



1. TITLE: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

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| 1.1 | Policy reference: | CO-A-002-02 |
| 1.2 | Category: | Academic – Education |
| 1.3 | Approval date: | November 2025 |
| 1.4 | Approved by: | Chief Executive |
| 1.5 | Effective date: | November 2025 |
| 1.6 | Review/revision date: | November 2027 |
| 1.7 | Unit responsible: | Learning team |

2. Policy declaration

2.1 Purpose

The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (the College) is committed to ensuring academic integrity is an integral part of its programme delivery. Registrars, Fellows and College staff are expected to engage in teaching, learning, research and related activities in a manner consistent with the values of academic integrity. Academic integrity is a commitment to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. These values form the foundation of this policy.

3. Scope

3.1 In scope

This policy applies to all College members, staff and candidates participating in College training, admission and assessment processes.

3.2 Out of scope

The College cannot provide direct legal assistance in any matter.

The College will not investigate or progress:

- anonymous reports of academic misconduct based on hearsay
- allegations of academic misconduct raised by another party on another individual's behalf
- reports that are made more than twenty (20) working days after the incident or situation relating to the alleged academic misconduct occurring, or more than twenty (20) working days after becoming aware of the alleged incident or situation
- alleged academic misconduct related to findings or decisions made about a registrar or Fellow by regulators or in other legal proceedings
- an incident or situation related to alleged academic misconduct that has previously been dealt with under these procedures.

4. Definitions

All definitions are available in the College's Academic Regulatory Framework for Quality Assurance.

5. General policy

5.1 Commitment to academic integrity

- 5.1.1 The College is committed to a culture of academic integrity. The individual is responsible for their conduct.
- 5.1.2 The College is committed to acknowledging Te Tiriti o Waitangi by working in partnership with Māori. The spirit of Tikanga is to seek resolutions to disputes and complaints in a manner that encourages a facilitated open exchange of views, with a view to seeking consensus and acceptance from all parties.
- 5.1.3 The College expects that registrars and Fellows will abide by established ethical standards in relation to medical practice, including educational and research activities.
- 5.1.4 Fellows engaged in College duties/activities are expected to fulfil the roles detailed in the relevant terms of reference.

6. Principles of Academic Integrity

6.1 Honesty

Honesty is essential to academic excellence. Members are expected to be truthful in assessments, research, and interactions with supervisors, assessors, and peers.

6.2 Trust

Academic integrity relies on mutual trust. The College trusts members to act honestly, while members and the public trust the College to uphold rigorous academic and professional standards.

6.3 Fairness

The College ensures fairness through clear standards, transparent procedures, and consistent decision-making. All allegations of misconduct are managed with procedural fairness and a presumption of innocence.

6.4 Respect

Respect is shown by valuing others' contributions, avoiding academic dishonesty, and engaging ethically in all academic activities. A respectful environment supports learning and scholarship.

6.5 Responsibility

All members are responsible for understanding and upholding academic integrity. This includes following College policies, reporting misconduct, and supporting ethical academic practices. The College will respond to reported breaches fairly and consistently.

7 Academic misconduct

- 7.1 Academic misconduct is seeking to gain for oneself, or assisting another person to gain, an academic advantage by deception or other unfair means.
- 7.2 Academic misconduct includes any breach of any rules relating to summative assessment including tests or examinations and any dishonest practice occurring in the preparation or submission of any work (whether in the course of an examination or not) that counts towards the attainment of a grade in any assessment or otherwise occurring in connection with any summative assessment.
- 7.3 Registrars, Fellows, College staff members and other individuals engaged in College duties and activities are required to formally notify the College in writing if they have formed the reasonable belief that a registrar and/or Fellow within the College community has allegedly engaged in academic misconduct.
- 7.4 A registrar or Fellow of the College is considered to have engaged in academic misconduct if they:
- a. collaborate, share, or allow their work to be copied for the purpose of cheating
 - b. present another's work or ideas—including from AI—as their own without proper acknowledgement (plagiarism)
 - c. reuse their own previously assessed work without an appropriate citation
 - d. submit work prepared for another purpose without permission or self-referencing
 - e. falsify data, information, or citations
 - f. deliberately hinder others from completing their work
 - g. copy from or view another person's work during an exam
 - h. allow others to view or copy their work during an exam
 - i. have a third party complete an exam or assessment for them
 - j. assist others in misconduct by:
 - i. Impersonating a student in an assessment
 - ii. Giving or receiving answers by any means
 - iii. Allowing others to copy their work
 - k. falsely claim illness, disability, or exceptional circumstances to gain special consideration
 - l. fabricate or falsify research or lab results
 - m. breach confidentiality, privacy, or ethical approval terms
 - n. use others' intellectual property without authorisation, including copyright breaches or unauthorised sharing
 - o. act contrary to the values and standards of academic integrity
- 7.5 The College will take any instance of academic misconduct seriously. Penalties may range from a warning to suspension from the programme. Any instance of academic misconduct will be recorded on a registrar's and/or Fellow's file.

