



Royal Australasian College
of Dental Surgeons

Let knowledge conquer disease

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2020

Document Information

Nature of Document:	Revised Policy
Document Number:	EXT_EDU_013_3.0
Version:	3.0
Policy Area:	Education
Contact Officer:	Director of Education
Authorised:	Education Policy Board
Approved:	Education Policy Board
Date Effective:	30/09/2020
Date of Next Review:	30/09/2025
Policy Status:	Current
Related Policies:	MRACDS (GDP) Assessment Policy Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy OMS Final Examination Policy OMS Surgical Science & Training (SST) Examination Policy
Related Documents:	Examination Incident Report

1. *Purpose and scope*

This Policy outlines the collective responsibilities of all members of the College Community to protect, practice and promote academic integrity in all College assessment and examination activities, including computer-based examinations or any future delivery method and details the actions to be taken should a breach in academic integrity be suspected or confirmed.

2. *Background*

A core principle underpinning the education and assessment activities of the College is the expectation that all members of the College community demonstrate commitment to, and behaviour consistent with high levels of academic integrity.

The majority of the College Community consists of individuals who have completed a University degree confirming the privilege to practice dentistry. Given this tertiary education background, it is expected that all members of the College Community will understand the principles of academic integrity and will demonstrate honest, ethical and respectful personal behaviour in all College interactions, activities and assessments. Members of the College Community are encouraged to seek assistance if they are in doubt about expectations with respect to academic integrity.

A breach in academic integrity a serious matter. The College will investigate alleged breaches in academic integrity and will take action where academic misconduct has occurred.

3. *Academic Integrity and academic misconduct*

Academic integrity is the demonstration of honest, ethical and respectful behaviour in all College interactions, activities and assessments.

A breach of academic integrity may constitute academic misconduct. Academic misconduct has occurred when behaviour or action (intentional or unintentional) breaches the principles underpinning academic integrity. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism - the presentation of another person's work as though they were one's own.
- Unauthorised collaboration – presentation of another person or groups work where individual work and/or answers are required.
- Unauthorised materials and resources – use of written, electronic, graphic and other materials and devices that have not been expressly permitted.
- Impersonation – where someone other than the person registered for an assessment undertakes the assessment on behalf of the registrant.
- Duplication – multiple submissions of the same work for multiple assessments.
- Assisting others in academic misconduct.

3.1. *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's work as though it is one's own. All work submitted as part of the requirements for any examination or other assessment must be expressed in the individuals own words and incorporate their own ideas and judgments. The College acknowledges that the majority of individuals exercise great care to acknowledge the sources of their work appropriately. Sources may include the internet, published articles or texts, clinical material, or the work of another person.

Direct quotes or extracts from a published or unpublished work of others must always be identified as such by being placed inside quotation marks and a full reference to the source must be provided in the proper form. A series of short quotations from several different sources, if not clearly identified as such, constitutes plagiarism, as does a single unacknowledged long quotation from a single source.

Plagiarism must be avoided with particular care with examinations and assessments including clinical logbooks, case reports and research requirements.

The College undertakes regular plagiarism audits using Plagiarism Detection Software with application across all activities including examination, assessment and case reports.

3.2. *Academic misconduct*

Academic misconduct embraces a range of activities and behaviour including but not limited to:

- Introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room, for example; notes, textbooks or study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries, personal stereos, mobile phones, smartwatches or other similar electronic devices.
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information (or attempting to do so) which could be examination related by means of talking, written papers/notes, telephone, internet, social media posts or by any other method.
- Attempting to solicit information on a forthcoming examination from examiners, observers, invigilators, or College/venue staff, or from candidates from an earlier examination.
- Attempting to gain an unfair advantage by copying the work or seeking the help of others.
- Failing to abide by the instructions of invigilators, examiners, observers or College staff in relation to the examination rules and regulations.
- Impersonating someone else with the sole purpose of attempting to sit an examination on behalf of another candidate or arranging for a third party to sit the examination on your behalf.
- Misuse of examination material, e.g. by passing or attempting to pass such material to a third party after the examination. This includes posting information about the content of examination on the internet, social media or any other method of information dissemination.
- Bribing or attempting to unduly influence an examination official or any other participant in the examination process.
- Behaving in such a way as to be disruptive, abusive or undermine the integrity of the examination.
- Taking a screenshot or screen recording of any examination material, sharing examination material, such as Case Reports, or sharing notes with other candidates in the case of online and computer-based assessments.

Other breaches in academic integrity may constitute academic misconduct and will be considered by the College at its discretion.

4. *Levels of academic misconduct*

For the purposes of this policy, breaches in academic integrity will be categorised into one of two levels of academic misconduct. Where the breach occurs during a final examination or assessment or when categorisation cannot be clearly identified, the breach is to be categorised as Level 2 academic misconduct.

4.1. *Level 1 academic misconduct*

Level 1 academic misconduct is a first breach in academic integrity by an individual where the breach is minor and/or unintended and reflective of naivety or lack of understanding of the acceptable academic practice.

