

## Academic Integrity

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Major changes/additions since the last version was approved are indicated by a vertical line in the left-hand margin.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

Ara Institute of Canterbury<sup>1</sup> is committed to fostering a culture of academic integrity, where honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility are the foundation of all academic work.

The purpose of this policy is to provide principles and guidance in Ara-wide learning, teaching, and assessment practices that model and support academic integrity. This policy outlines expectations for academic conduct and the procedures for addressing breaches (academic misconduct), including the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) tools.

This policy aims to:

- Promote academic integrity and ethical scholarship.
- Educate learners and staff on responsible academic practices, including the use of AI.
- Provide a fair and transparent process for addressing breaches of academic integrity.

## 1.2 Scope and Application

- a This policy applies to all learners undertaking study with Ara and covers all forms of academic and work-integrated work, including but not limited to: written or oral assessments, presentations, projects and portfolios.
- b It relates to any breach of academic integrity whether intentional or unintentional.
- c It does not apply to misconduct involving research, as this is covered by a separate policy (APP804 Research Ethics). Academic misconduct involving staff is handled according to the policy (CPP208 Resolving Employee Performance or Conduct Issues).
- d This policy is to be read in conjunction with *APP301 Learner Responsibilities and Rights*, *APP506 Learner Behaviour Management* and *APP512 Suspension and Refusal/Cancellation of Enrolment*, and where appropriate with *CPP117 Raising Problems or Complaints* and *CPP117c Learner Complaints Procedures*.

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<sup>1</sup> From herein referred to as Ara

### 1.3 Definitions

- a **Academic Integrity** is the expectation that all members of the Ara academic community, including learners, behave ethically in all academic pursuits. It involves producing original work, acknowledging the contributions of others, and engaging in learning and assessment honestly, fairly and responsibly.
- b **Academic Misconduct** is any action that undermines academic integrity, including but not limited to plagiarism (including AI assisted plagiarism), cheating, misrepresenting identity, and dishonest use of technology including AI misuse. See *APP304a Definitions of Academic Integrity Breaches* for detailed definitions.
- c **Intentionally/unintentionally** as applied to instances of academic misconduct involving learners mean:
  - i Intentional academic misconduct: Misconduct with the intention to deceive or in circumstances where academic conventions (e.g. referencing) should have been understood and used.
  - ii Unintentional academic misconduct: Misconduct arising from genuine ignorance or misunderstanding of the use of appropriate academic conventions.
- d **AI Misuse** is the **inappropriate** or **undisclosed** use of AI tools to complete assessments in a way that **misrepresents** the learner's own understanding or effort.

### 1.4 Responsibilities

- a Ara is responsible for:
  - i Providing clear guidance on academic expectations, including AI use.
  - ii Offering educational support to help learners meet academic standards.
  - iii Ensuring staff model academic integrity and address misconduct appropriately, in a timely manner.
- a. Learners are responsible for:
  - i Submitting original work and acknowledging all sources.
  - ii Using digital tools and AI ethically and transparently, following course-specific guidelines.
  - iii Seeking clarification when unsure about academic expectations.

<p><b>Related Ara Procedures and Forms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">APP302b Flowchart for Learner Responsibilities and Associated Policies</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">APP517b Application for Academic Appeal form</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">APP304a Definitions of Academic Integrity Breaches</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">APP304b Levels of Academic Integrity Breaches</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Related Ara Policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">APP301 Learner Responsibilities and Rights</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">APP505 Assessment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">APP506 Learner Behaviour Management</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">APP511 Academic Support and Progression</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">APP512 Suspension and Refusal/Cancellation of Enrolment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">APP517 Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Related Legislation or Other Documentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privacy Act 2020</li> </ul>	<p><b>Good Practice Guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AI Academic Integrity Guidelines</li> </ul>
<p><b>References</b></p>	
<p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>The title of the first version of this policy was ‘Plagiarism, Cheating or Other Dishonest Practice’. The 2006 version was produced by staff appointed to a working party, with ongoing consultation carried out over many months. This included comparison with policies from our TANZ partners.</p> <p>2012 – Ara Policy and Procedures have been updated to reflect the changes in structure, committees, roles and delegations as a result of the (then) CPIT management restructure currently being implemented.</p> <p>2014 – Policy reviewed in conjunction with APP301 Students Rights and Responsibilities and APP506. Regulations Governing Probation etc.</p> <p>2016 – new branding</p> <p>2017 – Addition of statement that Formal Appeals are reported publicly every six months</p> <p>2018 – Restructure of Te Kāhui Manukura</p> <p>2020 – minor edits include adding 3.5c: If registration is to be impacted at the end of the programme, the penalty should reflect that at the point in time, not at the end of the programme.</p> <p>2020 – (July) NZIST changes – Academic Board becomes Ara Academic Committee; Ara Council becomes Ara Board; Creation of Academic Appeals Application forms and standardised text relating to appeals; APP301 – Rights and Responsibilities changed to Responsibilities and Rights; Changing ‘student’ to ‘learner’.</p> <p>3/2/21: Changed Infoweb to Waituhi in footer</p> <p>28/9/21: Privacy Act date updated</p> <p>21/12/22: change of name to CPP208 Resolving Staff Performance or Conduct Issues</p> <p>19/02/2026 : Academic Misconduct policy and procedures become part of Academic Integrity Policy</p>	

