Academic Integrity Policy

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1. Purpose

This policy document articulates the principles and standards underpinning ATU's approach to Academic Integrity. The policy and related procedures endeavours to protect and maintain the reputation of the University and its members by endorsing the highest quality standards and practices for ensuring academic integrity.

The University is a member of the *National Academic Integrity Network* (NAIN) which offers advice and guidance to Higher Education Institutions and provides a common approach to upholding academic integrity, combatting academic misconduct, and effectively responding to suspected instances of academic misconduct including unauthorised content generation (UCG). This policy is informed by the NAIN guidelines and is supported in its implementation by related ATU *Procedures* and *Forms*.

2. Scope

This policy and its associated procedures apply to all University members engaged in academic work. This includes registered students, academic staff, and professional support staff, who are involved in, and/or contribute to teaching and assessment of academic work that contributes to the award of academic credit for learning within the University. Those involved in delivering a module or supervising research must refer students to this Academic Integrity Policy and to the resources that support it.

This policy should be read in conjunction with related approved policies and documents within the ATU Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (AQAEF).

This policy shall be reviewed within the lifetime of each Academic Council (every three years) and will be updated as and when required.

3. External Reference Documents

- Academic Integrity: National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms (National Academic Integrity Network, 2021)
- Academic Integrity Guidelines (National Academic Integrity Network, 2021).
- ENAI Recommendations on the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in Education. (Foltynek, T., Bjelobaba, S., Glendinning, I., Khan, Z.R., Rita Santos, R., Pavletic, P., and Kravjar, J., 2023).
- Glossary for Academic Integrity (European Network for Academic Integrity, 2023)
- *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019.*
  Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)18 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on countering education fraud (Council of Europe, 2022)

4. Policy

4.1   Key Principles of Academic Integrity

The International Centre for Academic Integrity has identified six core values to underpin academic integrity, which have been adapted by NAIN as follows:

4.1.1   Honesty

Students and staff should be truthful in their work and acknowledge the work of others, and the processes and tools they have used, where applicable.

4.1.2   Trust

The University should foster an environment where students and staff can trust in the quality of each other's work, and where the world outside the University can trust the quality and integrity of its awards.

4.1.3   Fairness

The University should provide a learning environment that is fair (meaning all actions should be predictable), transparent, and clear, and that students and staff operate under reasonable expectations.

4.1.4   Respect

Respect should be based on the recognition of diversity of people and views, and the potential to express a variety of positions. Respect is a reciprocal relationship that involves commitment by all involved.

4.1.5   Responsibility

Every member of the University, whether student, academic or professional staff, is responsible for safeguarding the integrity of its scholarship, teaching, assessment and research. This responsibility is both individual and collective.

4.1.6   Courage

Courage means to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity even when this is uncomfortable or difficult, and to follow through on one's convictions.

The University expects all those engaged in academic work to adhere to these core values.

4.2   Academic Integrity

ATU has adopted the NAIN (2021) definition of academic integrity that is derived from the ENAI glossary, which states that Academic Integrity is:

> *'Compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices and consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship'.*

(ENAI, 2018, p. 9)

The University is committed to enhancing and promoting a culture of academic integrity among all staff and students through programme development, curriculum design, teaching, learning and assessment strategies, research and publication, and the awarding of qualifications. Assessment integrity as essential to the promotion and maintenance of academic integrity. The University recognises the need to provide ongoing instruction on academic integrity practice across all programmes, and to embed academic integrity in curriculum and assessment design and practice.

4.3   Academic Misconduct

ATU has adopted the following NAIN (2021) definition of *academic misconduct*:

> *'Behaviours perpetrated by individuals or institutions that transgress ethical standards held in common between other individuals and/ or groups in institutions of education, research or scholarship'.*

(NAIN, 2021, p. 7)

The University recognises that academic misconduct can occur due to poor academic practices or lack of knowledge of academic norms. Notwithstanding, all cases of suspected cases of academic misconduct will be investigated in accordance with the ATU *Student Code.*

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting work as your own for assessment, which has been completed partially or entirely by someone else (including a peer, a family member, or other third party).
- Cheating in projects (*e.g.*, collusion; using 'essay mills' or similar services to carry out some or all of the assigned work).
- Selling or providing previously completed assignments to others. This includes posting advertisements for services which encourage contract cheating.
- Plagiarism: that is submitting work which is taken from another source without acknowledging the source.
- Falsifying references and documentation.
- Self-plagiarism: for example, resubmitting parts or all your work which has previously been submitted for assessment purposes without prior knowledge of the Lecturer.
- Cheating in exams (*e.g.*, crib notes, copying, using disallowed tools, impersonation).
- Misrepresenting research (e.g., data fabrication, data falsification, misinterpretation).
- Improper use of technology, laboratories, or other equipment.
- Sharing or selling staff or institutional intellectual property (IP) with third parties without permission.

- Submitting all or part of an assessment which has been generated by AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools and claiming it as your own work.

