

Academic Integrity Policy

Document Owner	Chief Executive Officer		
Responsible Officer	RTO Manager		
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Related Documents	<i>Assessment and Evidence Collection Policy</i> <i>Complaints and Appeals Policy</i> <i>Student Code of Conduct and Misconduct Procedure</i> <i>Staff Code of Conduct</i>		
Version	Authorised by	Approved	Effective Date
1.0	Chief Executive Officer	27/03/2025	31/03/2025

1. Context

This Policy supports Barrington Training Services (BTS)'s commitment to academic integrity.

BTS will actively educate and support its students in their academic efforts, aiming to develop individuals with strong ethical foundations who will act with integrity in their educational, professional, and personal dealings. This Policy articulates the commitment of BTS to ensure integrity across all academic pursuits and undertakings actively as well as the framework for staff and students to prevent and manage breaches of academic integrity.

2. Definitions

Refer to the *Explanation of Terms* document.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to BTS staff and students, to all BTS's training products, and to individual and group tasks.

4. Principles

The key principles informing this Policy are:

- academic integrity embedded in all aspects of the curriculum;
- appropriate behaviour in undertaking all educational and professional work including assessment tasks, examinations, and related documents;
- access to, and provision of, adequate information and guidance on what is expected and appropriate in terms of academic integrity and standards;

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- academic integrity in all its operations and functions and any breach of academic integrity will incur appropriate consequences; and
- handling of allegations of academic misconduct by students and staff in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

5. Policy details

- a) A breach of academic integrity includes, but is not limited to:
- contract cheating or ghostwriting;
 - collusion;
 - plagiarism and/or failure to adequately acknowledge sources, including *Artificial Intelligence (AI)* and *Generative Artificial Intelligence (Generative AI, GenAI, or GAI)*;
 - dishonest conduct;
 - making misleading or false claims;
 - tampering with records;
 - misrepresentation;
 - using or attempting to use unauthorised material in an examination or under other assessment conditions; and
 - complicity in assisting others conduct themselves in any of these ways.
- b) It is expected that all students and staff maintain the highest possible standards in their educational and professional undertakings. To this end, BTS is committed to providing guidance and information to support:
- students conducting themselves with honesty, integrity, and proper ethical behaviour when undertaking any academic activities including assessment tasks and examinations;
 - staff in accepting responsibility to create and foster an environment where honesty and academic integrity are understood and valued in all academic pursuits;
 - an approach to teaching and learning aimed at minimising opportunities for academic dishonesty;
 - education strategies that clearly define and explain academic misconduct and promote academic honesty;
 - a consistent, procedurally fair and equitable framework for considering and handling alleged breaches of academic integrity, with standard and appropriate penalties depending on the severity of the breach and access to an appeal process; and
 - a process of redress for students who have deliberately acted against this Policy and thereby engaged in academic misconduct.

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6. Procedure

This procedure provides a framework for staff and students to prevent breaches of academic integrity, manage suspected breaches, and impose penalties for breaches.

6.1. Preventing breaches of academic integrity

6.1.1. Students

The following measures are designed to support students in meeting academic integrity requirements:

a) Assessment design

In designing assessments, BTS incorporates strategies to eliminate or minimise opportunities for academic misconduct. This may include, but is not limited to:

- assessment tasks that have clearly explained requirements, supported by well-designed marking criteria and marking guide;
- measures that eliminate or minimise the possibility of academic misconduct are included in the assessment brief, such as:
 - written submissions may include:
 - open questions tests and assessments;
 - demonstration of ability and knowledge via a written or practical test;
 - referencing.
 - for non-written submission, part of the assessment may include:
 - practical demonstration of skills and application of knowledge;
 - an oral presentation;
 - evidence of research and findings;
 - drafts or preparatory work.
- assessment tasks in which breaches of academic integrity have occurred are redesigned; and
- rewriting of assessment task questions to avoid repetition of assessments in which students have gained knowledge of the task.
- Systematic validation and moderation activities of assessment strategies and tools.

b) Student induction

The student induction and orientation provide information about academic integrity, specifically detailing what constitutes academic misconduct. It offers guidance on how to avoid potential breaches, outlines available support, explains penalties for confirmed breaches, and informs students of their right to access the BTS Complaints and Appeals Policy.

