to be addressed, including:
- (a) responsibilities of the College, and the rights and responsibilities of staff and students with regard to the prevention and detection of academic misconduct and plagiarism;
  - (b) procedures to be applied consistently in the investigation and resolution of cases of alleged academic misconduct and plagiarism;
  - (c) advice to students on steps they should take to avoid committing academic misconduct and plagiarism.

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled with Raffles College of Design and Commerce (RCDC), including those enrolled at offshore campuses.

## 3 Definition of Terms

- 3.1 **Academic misconduct** involves dishonesty in academic matters, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- a) cheating, acting dishonestly, or otherwise attempting to gain an unfair advantage in an examination or any other assessment;
  - b) submitting, as one's own, work that another person has completed;
  - c) collusion with or assisting someone else to gain an unfair advantage in an examination or any other assessment;
  - d) misrepresenting, fabricating or falsifying information or data;
  - e) using information in breach of a duty of confidentiality;
  - f) attributing work to others who have not contributed to the research;
  - g) interfering with any research-related data, property or material of another person, or assisting someone else to do so;
  - h) making improper use of copyright material;
  - i) failing to report academic misconduct of which the person is aware.
- 3.2 **Plagiarism** refers to the use of another person's work, thoughts and/or intellectual property without appropriate reference or acknowledgement of that source, and includes:
- a) intentionally or unintentionally copying (in whole or in part) the work or data of other persons, or paraphrasing closely, substantial extracts from written, printed, electronic or other media, in written, oral, electronic, online or group assessment work, without due acknowledgment;
  - b) quoting or paraphrasing material from a source without appropriate acknowledgement;

- c) omitting reference to the relevant published work of others for the purpose of claiming personal discovery of new information;
- d) failing to acknowledge work primarily produced by a collaborator.

**Intentional Plagiarism** occurs when the student knows full well that they are passing off someone else's words or ideas as their own. Examples include copying an essay or article from the Internet or on-line sources, or electronic database without quoting or giving credit.

**Unintentional Plagiarism<sup>1</sup>** occurs when the student use the words or ideas of others but fail to quote or give credit, perhaps because he/she does not know how. Examples include paraphrasing poorly (changing a few words without changing the sentence structure, or changing the sentence structure but not the words), quoting poorly (putting quotation marks around part of a quotation but not around all of it) or citing poorly (omitting an occasional citation or citing inaccurately).

3.3 **Procedural fairness** refers to procedures that support natural justice, and includes ensuring that

- Students are informed, with adequate notice, of allegations and proceedings
- Students are provided with opportunity to respond and be heard
- Decision makers have no conflict of interest or prior involvement in the case
- Proceedings are carried out, and determinations made properly and without bias

## 4 Policy Principles

4.1 Ethical conduct and academic integrity and honesty are fundamental to the mission of the College.

4.2 The principles for assessing a case of alleged plagiarism or academic misconduct are as follows:

- (a) each case will be treated on its merits;
- (b) the extent and nature of the plagiarism and/or academic misconduct, the context and the student's history in regard to plagiarism and/or academic misconduct, will be principal criteria;
- (c) investigations under this policy and advice to the student of the outcomes of the investigation will be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Action Policy.

## 5 Responsibilities

### 5.1 Responsibilities of the College

The College has an obligation to:

- (a) set in place and notify all academic staff and students of the policies and procedures relating to academic misconduct and plagiarism;
- (b) inform all parties of their rights and responsibilities;
- (c) ensure that the policies and procedures are implemented consistently;
- (d) advise students on how to avoid committing academic misconduct and plagiarism;
- (e) advise staff on how to minimise opportunities for academic misconduct and plagiarism by students, and how to detect instances of it;

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<sup>1</sup> International and Unintentional plagiarism, Baylor School

- (f) provide students with adequate opportunity to answer allegations of academic misconduct and plagiarism;
- (g) provide an appropriate process for students to appeal against decisions arising from allegations of academic misconduct and plagiarism;
- (h) maintain a central Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism file securely and allow appropriate access only to persons with a legitimate need for the data in order to discharge their duties and responsibilities

## **5.2 Responsibilities of College Academic Staff**

All academic staff have a responsibility to:

- (a) know the policy of the College on academic misconduct and plagiarism, and apply it consistently;
- (b) explain to students, modelling good scholarly practice, the concept of academic misconduct and plagiarism, and play a central role in assisting the College to discharge the responsibilities listed above;
- (c) ensure that adequate information is provided to students about referencing requirements and academic conventions for the use of others' work, as appropriate for the discipline;
- (d) take all reasonable steps to ensure that information presented is reliable and up to date;
- (e) inform students of obligations regarding acknowledgment of collaborative work, and give clear guidelines for group work;
- (f) provide students with notification or fair warning if they believe any individual student or group of students may be at risk of breaching guidelines relating to academic misconduct and plagiarism;
- (g) give clear feedback about referencing problems;
- (h) refer students to sources of advice on academic writing;
- (i) ensure that allegations of academic misconduct and plagiarism are based on probative evidence;
- (k) check for plagiarism in student assessment submissions, using computer assisted and manual methods; and
- (j) report cases in which there is evidence of academic misconduct and plagiarism to the Dean.

