Sydney College of Professional Education Pty Ltd | ABN: 78648109040
RTO Code: 46019 | CRICOS Code 04135H
Address: Level 1, 133 Parramatta Road, Granville, NSW 2142
Tel: 0278060845 | Email: info@scpe.edu.au
Website: www.SCPE.edu.au

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY AND ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES

## PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy establishes Sydney College of Professional Education (SCPE)'s commitment to maintaining the integrity, fairness, and credibility of its assessment processes. It ensures that all assessment outcomes genuinely reflect each student's individual knowledge, skills, and effort. The policy supports compliance with Standard 1.4 of the Standards for RTOs 2025 and CRICOS obligations, by outlining the mechanisms for preventing, identifying, and responding to academic misconduct, including plagiarism, collusion, and the inappropriate use of AI-generated content.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a high-quality vocational education and training (VET) system. It underpins the credibility and validity of the qualifications issued by a RTO and protects the interests of students, employers, regulators, and the broader community.

All students are expected to:

- Submit work that is their own and appropriately referenced
- Acknowledge the use of external sources, including AI-generated content
- Understand and comply with SCPE's academic integrity expectations as outlined in the Student Handbook and during Orientation.

The Standards for RTOs 2025 place a strong emphasis on the delivery of training and assessment that is valid, fair, and reliable, and on the issuing of qualifications that genuinely reflect a student's competence. SCPE's Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure supports this by ensuring that all work submitted by students is their own, that assessment practices are free from misconduct, and that breaches of integrity are appropriately addressed.

A clear policy supports fairness, consistency, and transparency in how allegations of misconduct are handled, promoting trust and accountability across the training environment. It also plays an important role in educating students about expectations, preventing misconduct before it occurs, and equipping staff with consistent procedures for detection and response.

Academic integrity is fundamental to the trustworthiness of training outcomes. This policy establishes a structured, auditable process to detect academic misconduct and protect the integrity of qualifications issued by Sydney College of Professional Education (SCPE).

SCPE is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity across all training and assessment activities through robust integrity assurance measures, including the use of plagiarism detection tools, AI-content analysis where appropriate, and routine validation of student work.

Students must correctly reference all sources of information, ideas, data, or quotations used in their work. This includes content from books, articles, websites, and any external materials. Proper referencing not only demonstrates academic honesty but also strengthens the credibility of the student's work. Failure to reference appropriately may be considered plagiarism and a breach of academic integrity.

SCPE does not permit the use of AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT). AI-assisted tools may be used to support learning, such as checking grammar, summarising concepts, or generating practice questions, provided they do not write or generate the student's assessment responses. Students must acknowledge any AI tool used. The use of AI to write or reword assessment answers is considered misconduct unless explicitly permitted.

Being found guilty of academic misconduct is a serious matter and may result in a range of consequences depending on the nature and severity of the breach. Consequences can include a warning, being required to resubmit an assessment, receiving a Not Yet Competent result, or in more serious cases, suspension or cancellation of enrolment. Repeated or deliberate breaches, such as contract cheating or falsifying declarations, may also result in formal disciplinary action in accordance with SCPE's policies. All instances of misconduct are recorded and may impact the student's academic record and eligibility to complete their course.

Staff are provided with comprehensive guidance, training, and procedural support to promote ethical assessment practices, detect breaches of integrity, and respond to misconduct fairly and consistently. This policy reflects SCPE's broader commitment to the quality and credibility of its qualifications, the integrity of its assessment systems, and its obligations under the Standards for RTOs 2025.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled in nationally recognised training and all staff involved in training, assessment and student support.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Academic Misconduct:** any action or behaviour by a student that seeks to gain an unfair academic advantage or that undermines the integrity of assessment or learning. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication or falsification of information, collusion, and the unauthorised use of materials or assistance during assessments. Academic misconduct breaches the ethical standards of learning and assessment and may result in disciplinary action.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** computer systems or software capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. This includes activities such as recognising patterns, understanding natural language, learning from data, and making decisions. In the context of education and training, AI may be used for content generation, automated feedback, adaptive learning, and virtual assistance.

Responsible use of AI requires consideration of ethical standards, data accuracy, and academic integrity.