## 2 Principles

- 2.1 Staff will ensure learners are fully informed regarding appropriate assessment practices.
- 2.2 Learners will be supported to understand academic integrity and responsible use of AI.
- 2.3 Prevention and education are prioritised over penalty.
- 2.4 All allegations will be handled confidentially, respectfully, consistently, and in a timely manner.
- 2.5 Every person has the right to representation, advice, advocacy, and support at all stages of any of the processes under this policy. This includes information on the availability of the services of the Student Advocate. It also includes the right to be accompanied by one or more appropriate people of their choice at any meetings.
- 2.6 The course of Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness will be followed.
- 2.7 Every person has the right to access personal information as per the Privacy Act 2020.

### **3 Associated Procedures for Breaches of Academic Integrity (Academic Misconduct)**

<b>Contents:</b>	3.1	Introduction
	3.2	Preventative Steps
	3.3	Natural Justice/Procedural Fairness
	3.4	Dealing with Allegations of Academic Misconduct
	3.5	Educative Process
	3.6	Penalties
	3.7	Appeal Rights

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Any action that undermines academic integrity is considered academic misconduct and is unacceptable. Staff are expected to demonstrate integrity themselves and to take appropriate steps to ensure learners understand what constitutes academic integrity and misconduct. Prevention is the overall goal, rather than punishment; however, any form of academic misconduct, once admitted or established, will be handled quickly. It can result in an educative process and/or a penalty or penalties, depending on the circumstances. Dishonest academic practices may constitute 'unacceptable behaviour', as set out in the *APP301a Learner Responsibilities and Rights*.

#### **3.2 Preventative Steps**

- a Ara is responsible for fully informing all learners and staff about the standards, expectations and timelines required for assessed work including referencing, use of digital tools (including assistive writing platforms) and AI, providing clear guidelines regarding group work/jointly prepared assignments and for explaining what constitutes academic misconduct.
- b Ara is responsible for providing adequate educational support so that learners develop the appropriate skills for meeting the Ara academic standards.

#### **3.3 Natural Justice/Procedural Fairness**

- a Every person affected by this policy has the right to a copy of the policy and any other information as needed to clarify any point or process. This includes clear information on what constitutes a breach of academic integrity. Included will be information related to:
  - i Representation, advice, advocacy, and support at all stages of any of the processes covered by this policy, including information about the Student Advocate service and the right for a support person/s at any meeting. All parties will be informed of invited attendees prior to any meeting.
  - ii Any evidence related to alleged academic misconduct prior to any formal meeting, unless a second person is involved in the allegation.
  - iii The potential consequences of any form of academic misconduct being admitted or established.
  - iv The learner's right to respond to any allegation or suggested outcome prior to the final decision being made.
  - v Access all personal information held about them, unless good reason exists under the Privacy Act 2020 for not disclosing such information.
- b Ara leaders encourage learners to consult with the Student Advocate, student representatives and student advisors concerning any matters arising from this policy.
- c Each step covered by this policy is documented, including dates, who was present, what was discussed and what decisions, if any, were reached.
- d Every outcome/decision taken is notified in writing to the person/s concerned. This includes notification about any appeal or other rights.

