

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Purpose

To define the standards of academic integrity expected of trainees and the procedures for managing suspected or confirmed breaches within the New Zealand College of Sexual and Reproductive Health (NZCSRH) Fellowship Training Programme.

Scope

This policy applies to all NZCSRH trainees, training supervisors, the Educational Advisory Committee (EAC) and NZCSRH administrative staff.

This policy is owned by the New Zealand Sexual and Reproductive Health Educational Charitable Trust (NZSRHECT) Board, hereafter referred to as the 'Board'.

Definitions

Academic Misconduct: Any intentional, careless, or deceptive act that compromises the integrity of educational assessment or training processes, including research, clinical logging, or other training requirements. Types of misconduct may include plagiarism, falsification, or misrepresentation and include unauthorised or unacknowledged use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.

Plagiarism: Presenting another person's work, ideas, data, or content as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement. This includes material generated, substantially rewritten, or otherwise produced by another person or by an artificial intelligence (AI) or generative AI tool, where the use of that material is not permitted or is not appropriately acknowledged.

Falsification and Misrepresentation: Inventing, fabricating, or altering data, clinical logbook entries, patient interactions, attendance records, or supervisor sign-offs.

Collusion: Unauthorised collaboration with others in completing assessed work.

Detail

Principles

Academic integrity is essential to maintain professional standards and ensure academic rigour. All trainees must demonstrate honesty and ethical conduct. Allegations of academic misconduct must be investigated fairly and transparently. Decisions must be evidence-based, and any sanctions must be proportionate and consistent.

Requirements

Academic integrity means being honest and trustworthy in one's studies. It reflects ethical and responsible decision-making that respects the rights of others to have their work and ideas acknowledged. NZCSRH trainees have a responsibility to refrain from behaviours that would result in them gaining academic



advantage through the work of others or through unauthorised use of artificial intelligence or other technologies.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- plagiarism;
- copying colleagues' work or allowing their work to be copied;
- failing to acknowledge collaborative work;
- engaging another person to complete work on the trainee's behalf;
- using artificial intelligence or generative AI to produce, substantially develop, or rewrite work that is required to be the trainee's own, where such use is not permitted; or
- presenting AI-generated or AI-assisted content as the trainee's own work where disclosure or acknowledgement of its use is required.

Trainees are prohibited from using Generative AI tools to draft, generate, or rewrite reflectively or clinically assessed materials unless explicitly permitted in writing by the EAC. Where AI assistance is permitted (e.g. for technical proofreading or literature search), its use must be declared in an appended disclosure statement.

Where the use of AI tools is permitted for an assessment or other academic activity, trainees remain responsible for the accuracy, integrity and originality of the work submitted and must comply with any requirements specified by NZCSRH regarding the use or acknowledgement of AI.

Plagiarism, as defined above, is a form of academic misconduct. Where any part of another's work, whether published or otherwise, is copied directly or paraphrased, it must be acknowledged. Failure to reference work appropriately, whether through carelessness or by deliberate intent, is considered plagiarism.

Note: Collaboration in research, where appropriately acknowledged, does not constitute plagiarism.

NZCSRH considers the provision of one's own work to another person, for the purposes of plagiarism, as a serious form of academic misconduct. Assisting, or attempting to assist, another person to plagiarise work will render the trainee concerned liable to the same disciplinary procedure that would be imposed on a trainee who plagiarises.

Falsifying or fabricating information (for example, clinical logbook hours, procedural numbers, supervisor sign-offs) constitutes serious academic misconduct that impacts public safety and professional fitness to practice.

Procedure for Allegations of Academic Misconduct

All allegations of academic misconduct must be notified as soon as practicable. Where an assessor determines that reasonable grounds for suspecting academic misconduct exist, the assessor must notify the EAC in writing and provide all available evidence, including a copy of the trainee's work that is being assessed.

Allegations of academic misconduct are to be investigated and dealt with in a manner following the principles and procedures associated with procedural fairness and natural justice, by the EAC. Where the committee deems it appropriate, the task may be delegated to a subcommittee.



Notification of Allegation

In cases where the Chair of the relevant committee or designated subcommittee has not been involved in the initial assessment of the trainee's work, the information supplied by the assessor is to be passed on to the Chair of the relevant committee or designated subcommittee, who, in consultation with the Board Chair, will decide whether or not to proceed with the matter. Where the Board Chair has been involved in the initial assessment, or any other factor(s) preclude their involvement, the Deputy Chair will make the decision.

The NZCSRH Administrator, or nominee, will inform the trainee by email that they will be required to appear before the EAC at its next scheduled meeting in order to answer allegations of plagiarism or other academic misconduct. Notification must be given at least twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the hearing date. The Chair of the EAC will advise the trainee in writing:

- The date, time and location of the hearing;
- The membership of the committee or designated subcommittee;
- The right of the trainee to present their case to the committee or designated subcommittee in person; and
- The right of the trainee to have a personal advocate, colleague, or mentor present at the hearing in an observer capacity.

The trainee will receive the same information regarding the allegations that is provided to members of the EAC. The trainee's Training Supervisor shall be informed by EAC that the trainee is facing allegations of plagiarism or academic misconduct.

