



Title	AHE Academic Freedom and Integrity Policy
Code	APo8
Approving Body	Academic Board
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Developer	CEO/ Executive Dean
Date Approved	30 July 2018
Commencement Date	30 July 2018
Date of Review	30 July 2022
Distribution	Internal: academic governance
Purpose	Apex Higher Education (AHE) has a policy on academic freedom and integrity to demonstrate its commitment to these aspects
Scope	Applies to all academic aspects of AHE

1. Principles of Academic Freedom and Integrity at AHE

- 1.1 AHE is committed to academic freedom and integrity. Academic freedom and its related responsibilities as recognised and practised by AHE have their fundamental basis in the academic culture commonly found in Australian universities and other higher education providers.
- 1.2 In the pursuit of knowledge, and in scholarly activity, academic integrity is essential to the fabric of an academic community, embracing managers, researchers, teachers and students. This includes the **AHE Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure**. When staff are undertaking any intellectual enquiry, it is important that they are cognisant of their responsibility to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity.

2. Rationale

- 2.1 The overarching statement of this commitment lies within AHE's Mission which states that AHE seeks to "to maintain a sustainable academy that provides students with scholarly input and support where ethical concepts are supported, and real-world experience is provided by ongoing interaction with practitioners". Refer to the **AHE Strategic Plan**.
- 2.2 Furthermore, one of the key functions of the Academic Board, as espoused in its terms of reference, is to "foster and promote scholarship of teaching, learning and subject matter expertise within an ethos of free intellectual inquiry and scholarship." Refer to the **AHE Governance Framework**.

3. Policy Details of Commitment to Academic Freedom and Integrity

- 3.1 AHE expects its academic staff to exhibit a strong commitment to scholarship and the professional expectations of their academic disciplines. The pursuit of knowledge through intellectual inquiry is highly valued as a mark of institutional excellence. Refer to the **AHE Scholarly Activity Policy**.

- 3.2 To support this pursuit of knowledge, AHE makes the commitment that its academic staff will have freedom of inquiry without fear of repression.
- 3.3 Academic staff and students are entitled to full freedom in any scholarly activity they pursue in order to encourage scholarly enquiry. Furthermore, academic staff are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the unit of study they are delivering; however, they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relevance to the unit.
- 3.4 When speaking or writing as private citizens, academic staff are free from AHE institutional censorship or discipline. However, academic staff should keep in mind that as scholars, the public may judge their profession and AHE by their utterances. Therefore, they should at all times demonstrate academic and scholarly rigour to ensure accuracy, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for AHE. Academic staff will refrain from using their AHE institutional affiliation when publicly expressing an opinion on topics outside their area of expertise and/or on contentious issues where personal opinion may deviate from AHE's rules and regulations.
- 3.5 AHE will ensure that students and staff have a reasonable expectation that their right to hold values of their own choosing will be respected even when those values are being questioned. Academic freedom carries associated responsibilities to exercise professional care and competence in the conduct of teaching and research, to subject academic work to the critical scrutiny of others, to consider the impact that one's work may have on others, and not to impinge on the ability of others to engage freely in teaching and learning, research, and academic debate.
- 3.6 AHE takes a serious view of academic misconduct and will penalise staff who are found guilty of offences associated with breaches of academic integrity including, but not limited to, misappropriation of others' work, misrepresentation of performance and fraud, improper access to scholarly resources and obstructing others in pursuit of their academic endeavours. The **AHE Staff Code of Conduct** includes an expectation that AHE staff uphold academic integrity when conducting their work at AHE. The **AHE Staff Code of Conduct** outlines procedures concerning breaches of the **Code**.

4. Dissemination and Publication:

This Policy will be part of the documents of AHE for executive management purposes and published on AHE's website (temporary AHE website: <https://apex-h.pagecloud.com/>)

5. Benchmarking Documents

- TEQSA Guidance Notes: Scholarship
- TEQSA Guidance Notes: Academic Quality Assurance

6. Legislation

- Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)
<https://cricos.education.gov.au/>
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00292>
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182>
- TEQSA National Register <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/national-register/provider/apex-institute-higher-education-pty-ltd>,

- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
(Refer to Higher Education Standards Panel) <https://www.dese.gov.au/higher-education-standards-panel-hesp/higher-education-standards-framework> Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

7. Related Documents

- AHE Workforce Plan and Staffing
- AHE Scholarly Activity Policy
- AHE Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- AHE Strategic Plan
- AHE Governance Framework
- AHE Staff Code of Conduct
- AHE Staff Employment, Review and Professional Development Procedure

8. Definitions

Refer to the **AHE Table of Acronyms and Definitions**

Version Control and Approval

Version	Person Responsible and Action Taken	Date	Approved by
2021.1	CEO/Executive Dean. Updated relevant legislation and preface, and related documents	15 Sep 2021	CEO/Executive Dean
2019.1	CEO/Executive Dean. Added section on academic integrity	20 Sep 2019	Academic Board Minutes
2018.1.1	CEO/Executive Dean. Reformatted document and proof read	16 Nov 2018	CEO/Executive Dean
2018.1	CEO/Executive Dean. Created the Policy	20 July 2018	Academic Board Minutes