4.4   Unauthorised Content Generation

ATU recognises the potential usefulness of artificial intelligence (AI) in education. Notwithstanding, the undeclared and / or unauthorised use of AI tools to produce work to earn academic credit is a form of academic misconduct. The University considers all categories of Unauthorised Content Generation (UCG) including contract cheating and the inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence as instances of academic misconduct. ATU has adopted the following definition of UCG provided by NAIN (2023,) and developed by Foltynek et al. (2023) as:

> *'The production of academic work, in whole or in part, for academic credit, progression, whether or not payment or other favour is involved, using unapproved or undeclared human or technological assistance'.*

(Foltynek et al., 2023, p. 2)

The University is committed to providing training, information, and other resources relating to academic integrity, to effectively address issues of academic misconduct in a fair and transparent manner, as recommended by the Council of Europe (2022) and NAIN (2021; 2023).

4.5   Framework for Investigating Academic Misconduct

The management of academic misconduct will be guided by best practice and will be undertaken using the NAIN *6-Stage Framework for Academic Misconduct Case Management* (2023) incorporating the following steps: Detection, Reporting, Consideration, Decision, Record and Review.

A Tariff Score System (NAIN, 2023) will determine the level of academic infringement imposed. Sanctions will reflect the classification infringement level.

Classification of Infringement
Level 1 = Poor Academic Practice / Conduct
Level 2 = Academic Misconduct (Minor Infringement)
Level 3 = Severe Academic Misconduct (Major Infringement)

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The provisions of this policy and related procedures shall be implemented by all staff who teach, support and / or are engaged in teaching, learning and assessment.

5.1   Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar

The office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Registrar is responsible for the oversight and implementation of this Academic Integrity Policy and its associated procedures. Records of all reported cases of academic misconduct will be held at the Office of the Registrar and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

5.2   University Faculties

Each University Faculty must:

- Promote academic integrity as a central ethical value.
- Communicate regularly and consistently with students in respect of academic integrity. This should encompass a thorough explanation of the repercussions of cheating, including a comprehensive overview of the penalties and sanctions associated with proven academic integrity violations.
- Support the development of educational materials, services, and training, and the establishment of best practices for upholding academic integrity and addressing instances of academic misconduct.
- Adhere to and maintain clear, consistent, and fair processes to investigate and address any perceived breaches of academic integrity.
- Collect data on academic misconduct for reporting, disciplinary, educational, process enhancement and policy purposes.
- Where possible, enable and support staff via CPD initiatives to maintain enhance academic integrity practices.

5.3   Academic Staff and Professional Support Staff

- All staff involved in and / or contributing to teaching and assessment are required to familiarise themselves with this policy and its related procedures.
- Lecturers and other staff engaged in assessment must refer students to this *Academic Integrity Policy* and relevant support resources (e.g., the *Student Hub*).
- Lecturers must incorporate academic integrity principles and practices into each programme module and promote academic integrity though positive engagement and discussion with students.

- Lecturers should require students to use a similarity or matched material index tool when submitting material for assessment, where appropriate.
- Programme Boards must ensure that academic integrity principles are embedded in all programme design approaches, and development. This is inclusive of assessment design and implementation, teaching and learning philosophies, research and publications, and support services for students.
- Programme Boards must ensure that all programmes include information on academic misconduct and provide guidance and support on good academic practices.
- Supports will be offered to students who have additional learning needs and are registered with the ATU Disability Access Office.

5.4   Students

- It is the responsibility of each student to access (*e.g.,* via the student hub) and familiarise themselves with policies, practices, rules, and procedures relating to academic integrity at ATU.
- Students must familiarise themselves fully with the guidelines and rules pertaining to submission of assessments, research and publications, and must ensure that all work submitted for assessment is compliant with the University's Academic Integrity Policy (*i.e.,* that individual work is fully their own, or in the case of group work, is fully that of the group).
- All students must complete and attach a *Student Declaration of Academic Integrity* (currently under development) with each assessment of every credited-bearing module.
- All students must submit written assessments via a similarity or matched material index tool (for example, '*Turnitin*').

5.5   Teaching and Learning Centre

The University Teaching and Learning Centre will:

- support the creation of student academic integrity information and education resources, services and training, in a variety of formats to assist, engage and empower students to uphold the principles of academic integrity.
- provide ongoing educational resource tools and continuous professional development training for the promotion of academic integrity practices.

6. Penalty for Academic Misconduct

The penalty for Academic integrity misconduct will be proportionate to the nature of the breach. Breaches of Academic Misconduct will be dealt with under *Procedures for Dealing with the Academic Breaches of the Student Code* and range along a continuum from *reprimand* (a formal warning) to *suspension and / or exclusion* (expulsion) from a programme of study. Academic integrity misconduct will be viewed more seriously in the latter years of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

7. Associated Documents Generated by this Policy.

Procedure for Dealing with Academic Breaches of the Student Code (currently under development)

7.1   Revision History

Revision No	Description of Change	Approval Date
000	New Policy Approved by Academic Council	08/12/2023