Trainees are required to lodge all written submissions and copies of any documents and records upon which they wish to rely to the Chair of EAC fourteen (14) calendar days prior to an Academic Integrity Hearing. Additional information provided after the submission will only be considered if the Chair of EAC considers that the material is of significance to the matter.

Academic Integrity Hearing

Hearing Procedure and Natural Justice

Academic Integrity Hearings will be conducted under a structured framework to ensure absolute procedural fairness and natural justice. The Educational Advisory Committee (EAC) and the trainee must adhere to the following mandatory procedural rules:

1. Panel Impartiality and Conflicts of Interest: No member of the EAC who was directly involved in grading or reviewing the trainee's work when the potential misconduct was identified, or who conducted a preliminary review or technical check of the alleged academic misconduct may sit on the hearing panel or participate in the final decision-making.
2. Full Disclosure of Evidence: The trainee must be provided with complete copies of all allegations, written reports, evidence, and supporting documentation to be considered by the panel at least twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the scheduled hearing date.
3. Right of Submission and Response: The trainee has the right to lodge written submissions and supporting evidence at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the hearing. During the hearing, the trainee must be granted an uninterrupted opportunity to present their case, address the panel, and clarify or contradict any statement or evidence presented against them.
4. Representation and Support: The trainee has the right to be accompanied by a support person, mentor, or colleague in an observer capacity. If the trainee wishes to have a formal advocate present, written notice must be provided to the EAC Chair at least seven (7) working days prior to the hearing.



5. Private Panel Deliberations: Following the conclusion of the hearing, the panel will move into a closed session (such as a private Zoom breakout room) to deliberate and reach a decision. Only the panel members and a designated minute-taker may be present. The trainee, their support person, the assessor, and any observers or witnesses, will be moved out of the meeting space prior to deliberations commencing.

6. Written Decision and Findings: The EAC's final determination will be based strictly on the balance of probabilities and available evidence. The trainee will receive a formal written outcome letter within fifteen (15) working days (or 21 calendar days) of the hearing, detailing:

- The specific findings of fact for each allegation.
- The rationale and evidence relied upon for the decision.
- The formal penalty applied under the Schedule of Penalties, if applicable.
- Clear instructions on the trainee's right to appeal under the NZCSRH Appeals Policy.

A copy of the formal outcome letter is to be retained in the trainee's file.

Outcomes and Penalties

If, after the hearing, the EAC determines that a trainee has committed academic misconduct, it will apply a penalty proportionate to the severity, intent, and professional impact of the breach. Penalties are categorized into three levels:

Level 1: Minor / Unintentional Misconduct (Low Severity)

- Scope: Poor referencing or improper citation in a draft submission; minor administrative omissions in logbook dates; unacknowledged AI use limited to minor prose polishing without generating core content.
- Available Penalties:
 1. Written caution from the EAC Chair retained on the trainee's file for the current training block.
 2. Requirement to complete targeted remediation in academic integrity or medical ethics at the trainee's expense.
 3. Resubmission of the assessment task within a specified timeframe (capped at a maximum "Satisfactory" pass mark).

Level 2: Moderate / Serious Misconduct (Moderate–High Severity)

- Scope: Submitting plagiarized content, unacknowledged AI-generated essays/projects, or recycled work from previous studies; colluding on individual assignments; inflating clinical hours or procedural logbook numbers.
- Available Penalties:
 1. Formal letter of reprimand from the EAC Chair permanently placed on the trainee's official record.
 2. Awarding an immediate "Unsatisfactory" / Fail grade for the module or research project, with no automatic right of resubmission.
 3. Withholding or invalidating accredited training credit for the training period (up to 6 months FTE), requiring an extended placement.
 4. Placement on a mandatory Learning Development Plan (LDP) targeting professional conduct.

Level 3: Severe / Systemic Misconduct (Extreme Severity)

- Scope: Fabricating patient cases, research data, or clinical logs; forging supervisor signatures or digital approvals; contract cheating; impersonation; or committing a second Level 2 offence.
- Available Penalties:



1. Forfeiture of all training credits for the current calendar year.
2. Formal suspension from the Fellowship Training Programme for a specified duration.
3. Recommendation to the Board for permanent removal from the programme under the Fitness to Continue / Removal Policy.
4. Mandatory reporting to the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) under professional conduct and health practitioner competence obligations.

The EAC may, at its discretion for any level of misconduct, require the trainee to undertake a designated course, at the trainee's expense, on professional ethics and/or appropriate methods of avoiding plagiarism and/or academic misconduct.

Impact Upon NZCSRH Qualifications/Awards

No trainee shall be eligible for elevation to Fellowship or receipt of any other NZCSRH Qualification/Award while a formal matter relating to plagiarism, assisting to plagiarise, or other academic misconduct is under consideration or pending consideration by EAC.

Disputes

Trainees in the Fellowship Training Programme who wish to appeal any decisions regarding academic misconduct may do so according to the Appeals Policy. Any disputes that fall outside the scope of this policy will be referred to the NZSRHECT Board according to the Complaints Policy.

Policy Owner	NZSRHECT Board
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