4.2. *Level 2 academic misconduct*

Level 2 academic misconduct is a breach in academic integrity by an individual where the breach is serious, is a second or subsequent breach, and/or is intentional. A first offence that is serious and deemed intentional in nature can be treated as a Level 2 offence. A breach that occurs during a final examination or assessment or when 'Level categorisation' cannot be clearly identified is categorised as Level 2 academic misconduct.

5. *Academic Integrity Officer*

The Director of Education will designate an Academic Integrity Officer (AIO), who may be a member of RACDS Staff, to investigate alleged breaches of academic integrity.

6. *Allegations of academic misconduct*

Actual and potential breaches in academic integrity are to be reported to the Director of Education (DoE) and Registrar by examiners, observers, invigilators, candidates, examination/College staff or venue staff as soon as the breach is identified or suspected.

The DoE is to make a written description of the alleged breach, including a summary of the evidence supporting the allegation. The DoE and the Registrar jointly determine if the information available supports the allegation that a breach has potentially occurred, the Level of the alleged academic misconduct, and decide on the actions to be taken by the College.

- Allegations suggestive of Level 1 academic misconduct of a minor and/or unintended nature, and the first for the individual concerned will normally be managed by the Registrar with a focus on correction/remediation and education. First instances of Level 1 academic misconduct do not usually result in a sanction.
- Allegations suggestive of Level 2 academic misconduct (or a second or subsequent Level 1 breach) are to be referred to the AIO by the DoE who is to be tasked to undertake a detailed investigation to establish the full facts and circumstances of the alleged misconduct. At the conclusion of the investigation the AIO will provide a full report detailing the findings of the investigation.

The individual who is alleged to have breached academic integrity is to be informed of the allegation and the College process for managing such allegations. The individual is to be given a written description of the alleged breach and details of the evidence supporting the allegation. The individual is to be invited to respond in writing, within seven (7) working days to the allegations made. If the allegation is investigated by the AIO, at the conclusion of the investigation a full report detailing the findings of the investigation will be provided to the Registrar and the Director of Education. The individual concerned will be given fourteen (14) days to respond to the investigation report.

The College reserves the right to withhold examination and assessment results while investigations are ongoing. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, results may be released or permanently withheld. This applies to the results of one or more individuals.

7. *Investigation of academic misconduct*

Investigations of academic misconduct are to establish the full facts and circumstances of the alleged misconduct and to include a description of the misconduct, a summary of the evidence supporting the alleged misconduct, the nature, scope, extent and intention (deliberate / intentional) of the misconduct, any response received from the individual to the allegation and any past history of misconduct. At the conclusion of the investigation the AIO will provide a full report detailing the findings of the investigation.

8. *Outcomes of academic misconduct investigation*

After consideration by the DoE and Registrar of the written description of the alleged breach including a summary of the evidence supporting the allegation, any response received from the individual to the allegation, and/or report of the investigation by the AIO, the finding may be that no academic misconduct has

occurred. In this circumstance, no further action required.

In situations where the allegation of academic misconduct is upheld (allegation is substantiated) and in consideration to the response from the individual to the investigation findings, the Registrar will take the following actions.

First offence and minor in nature. The College will take an educative response. The individual concerned is supported to develop a better understanding and practical application of the behaviours associated with acceptable academic integrity. Corrective and/or remediation action is to be taken to address the specifics of the breach including resubmission of the problematic work or reassessment. Reassessment or resubmission will usually be undertaken within four weeks from the date the individual received advice of the breach. Resubmission may result in the candidate being awarded a pass for the reassessment. A written formal letter detailing the breach and a warning that any further breach will be treated as Level 2 academic misconduct with the attendant penalties is to be provided to the individual concerned.

Second or subsequent offence and/or Level 2 academic misconduct. Corrective and/or remediation action is to be taken to address the specifics of the breach as necessary. When considering the response to the misconduct, consideration needs to be taken with respect (but not limited to) the extent, intent and context of the misconduct, any history of previous misconduct, and any mitigating factors/circumstances.

The individual is to receive a written formal letter detailing the unacceptability of the breach, and:

A fail is recorded for the individual's piece of work, assessment or examination. Where circumstances allow, the individual may be permitted to re-submit the corrected work or re-sit the assessment or examination. Reassessment or resubmission will usually be undertaken within four weeks from the date the individual received advice of the breach. A candidate may be awarded a pass for the reassessment.

OR

Removal from the program. In situations of deliberate and serious academic misconduct and/or repeat offences, the individual may be removed from the program and disqualified from re-entry.

The Registrar can apply any of these sanctions or penalties. Any penalty imposed must be reasonable, proportionate, justifiable, equitable and fair given proper consideration to the extent of the breach and the intent of this policy.

9. Communicating Decisions

The candidate will be informed of any decision in writing as soon as possible after decisions are made.

10. Appeals

Individuals who have found to have breached academic integrity and who wish to appeal the finding and/or outcome are referred to the College's Reconsideration, Review & Appeals Policy.

Acknowledgement

This policy has been developed with consideration to similar aligned Australian and New Zealand University policies and statements.