8. Procedural fairness

- 8.1 The College deals with all allegations of academic misconduct in a fair, transparent, valid and timely manner.
- 8.2 Personal information related to the allegation is strictly confidential to the College.
- 8.3 All parties named have the right to natural justice.
- 8.4 All reports of alleged academic misconduct will be reviewed and then investigated. Those accused of alleged academic misconduct will be presumed innocent until proven otherwise, and the College will follow procedural fairness by:
 - a. Informing the registrar or Fellow in writing of the details of the allegation against them and the possible penalties if academic misconduct is found to have occurred
 - b. providing access to information about the allegation of academic misconduct
 - c. providing adequate notice of the process and timelines for dealing with the alleged academic misconduct
 - d. offering the opportunity to attend an Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) meeting, with a support person of their choice, to present their case and evidence to the AIC before a decision is made
 - e. ensuring the process of inquiry and determination is conducted without bias
 - f. only considering the facts and documentation relevant to the alleged academic misconduct when determining the outcome. If deemed necessary by the AIC, the party who alleged the academic misconduct may be required to attend an AIC meeting to answer questions / points of clarification that the AIC may have to help determine the outcome
 - g. notifying the registrar or Fellow in writing of the outcome, including reasons to explain the outcome, and right of appeal
- 8.5 All individuals associated with the College are deemed to be experienced in academic pursuits and fully aware:
 - a. of what constitutes academic misconduct
 - b. that academic misconduct is unacceptable
- 8.6 Any registrar(s) and/or Fellow(s) claim that they participated in academic misconduct because of inexperience, or because they were unaware of the requirements, will be disregarded.
- 8.7 An allegation of academic misconduct can be withdrawn by the individual(s) who submitted the original report within ten (10) working days of the report being submitted to the College.

9. Academic Integrity Committee

- 9.1 Allegations of academic misconduct that are of a serious nature will require a full investigation by an Academic Integrity Committee (AIC), which will be convened by the Head of Learning (or delegate).
- 9.2 The AIC may consist of some or all of:
 - a. a Chair, being a Fellow appointed by the College
 - b. Head of Learning (or delegate)
 - c. Clinical Consultant
 - d. Chief Examiner
 - e. Tumuaki Māori / Head of Equity (or delegate)

- f. Head of Membership Services (if related to research funding)
 - g. GP registrar representative from the Registrars' Chapter
 - h. College administrative/secretariat support
- 9.3 Other members of the AIC may be appointed at the College's discretion, and the Chair may expand the membership of the AIC to include additional Fellow and/or non-Fellow members, as they consider appropriate in the circumstances
- 9.4 AIC members must be independent and not have previously participated in any decision-making process in respect of the alleged academic misconduct.
- 9.5 The AIC may interview other relevant people to gather further information to help inform an outcome.
- 9.6 **Consequences of substantiated academic misconduct**
- 9.6.1 If a determination of academic misconduct is made, the AIC may propose appropriate penalties to the Board of the College, as follows:

Affiliation with the College	Possible consequences
Registrar	Removal from the training programme; request refund of research funding.
Fellow	Expel the member (as per College Rules 14.3 and 14.4); suspend the member (as per College Rules 15.1 and 15.2); request refund of research funding.

- 9.6.2 Instances of substantiated academic misconduct may be reported to the relevant regulatory authority or professional body, e.g. the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ).

10. Appeal

- 10.1 Any registrar and/or Fellow who is dissatisfied with a decision made under this policy may formally appeal the decision. Appeal applications must be made in accordance with the Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy (CO-A-002-06).
- 10.2 An application for appeal must be made on the College's form, accompanied by the prescribed fee, and be received by the College within ten (10) working days of receipt of the outcome of the AIC investigation.

11. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required in the event of legislative changes or requirements.