- **AI-generated content:** Content created by artificial intelligence tools (e.g., ChatGPT)
- **Collusion:** Unauthorised collaboration between students.
- **Plagiarism:** Using another person's work without acknowledgement.

## PROCEDURE

**Step 0: Academic Integrity Information**
Students' receiver clear, accessible information about academic integrity including examples of plagiarism, cheating, collusion and AI misuse. Targeted Orientation is provided to support understanding of Australian academic conventions, referencing and independent authorship. All academic integrity policies and consequences are published before and after enrolment in plain English.

**Step 1: Submission of Assessment**
Students must submit assessments in an editable digital format (e.g., Microsoft Word or PDF), including a signed declaration of originality. Handwritten work must be transcribed or provided digitally on request.

**Step 2: Initial Review by Assessor**
Assessors conduct a preliminary review of submissions for inconsistencies in writing style, tone, and structure. Sections of concern are flagged.

**Step 3: AI Detection**
Flagged content is checked using AI detection tools such as Scribbr or ZeroGPT. High-probability results trigger further scrutiny.

**Step 4: Plagiarism Detection**
Full assessments are scanned using a plagiarism checker (e.g., PlagiarismDetector.net). Assessor evaluates citation accuracy and nature of matches.

**Step 5: Recording of Integrity Checks**
Results from AI and plagiarism checks are recorded in the Assessment Integrity Register with details including student name, unit, date, tool, and action taken.

**Step 6: Student Notification and Resolution**
Suspected academic misconduct results in prompt written notification to the student, including:

- A clear explanation of the suspected breach
- Supporting evidence (e.g., plagiarism report, AI detection results)
- An opportunity for the student to respond, provide context, or clarify their actions.

Academic misconduct arising from cultural differences, language barriers, or unfamiliarity with Australian academic conventions is addressed supportively. SCPE provides access to study skills support, English language assistance, digital literacy resources, and guidance on referencing and independent authorship.

Fairness and natural justice principles are upheld at all stages**.** Investigations are transparent, impartial, and ensure that overseas students are not disadvantaged due to miscommunication or lack of understanding.

Where a breach is confirmed, the student may be required to:

- Resubmit the assessment
- Complete a supplementary (gap) task
- Receive a Not Yet Competent outcome
- Attend a meeting or training session on academic integrity

In cases of repeated or serious breaches, face suspension or cancellation of enrolment in accordance with SCPE's Misconduct Policy.

Students are advised of their right to:

- Request a review of the decision
- Lodge a formal appeal through SCPE's internal complaints and appeals process
- Access an external appeals process if dissatisfied with the internal outcome, in accordance with Standard 10 of the National Code 2018.

**Step 7: File Retention and Evidence Pack**
All files, check results, and communication records are saved to the student file for audit readiness.

## PROCEDURE SUMMARY TABLE

| Step & Action | Responsible | Tools / Forms | Timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 Provide academic integrity information to students | Student Administration and Support | Academic Integrity Policy Orientation Presentation Student Handbook | Pre-Enrolment and Orientation |
| 1 Assessment submitted in editable digital format with declaration | Student | Assessment Declaration Form | At time of assessment submission |
| 2 Review for style and consistency | Assessor | N/A | Within 2 business days of submission |
| 3 AI content detection | Assessor | Scribbr, ZeroGPT, or similar | Same day as Step 2 or within 1 business day |
| 4 Plagiarism detection | Assessor | PlagiarismDetector.net or similar | Same day as Step 3 or within 1 business day |
| 5 Log integrity check results | Assessor | Assessment Integrity Register | Immediately after Steps 3 & 4 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 Student notification and resolution | Assessor / Student Administration and Support / CEO | Email Record, Appeal Form (if required) | Within 1 business day of detection |
| 7 Save all evidence | Student Administration and Support | Student File Checklist | Immediately after Step 6 |

## POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is implemented through staff training, internal validation, and audit processes. Trainers and assessors are supported to use detection tools and record results appropriately.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The CEO/RTO Manager reviews academic integrity processes biannually or as issues arise. Updates to the policy are informed by sector best practice and emerging technology. Reviews will benchmark practice against national regulator ASQA, and trainers will undertake annual academic integrity refresher training.