### 3.4 Dealing with Allegations of Academic Misconduct

- a Any learner, staff member or assessor/examiner who suspects that all or part of a learner's submitted work is the result of academic misconduct is expected to report this to the Portfolio Manager's delegate. (refer to *APP304a Definitions of Academic Integrity Breaches*)
- b The Portfolio Manager's delegate (e.g., SASM, Course or Programme Lead) will carry out a preliminary investigation to determine whether and to what level a breach of academic integrity is likely to have occurred, and whether it was intentional or unintentional (refer to *APP304b Levels of Academic Integrity Breaches*). This may include reports from detection tools such as Turnitin.com, as well as interviews with relevant staff and all learners who may have been involved. Others may be asked to assist with the investigation as needed.
  - i A request to interview a learner or learners must describe the allegation and supporting evidence in writing and include a copy of this policy. Learners are to be given sufficient time to seek advice, advocacy, and support if they wish.
  - ii Learners have the right to be accompanied by one or more appropriate people of her/his choice at any meetings. If more than three people are to accompany the learner, prior notice must be given to the convenor of the meeting, and their attendance is subject to the agreement of Ara.
  - iii If more than one learner is implicated or involved, each learner will be interviewed separately. They are each entitled to support, but the support person must not be someone who is also implicated or involved in the allegation being investigated.
  - iv If misconduct is admitted or established, the next step is to determine whether it was intentional or unintentional, based on information such as the frequency of the misconduct, its seriousness, the academic level of the course, the learner/s involved and the amount of information/assistance given to learners to decrease the likelihood of misconduct occurring in the first place (refer to *APP304b Levels of Academic Integrity Breaches*).
- c The Portfolio Manager's delegate prepares a brief written report with recommendations.
- d If the Portfolio Manager's delegate accepts that the misconduct was unintentional, an educative process (described in Section 3.5, below) is undertaken. If it is decided the misconduct was intentional, the appropriate penalty/penalties, as set out in Section 3.6, are implemented.

### 3.5 Educative Process

- a Actions under this category may include any or all of the following (see also *APP304b Levels of Academic Integrity Breaches*):
  - i Facilitated discussion with appropriate academic staff member.
  - ii A referral to Learning Services or other appropriate staff member for skills development, including specific learning outcomes and timeframes.
  - iii Additional work (e.g. an assignment designed to assess whether the learner has learned the appropriate skills) may be required.
  - iv Academic support and monitoring plan.
  - v Other actions, as determined for particular circumstances.
- b A formal written warning and/or deduction of marks from the original assessment may also occur, depending on the specific circumstances.

### 3.6 Penalties

- a Regulations set by any relevant external body (e.g. NZQA for some national qualifications) are checked to identify whether there are any specified external standards or procedures related to plagiarism or other forms of misconduct that need to be considered.
- b The Portfolio Manager, in consultation with their delegate will usually make the final decision regarding any penalty. However, where appropriate the Portfolio Manager will consult with the Dean of Faculty. Where the Portfolio Manager has been the initial investigator, the elevation is required to the Dean of Faculty. Provisions set out in related policies (e.g. *APP506 Learner Behaviour Management* and *APP512 Suspension and Refusal/Cancellation of Enrolment*) are followed if relevant to the particular case. Penalties can include any or all of the following (see also *APP304b Levels of Academic Integrity Breaches*):
  - i Decision not to mark or assess the work or record a mark/grade.
  - ii Formally recorded fail/zero grade for the work concerned, which remains on the learner's academic record.
  - iii Cancellation of credit already awarded if academic misconduct is admitted/established after assessments have been completed and recorded.
  - iv Formal note indicating 'Intentional Plagiarism' (or other misconduct) placed on academic record for a specified period of time.
  - v Formal written warning.
  - vi Probation, suspension, or cancellation/refusal of enrolment as defined in *APP506 Learner Behaviour Management* and *APP512 Suspension and Refusal/Cancellation of Enrolment*.
  - vii Other penalty, as determined for the particular case.

### 3.7 Appeal Rights

- a Any learner affected by a decision made under this policy may appeal that decision in writing to the Chief Executive within ten working days from the date on the advice of the decision (refer to *APP517b Application for Academic Appeal Form*).
- b The Chief Executive may choose to respond to the appeal directly or authorise the convening of an Academic Appeals Committee (refer *APP517 Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference*) which must be done within ten working days of receiving the appeal. The next steps must be communicated to the student within 15 working days.
- c If an Academic Appeals Committee is convened, they will determine the matter and communicate its decision to all the parties.
- d Appeal decisions are reported publicly every six months. Please note no identifying information is published.



## Flowchart for Learner Responsibilities and Rights and Associated Policies

All learners enrolled at or attending/using services of Ara are expected to accept certain responsibilities, respect the rights of others and behave in an acceptable manner

### Learner Responsibilities and Rights

APP301