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c) Learning support

Learning and academic skills support will be offered to students as needed throughout their enrolment by the trainers/assessors and the BTS Team, and also by accessing *The Smart Study Guide*. Support can be offered in the areas of:

- accessing resources;
- researching;
- paraphrasing and quoting;
- ethical and responsible use of AI and Generative AI, such as ChatGPT and Copilot;
- acknowledging sources and referencing; and
- self-regulation – using a free plagiarism checker and/or AI checker such as *Grammarly*, *Justdone*, or *Quillbot*.

d) Academic integrity declaration

Before submitting any assessment work, whether in paper form or through the BTS Learning Management System, students must declare that the work is their own and that they have not violated any principles of academic integrity. Upon submission, students will be reminded that making a false declaration is a serious offence and may be considered if there is a violation of academic integrity.

6.1.2. Staff

The following measures are intended to assist staff in fulfilling academic integrity requirements:

a) Staff induction

When inducting new academic and professional staff, the RTO Manager must reference the Academic Integrity Policy and this Procedure. They should also be encouraged to seek additional support as necessary to uphold academic integrity.

Induction on academic integrity will be developed using recent good practice guidance from relevant industry bodies.

b) Self-regulation

Staff must acknowledge and reference external documents when creating new documents for BTS. Before submitting their work for manager approval, they should also address any issues related to similarity with existing documents. It is highly recommended to use a plagiarism and/or AI checker, such as *Grammarly*, *Justdone*, or *Quillbot*, to ensure originality.

6.2. Dealing with breaches of academic integrity

6.2.1. Students

Below is the procedure staff must follow for suspected breaches of academic integrity by students:

a) Recognition

Recognition of possible breaches of academic integrity is the responsibility of the trainer or assessor and needs to be supported by clear evidence, such as:

- similarity detected by using plagiarism checker tools;
- similarity with work submitted by another student or by the same student for another assessment;
- non-submission of required outlines, drafts, or preparatory work, as outlined in the assessment brief;
- disparity between student's performance to date in course work and/or prior assessments;

Without clear evidence, an allegation of academic misconduct is not to be acted upon.

When academic misconduct is suspected in group tasks, the steps within this procedure must be undertaken individually for each student.

Note: *Where a student has properly referenced quotes from other sources, this is **not** plagiarism. BTS requires **at least 70%** of an assessment to be a student's original work.*

b) Enquiry

The trainer or assessor notifies the RTO Manager of the suspected breach of academic integrity, who considers the evidence provided. If the RTO Manager deems:

- the evidence does not substantiate a breach of academic integrity, the allegation is dismissed, and no further action is taken;
- the evidence indicates a possible breach of academic integrity, the BTS Team, as per instructions from the RTO Manager, informs the student via email within 5 working days and invites the student to a meeting/hearing at which the student can present their case. The email is to:
 - inform the student of the allegation;
 - advise the details of the meeting/hearing. The meeting should occur within 10 working days of the initial notification;
 - indicate that the student may bring a support person;

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- provide a copy of the *Academic Integrity Policy*;
- allow the student to submit a written statement by the date of the meeting as an alternative to, or supplement to, the meeting.

BTS is to record this communication in the LMS, along with ongoing correspondence with the student.

In response to the enquiry, the RTO Manager is to determine whether the evidence confirms:

- a breach of academic integrity **has** occurred. The RTO Manager documents this in the LMS and proceeds to Step 3 – Penalty below;
- a breach of academic integrity **has not** occurred. The allegation is dismissed, the outcome recorded in the LMS, and communicated to the student and the trainer or assessor via email.

If the student does not respond to the meeting request or chooses not to participate in the enquiry, the RTO Manager is to determine whether the available evidence confirms a breach has occurred or not.

c) Penalty

When the evidence confirms a breach of academic integrity has occurred, the RTO Manager is to determine whether the breach is:

- ‘**major**’ – deliberate, planned, significant in scale and/or in scope;
- ‘**minor**’ – academic misconduct that is not deemed ‘major’;
- ‘**initial**’ – the first time a breach has been confirmed;
- ‘**repeated**’ – a breach has previously been confirmed.

