Academic Misconduct Policy

Version Control			
Version	**Author**	**Date**	**Changes**
1.01	Quay Huong Tran[1]	23rd May 2022	Included a version control table

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[1] This date is only indicative, and the said policy may be reviewed before due to changes in the macro and/or microenvironment.

Policy: Academic Misconduct	Date created: December 2017	Date implemented: January 2018
Responsibility: Quay Tran	Approved by: Management	To be reviewed: May 2023

Academic Misconduct Policy

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1 Scope of the policy

This policy covers the principles of course management and administrative procedures offered through Bliss College ensuring that the welfare and general interest of learners are prioritised.

2 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to implement Bliss College's commitment to develop a learning environment where all applicants and learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate and realise their full potential. However, the college takes academic misconduct very seriously and will seek at all times to rigorously protect its academic standards. Plagiarism, collusion and other forms of cheating constitute academic misconduct, for which there is an explicit range of penalties depending on the particular form of academic misconduct. The penalties that can be applied if academic misconduct is substantiated range from failure in the item of assessed work or module to expulsion in very serious cases. It is the responsibility of learners to ensure that they understand the academic practices of their courses as well as the procedures governing Learner Academic Misconduct and to ensure that work submitted for assessment is their own. In any academic activity, learners are responsible and accountable for academic integrity. Academic misconduct will be disciplined according to the severity of the offence. Those who are found to have repeated offences will be progressively disciplined.

3 Location of the policy

You can obtain of this policy by ringing our administration team on 02085144977.

4 Communication of the policy

It is important that both Centre personnel involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of all programs on offer, are fully aware of the contents of the policy. Management will assume the responsibility for communicating all updates to this policy to all stakeholders affected by it.

5 Review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and revised where necessary based on feedback from stakeholders, external agencies and regulatory authorities. The review of the policy will ensure that procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgments.

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Introduction

The college considers seriously all acts of academic misconduct, which by definition are dishonest and in direct opposition to the values of a learning community. Academic misconduct, if not challenged, will ultimately devalue academic standards and honest effort on the part of learners.

Academic Misconduct is a matter for learners and staff together –

- It is the responsibility of all learners to demonstrate both a level of independent thinking and the provision of clear referencing to all sources consulted.
- It is the responsibility of academic schools to provide detailed guidance and academic study skills support alongside awareness and detection methods in all aspects of teaching, assessment and feedback.
- It is the responsibility of the college to provide institutional support to both learners and staff alongside a clear policy and regulatory framework for a consistent approach to preventing, detecting and dealing with Academic Misconduct.

6   Defining Academic Misconduct

6.1 Cheating

Cheating is defined as any attempt to gain unfair advantage in an assessment by dishonest means, and includes, for example, all breaches of examination room rules, impersonating another learner, falsifying data, and obtaining an examination paper in advance of its authorised release.

This is not an exhaustive list and other common examples of cheating would include:

- Being in possession of "crib notes" during an examination where applicable
- Copying from the work of another learner
- Prohibited communication during an examination where application
- Acts of plagiarism or collusion as defined below

6.2 Collusion

Collusion is when two or more people combine to produce a piece of work for assessment that is passed off as the work of one learner alone. The work may be so alike in content, wording and structure that the similarity goes beyond what might have been coincidence. For example – where one learner has copied the work of another, or where a joint effort has taken place in producing what should have been an individual effort.

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Collusion should not be confused with the normal situation in which learners learn from one another, sharing ideas and group work to complete assignments (where this is specifically authorised).

6.3 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's work and passing it off as your own. This includes incorporating either unattributed direct quotation(s) or substantial paraphrasing from the work of another/others. It is important to cite all sources whose work has been drawn on and reference them fully in accordance with the referencing standard used in each academic school.

The most common forms of plagiarism are:

- Cut or copied and pasted materials from websites
- Copying the work of another learner (past or present) including essays available through "essay bank" websites – or other data.
- Copying material from a text book or journal

Learners may go to great lengths to disguise the source reference they have been consulting in contributing to an assignment – without understanding that with proper referencing this is entirely acceptable.

7   Support for Learners

The college, through its academic staff, will be both sympathetic and supportive in preventing plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct, particularly in the first year of undergraduate study.

It is the responsibility of academic staff and the institution to provide clear support and detailed guidance for the prevention of misunderstood academic misconduct through:

- The availability of academic support and counselling.
- The provision of guidance at induction on concepts and forms of academic misconduct – to be reinforced throughout the academic year.
- The development of learners referencing skills throughout the duration of their academic studies.
- Each Department should provide written guidance to learners at induction on subject-specific conventions and how to reference work properly.
- The availability of published guidance on "How to avoid Academic Misconduct".
- The availability of independent study skills guidance through study support staff and on-line guidance materials.
- Where "Group work" is a prescribed assessment component teaching staff must make additional efforts to underline the boundaries between collaboration and collusion.

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- The identification of vulnerable groups, for special attention and guidance – including international learners.

It is the responsibility of all learners to ensure that they understand the regulations and conventions for proper academic referencing and where concerned about the potential for any act of academic misconduct to seek advice/counselling from academic or academic support staff. In understanding this, any attempt to enhance performance by dishonest means will result in academic penalties.

8   A proactive learning and teaching approach

The college, in its effort to become a college for excellence in approaches to learning and teaching, will promote and apply such conventions and initiatives that will reduce the prevalence of academic misconduct and encourage detection and reporting.

This will include:

- Engaging learners in discussion and activities to promote understanding of Academic Misconduct.
- Pre-enrolment information and guidance throughout the learner life cycle as set out above.
- Engaging strategies for learning that effectively recognise the "transition" to Higher Education expectations – specifically at the point of induction.
- The design of modules and their delivery
- Developing research skills in learners
- Developing expertise amongst staff
- Use of different approaches to assessment design
- Ensuring a "no blind eyes" culture and encouraging action

9   Detecting Plagiarism

In concert with the skills and experiences of academic staff the college will utilise electronic detection tools such as Google. Learners are required, where appropriate, to make a declaration as to the authenticity and originality of any submitted piece of work. Learners may be further required to submit an electronic copy of their work for checking with the electronic detection tool where plagiarism is suspected.

10 Investigation & Penalties

The college has a defined framework of "Regulations & Procedure for the Investigation of Academic Misconduct" – this is available as a separate document.

Where a case of cheating, collusion or plagiarism is suspected this procedure should be followed at all times. It is essential that the college, through its academic staff, apply the regulations and procedure fairly and consistently.

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- Advice to academic staff is available from the Conduct & Appeals Unit.
- Copies of this policy, the regulations and procedure and advice to learners on "*How to avoid Academic Misconduct*" will be made widely available and easily accessible through the college's website.
- The college will provide for an ongoing and highly visible campaign to discourage all aspects of academic misconduct, in liaison with the Learners' Union, promoting routes for support & guidance, levels and mechanisms for detection, impact and penalties.

11 On-going Policy & Practice Development

The college will monitor levels of Academic Misconduct and the impact of developing practice and policies through the relevant Sub-Committees of the Board. Which, in collaboration with the Academic Staff, will view reports on the levels of Academic Misconduct and lead on on-going development of practice and expertise, monitoring developing best practice in the sector and the use of new technologies in an on-going review of both this policy and associated documents.

End.

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