

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY FOR COURSEWORK AWARDS

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Approved by	Coursework Committee
Responsible Body	Coursework Committee
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Superseded documents	None
Related documents	<i>Grievance Resolution Policy for Domestic students</i> <i>Grievance Resolution Policy for Overseas Students</i>

1. PURPOSE

To uphold the highest possible standards of academic integrity within ACT coursework awards.

2. DEFINITIONS

Academic Board is the Academic Board of the ACT.

Academic Dean refers to an Academic dean or equivalent officer of an **affiliated college**.

Academic integrity is academic and research honesty, including observance of ethical standards.

Academic misconduct is engaging in practices including but not limited to cheating in tests, examinations, essays or other assessable work, plagiarism, unauthorised collusion, fraudulent or unethical research and scholarship practices.

ACT is the *Australian College of Theology Limited*.

ACT award is a qualification conferred by the ACT which is certified by a testamur.

Affiliated College is an institution approved to offer an accredited higher education award of the ACT.

Assessment is the evaluation and measurement of student performance.

Cheating is attempting to obtain advantage in an assessment through dishonesty, deception or in contravention of any applicable regulations.

Contract cheating is when a student uses or seeks to use another party to undertake part or whole of their assessed work for them. This work may be paid or unpaid.

Coursework is work done by a **student** within a **unit** of study to a set curriculum and **assessment** schedule.

Coursework Committee is the ACT committee with oversight of **coursework units**.

Director of Academic Services is the officer of the **ACT** who manages academic administration, performance assessment and quality assurance.

Director of Learning and Teaching is the officer of the **ACT** who oversees all learning and teaching within **coursework**.

Domestic student is a **student** who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident.

Handbook is a publication detailing the information such as courses and policies for different courses of study. The **ACT** produces several handbooks for different purposes.

Marker is a qualified person appointed to mark **assessments** by an **affiliated college**.

Overseas student is a **student** who is in Australia on a student visa enrolled with the **ACT** through its **affiliated colleges**.

Plagiarism is to take and use another person's ideas and to fail to give appropriate acknowledgement. This includes material from any source, including other staff or students, the Internet, published and un-published works.

Registrar is the registrar or equivalent officer of an affiliated college.

Recycling is submitting for assessment work that has previously been submitted in a unit for which a student has already gained (or expects to gain) academic credit, or reusing words and ideas from a writer's own previously published work without proper attribution.

Student is a student of the **ACT**. They may be a prospective, enrolled or former student.

Student records are records kept by the **ACT** and its **affiliated colleges** about each **student** and include enrolment, attendance, **assessment** and other information pertaining to their study.

TAMS is the Theological Academic Management System used to maintain the **ACT student** records.

Turnitin is an online based text-matching software service. It facilitates electronic **assessment** marking, formative feedback and originality checking.

Unit is a block of study in a particular field.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all ACT coursework awards.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The **Australian College of Theology (ACT)** is committed to the principle of **academic integrity**. In line with tertiary institutions throughout Australia, **ACT** regards academic misconduct as a serious matter. **Affiliated colleges** are responsible for rigorously pursuing the highest possible standards of academic integrity.

5. PRINCIPLES

Definition of Academic Misconduct

5.1 Academic misconduct may encompass the following actions:

- a) taking unauthorised materials into an examination;
- b) engaging in **contract cheating** by engaging another party to undertake part of whole of an assessment item and submitting work for an assessment knowing it to be the work of another person;
- c) improperly obtaining knowledge of an examination paper and using that knowledge in the examination;
- d) endeavouring to gain unfair access to content and information where such access is not permitted;
- e) arranging for another person to sit an examination in the place of the candidate;
- f) failing to acknowledge the source of material in an assessment, including project or thesis, in any ACT program;
- g) submitting a false medical certificate;
- h) submitting incorrect, incomplete or misleading information.

Resources

5.2 The ACT provides access to Turnitin to its affiliated colleges as a tool in the identification of instances of potential academic misconduct.

Acknowledgment and Usage of Sources

5.3 Students are expected to acknowledge the source of their ideas and expressions used in their written work. To provide adequate documentation is not only an indication of academic honesty but also a courtesy enabling the marker to consult sources with ease. Deliberate failure to provide documentation may constitute plagiarism or recycling, which are subject to charges of academic misconduct.

5.4 Plagiarism is understood to be the presentation of another person's words or thoughts either as one's own or without appropriate acknowledgement. Students are required to acknowledge by use of footnotes the origin of extracts, quotes and paraphrases contained in their work. Quoted material shall be identified by relevant conventions.

5.5 Except in the case of ACT approved study and assessment schemes, students ought not to assist other students in the writing of individual assessments, such as providing written material to be copied.

5.6 Material submitted for assessment by a student in a unit for which the student has already gained (or expects to gain) academic credit may not be submitted for assessment by the student in any other unit. Students are also

prohibited from reusing in their assignments words and ideas from their own previously published work without proper attribution. Both of these practices constitute recycling. Material submitted by a student for assessment in a unit which was not successfully completed may be submitted again in the same unit if re-enrolled, or in another unit of study. This is not seen as recycling as no academic credit was awarded for the completion of the work.