The RTO Manager is then to determine an appropriate penalty for the breach, based on the four criteria above. Penalties include (noted in ascending severity):

- resubmission of the assessment task;
- an alternative assessment task is to be undertaken by the student where the opportunity to breach academic integrity has been eliminated or reduced (e.g. an oral presentation);
- a Not Yet Competent (NYC) mark for the assessment task and the need to access the BTS Re-assessment process as described in the *Assessment Policy* (administrative fees apply)
- a final NYC result for the Unit of Competency;

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- referral to the Director of Finance, Training & Administration with a recommendation of suspension, exclusion, or cancellation of enrolment.

Except for cancellation of enrolment, each of these penalties is to be accompanied by a requirement for the student to undertake further training on academic integrity.

The RTO Manager's decision is recorded in the LMS and communicated to the student and the trainer or assessor via email. If the student disagrees with the outcome of the investigation, the student can access the appeals process outlined in the *Complaints and Appeals Policy*, which can be accessed on the BTS website.

d) Follow-up

Breaches of academic integrity by students are to be noted in the Academic Misconduct Register and the LMS, along with actions arising and the outcome.

In response to breaches of academic integrity, the RTO Manager reviews the assessment brief for which a breach occurred, and associated assessment tools, to determine if further developments are required to eliminate or minimise future occurrences.

6.2.2. Staff

a) Recognition

Suspected breaches of academic integrity by staff are to be raised with the Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegate, and evidence provided. Without clear evidence, an assumption of academic misconduct is not to be acted upon.

b) Enquiry

The Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegate, considers the evidence provided and determines whether the report and/or evidence indicate a breach of academic integrity:

- has not occurred. In such cases, the allegation is dismissed, and no further action is taken.
- may have occurred. In such cases, the Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegate, informs the staff member within 5 working days via email and invites them to a meeting at which they can present their case. The email is to:
 - inform the staff member of the allegation;
 - advise the date, time and place of the meeting. The meeting should occur within 10 working days of the initial notification;
 - indicate that the staff member may bring a support person;

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- provide a copy of the *Academic Integrity Policy*;
- allow the staff member to submit a written statement by the date of the meeting as an alternative to, or supplement to, the meeting;
- If the staff member is unable to attend the meeting, the discussion may occur via email, teleconference, or video conference.

The Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegate, is to maintain a record of associated correspondence and outcomes.

In response to the discussion, the Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegate, is to determine whether the evidence confirms:

- a breach of academic integrity **has** occurred. The Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegate, documents this in staff files and proceeds to Step 3 – Penalty below.
- a breach of academic integrity **has not** occurred. The allegation is dismissed, and the outcome is noted and communicated to the staff member via email.

If the staff member does not respond to the meeting request or chooses not to participate in the discussion, the manager is to determine whether the available evidence confirms a breach has occurred or not.

c) Penalty

When the evidence confirms a breach of academic integrity has occurred, the manager is to determine whether the breach is:

‘**major**’ – deliberate, planned, significant in scale, and/or significant in scope;

‘**minor**’ – a breach that is not deemed ‘major’;

‘**initial**’ – the first time a breach has been confirmed;

‘**repeated**’ – a breach has previously been confirmed.

The Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegate, is then to determine an appropriate action for the breach, based on the four criteria above. Actions include (noted in ascending severity):

- review of the *Academic Integrity Policy*;
- undertaking training on academic integrity;
- performance management;
- disciplinary action.

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The Chief Executive Officer or authorised delegate’s decision is recorded in the staff's file and communicated to the staff member via email. If the staff member disagrees with the outcome of the investigation, they can access the appeals process outlined in the *Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

d) Follow-up

Breaches of academic integrity by staff are to be noted in their file, along with actions arising and the outcome.

The Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegate, reports breaches of academic integrity to the Senior Leadership Team and advises on measures being taken to eliminate or reduce opportunities for academic misconduct.

7. Breaches

If a student or staff member is found to be in breach of this Policy, she or he may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the relevant Code of Conduct and Misconduct Procedure.

8. Appeals

Appeals concerning any decision taken in relation to this Policy should be made under the relevant Complaints and Appeals Policy, which can be accessed from the BTS website.

Document History:

Version	Date	Author	Reason	Sections
0.1	8/03/2025	Ivan Negro	Document Creation	All
1.0	27/03/2025	Allen Barry	CEO Approval	All

This document is UNCONTROLLED once printed.