12. Procedure

Alleged academic misconduct will be investigated as follows:

Step	Action	College recommended timeframes *
1.	A College staff member, registrar, Fellow or other employee of the College submits in writing a report to the College which details the situation or incident of alleged academic misconduct by a registrar(s) or Fellow(s)	Within twenty (20) working days of the alleged incident or situation occurring, or within (20) working days of becoming aware of the alleged incident or situation
2.	Once the report has been received, the Head of Learning (or delegate) acknowledges receipt of the report and the report is recorded in the College database.	Within two (2) working days of the report being received by the College.
3.	When an allegation is being investigated, the registrar(s) or Fellow(s) is informed in writing of the allegation made against them.	Within five (5) working days of the report being received by the College.
4.	The Head of Learning (or delegate) undertakes an initial investigation of the alleged academic misconduct situation or incident to determine whether: a. the matter should be dismissed because: i. the allegation is mischievous, vexatious, frivolous or malicious ii. the relevant conduct is relatively trivial in nature or unlikely to lead to a finding of academic misconduct iii. the relevant conduct does not fall within the definition of academic misconduct, or iv. the circumstances are such to warrant the dismissal of the matter, or b. the matter should be subject to a full investigation by the AIC.	Within ten (10) working days of receipt of the original allegation received by the College. The Head of Learning (or delegate) determination should be made within thirty (30) working days of the original allegation being received by the College.
5.	The decision and outcome is communicated in writing to the individual(s) who reported the alleged incident or situation and the registrar(s) and/or Fellow(s) whom the allegation has been made against.	Within ten (10) working days of the decision and outcome of the initial investigation.
6.	The outcome decision is recorded in the College database.	Immediately following the formal notification of the outcome decision to the registrar(s) and/or Fellow(s).
7.	For matters referred to the AIC, the Head of Learning (or delegate): • may withhold ratification, notification and/or effectiveness of any assessment, or admission, or reporting activity, as appropriate • will arrange for an AIC to be convened	Within thirty (30) working days of the original allegation being received by the College.

Step	Action	College recommended timeframes *
	- will ensure the written notice of outcome of the initial investigation includes: - a copy of the relevant conduct report(s) - a link to this policy - any other relevant materials that the Head of Learning (or delegate) proposes the AIC considers.	
8.	Members of the AIC are provided with all documentation prior to the meeting date.	At least five (5) working days prior to the date of the meeting.
9.	The accused registrar(s) and/or Fellow(s) are given written notice of the AIC meeting they are requested to attend and details of the allegation. This must include: - date - location - details of the allegation - names of people who will be present at the meeting. The registrar(s) and/or Fellow(s) may use this time to prepare a response and to arrange for a support person of their choice to attend the meeting.	At least five (5) working days prior to the date of the meeting.
10.	If any other relevant materials are received from the individual reporting the alleged situation or incident before the AIC convenes, the registrar(s) and/ or Fellow(s) whom the allegation has been made against must be provided with a copy. They must also be advised if other people have been asked to provide relevant information.	Within (10) working days of receipt of the further relevant materials.
11.	The individual who reported the alleged situation or incident may be invited to attend the AIC meeting with a support person of their choice, if the AIC have questions or require points of clarification. They must be given written notice of the AIC meeting they are requested to attend which must include: - date - location - details of allegation - names of people who will be present at the meeting	At least five (5) working days prior to the date of the meeting.

Step	Action	College recommended timeframes *
12.	The Head of Learning (or delegate) writes to the registrar(s) and or Fellow(s) whom the allegation has been made against, with the outcome of the full investigation advising: • whether or not the AIC made a determination of academic misconduct • a summary of the reasons for the determination • details of any penalty imposed • a link to the College's Appeals Policy (CO-A-002-06)	As soon as possible after a determination is made.
13.	The decision and outcome of the full investigation is communicated in writing to the individual(s) who reported the alleged incident or situation of academic misconduct.	As soon as possible after a determination is made.
14.	The outcome decision is recorded in the College database.	Immediately following the formal notification of the outcome decision to the registrar(s) and/or Fellow(s).
15.	The registrar or Fellow whom the AIC has made a determination against may appeal the decision in accordance with the Appeals Policy (CO-A-002-06).	Within ten (10) working days of receipt of outcome of the AIC investigation.

* **Complex matters may incur delays**

NOTE: All correspondence relating to allegations of academic misconduct including associated documentation must be saved by the College into the registrar's/Fellow's file.