## **5.3 Responsibilities and Rights of Students**

5.3.1 Students have a responsibility and obligation to:

- (a) read, understand and comply with this policy;
- (b) familiarise themselves with the conventions of referencing for the discipline;
- (c) avoid acts which constitute plagiarism or academic misconduct;
- (d) seek assistance from appropriate sources and support services if they become aware that they need more knowledge and skills;
- (e) ensure that when they submit an assessment task manually or electronically, the assessment complies with this Policy;
- (f) report academic misconduct or plagiarism of which they are aware.

5.3.2 Students should:

- (a) be informed of the policies of the College with respect to academic misconduct and plagiarism;
- (b) be provided with clear guidelines on academic writing styles required;

- (c) receive practical comments which assist them to review their work and apply the principles in this Policy;
- (d) expect clear guidelines relating to all aspects of group work and collaboration;
- (e) expect notification or fair warning in the case where an academic staff member believes a student or group of students may be at risk of breaching guidelines relating to academic misconduct and plagiarism;
- (f) participate in appropriate learning experiences designed to improve competency in writing and study skills, understanding of the requirements of group work and collaboration, and development of personal attributes, in particular, ethical behaviour;
- (g) expect consistent interpretation of this policy.

5.3.3 Where an allegation of plagiarism or academic misconduct has been made, the student will be advised promptly in writing of relevant matters, including:

- (a) the nature of the allegation;
- (b) their right to present a case in writing or orally to the Dean;
- (c) the student support available; and
- (d) the fact that upon completion of the investigation by the Dean and/or Standing Panel in relation to the case, the student will receive a written statement as to the outcome of the investigation and the decision on the penalty.

## 6 Process for Handling Allegations of Student Plagiarism or Academic Misconduct

This process sets out the guideline for handling allegations of student misconduct in a manner that is consistent, clear, and in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness, and generally includes the following procedures:

- 6.1 **Detection:** If a member of staff or a fellow student has reason to suspect plagiarism or academic misconduct, that person must inform the subject lecturer and Program Director at the earliest opportunity. The staff member will investigate whether there is any probative evidence to support the suspicion.
- 6.2 **Allegation:** When plagiarism or academic misconduct is suspected, and there is some probative evidence to support the allegation, the staff member must submit a written report on the matter to the Dean detailing the evidence on which the allegation is based. If the allegation is one of plagiarism, the staff member must also present a copy of the work with the alleged plagiarism identified, and any other evidence to be relied upon to support the claim of plagiarism.
- 6.3 **Determination:** Based on the evidence and materials available, the Dean will determine whether or not there is a prima facie case of plagiarism or academic misconduct.
- 6.4 **Continuation:** From this point, the investigation must proceed as per the processes in the Student Disciplinary Action Policy, including notifying the student, providing the opportunity for the student to respond, making a determination, penalties, informing the student of the determination and their right of appeal, the process of appealing and record-keeping.
- 6.5 **Central Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism file:** At the end of the matter, whatever decision is reached, a record of the final decision will be deposited in the Central Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism file maintained by the Student Services Manager of RCDC.

- 6.6 **Annual Report:** At the end of each academic year the Student Services Manager will submit a report to the Academic Board listing by Department the number of investigations that were carried out, and what ultimate decision was made, and the nature of the penalty.
- 6.7 The Student Services Manager may recommend any changes to this Policy, or procedures involved, that they believe are necessary or appropriate to improve it, or its effectiveness or fairness. In any event, the Academic Board shall review the Policy every 12 months on receipt of the Student Services Manager's report, and recommend any necessary improvements or refinements to the Policy in light of the prior year's experience or other circumstances.

## 7 International Students

Where an international student is suspended, or enrolment terminated, due to academic misconduct or plagiarism, RCDC is required to inform the student in writing of its intention to suspend or cancel his/her enrolment and to advise that the suspension or termination of the student's enrolment may affect his/her student visa. The student shall be advised that he/she has 20 working days within which to lodge an appeal against the decision. If the student does not exercise the right to appeal, or appeal results in the original decision being upheld, RCDC shall proceed to inform the Department of Education and Training via Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).

## 8 Supporting and Related Documents

Student Misconduct Policy and Procedure

Student Grievance and Appeal Policy and Procedure