Procedures

- 5.7 Where a marker suspects intentional or inadvertent academic misconduct, the marker is to consult the Academic Dean who will make a determination regarding the nature of the student's intentions.
- 5.8 In the case of inadvertent academic dishonesty resulting from misunderstanding of academic conventions rather than deliberate deception, students are to be granted an opportunity to resubmit a corrected assessment, the marker shall deduct marks from the assessment and the Academic Dean is to counsel the student concerning the academic conventions prevailing in the ACT.
- 5.9 Students who have knowingly divulged, or caused to be divulged, the content of an examination to other students who are yet to complete the examination, will be dealt with by separate disciplinary processes approved by the Academic Board.
- 5.10 Students who have intentionally and knowingly received information relating to the content or nature of an examination for a unit in which they are enrolled, except that which was commonly released by the lecturer/s as part of the unit, will be dealt with by separate disciplinary processes approved by the Academic Board.
- 5.11 Students who have engaged in **contract cheating** by intentionally and knowingly using or sought to use another party to undertake part or whole of their assessed work for them, whether paid or unpaid, will be dealt with by separate disciplinary processes approved by the Academic Board.
- 5.12 Affiliated colleges are required to report to the Director of Academic Services all offences with respect to plagiarism and cheating for recording in TAMS. Such information shall be available to registrars by means of a note on the student's record on TAMS to any affiliated college with which a student is either enrolled or intends to enrol.

Penalties

- 5.13 Wilful academic misconduct may result in the following penalties:
 - a) the awarding of a fail grade for the whole unit of which the assessment is a part,
 - b) the awarding of 0% for the assessment or thesis or project with or without the opportunity to redeem it,

- c) the student's exclusion from the ACT award in which he or she is enrolled for a period not exceeding two years,
- d) exclusion from any award of the Australian College of Theology, or
- e) another outcome appropriate to the case but with an impact less serious than exclusion from enrolment in any ACT award.

5.14 *Plagiarism and cheating are both serious academic offences. However, the ACT also recognises the importance of educating students about the seriousness of the offence. Thus the penalties given below reflect both the seriousness of the offence and the desire to give students a chance to learn from their actions. A distinction is made between single occurrences, and multiple concurrent occurrences, in which plagiarism is found within multiple assessment tasks in one or more units concurrently:*

a) First offence

For a single occurrence in a first offence, a student will be subject to academic counselling, with the maximum penalty being to fail the assessment item with no marks awarded. Where deemed appropriate, the minimum penalty available will be that a student may be granted an opportunity to resubmit the assessment with a maximum of 50% for the assessment.

If multiple concurrent occurrences are detected, a student will be subject to the same potential penalties as for a single first offence and will also be placed on conditional enrolment as set out in the Progression and Intervention Policy.

b) Second offence:

For a second offence a student will fail the unit, with no remedial opportunity.

If multiple concurrent occurrences are detected, the student will be deemed to have committed a third offence and the potential penalties for a third offence will apply.

c) Third or major offence:

For a third or major offence, whether single or multiple concurrent occurrences, a student may be excluded from any ACT award, or excluded from the enrolled ACT award for up to two years, or any other outcome appropriate to the case but with an impact less serious than exclusion.

5.15 In the case of severe plagiarism and/or cheating, or where students have engaged in **contract cheating** by intentionally and knowingly used or had sought to use another party to undertake part or the whole of their assessed work for them, whether paid or unpaid, a student may be subject to a separate disciplinary process approved by the Academic Board.

Appeals

- 5.16 For domestic students enrolled in a coursework unit, any appeal against an outcome will be dealt with in accordance with the *Dispute Grievance Resolution Policy for Domestic Students* (section 3) which can be accessed on the ACT website and in the Handbooks.
- 5.17 For overseas students enrolled in a coursework unit, any appeal against an outcome will be dealt with in accordance with the *Dispute Grievance Resolution Policy for International Overseas Students* (section 3) which can be accessed on the ACT website and in the Handbooks.

6. RELATED LEGISLATION

none

7. REFERENCES

TEQSA Academic integrity toolkit: <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/contract-cheating>

TEQSA Good Practice Note: Addressing contract cheating to safeguard academic integrity: <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/good-practice-note-addressing-contract-cheating-safeguard-academic>

8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
1	Dean	12 March 2008		
2	Dean	30 October 2010		
3	Academic Board	14 March 2014		
4	Coursework Committee	5 August 2016	5 August 2016	Recognition of ACT's use of Turnitin; change to the penalty of a first instance of wilful academic misconduct; requirement that the Academic Dean in each college be responsible for identifying wilful academic misconduct.
5	Coursework Committee	16 March 2018	16 March 2018	Update penalties for offences, including reference to concurrent offences.
6	Coursework Committee	26 July 2019	22 October 2019	Add 'recycling' to definition. Amend 5.3 & 5.6.
7	Coursework Committee	16 April 2021	16 April 2023	Introduce definition and references to contract cheating; update 5.6 student recycling statement when repeating a non-completed unit; policy

				statement and title update.
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Any hard copy of this electronic document may not be current as the ACT regularly reviews its policies. The latest version can be found online at <http://www.actheology.edu.au/policies.php>.