Objectives

To set out clear guidelines for students and staff members as to the definition of plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic misconduct and to make students and staff aware of the procedures and possible penalties that may occur if it is shown that any form of academic misconduct has taken place.

Students and staff members should be made aware that plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice are not consistent with academic ethics and are unacceptable at WCI.

Guidelines

Student and staff member responsibilities:

- Students and staff members must read the WCI statement on plagiarism and collusion in each subject study guide and ensure that they clearly understand that submitting copied, falsified or improperly obtained information as their own work is illegal, and will not be accepted.

- Academic staff members must ensure that all subject study guides include a clear and understandable statement on plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic misconduct. During class contact hours, academic staff members will review the policies and procedures on plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic misconduct and ensure that all students have a clear understanding of the definition of this form of malpractice.

- Not attending a class where plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice are discussed by the lecturer, does not excuse a student from being given a penalty for academic malpractice if it occurs.

- Academic staff members detecting an incidence of plagiarism, collusion or other forms of academic misconduct will promptly advise the student and the Manager Higher Education in writing, utilising the relevant student academic misconduct form. This form must be signed by both the staff member and the student concerned, and submitted to the Manager Higher Education within one business day of the academic misconduct taking place. The Manager Higher Education will then forward this to the WCI Board of Examiners who will then form a Disciplinary Committee to review the case, and allow the student to explain the reason for the misconduct. The Disciplinary Committee may apply penalties for the misconduct that may range from a warning, to being awarded a zero mark for any examination or assessment.
number of incidents of academic malpractice may result in the student concerned being removed from a WCI Associate Degree course.

- All students involved in academic misconduct must be advised to speak with the student counsellor for personal advice and support. The student may decline to do so, if they wish.

- Students should note that submitted work will not be marked whilst being investigated for any form of academic malpractice.

- All reports of plagiarism or collusion, and any penalties imposed, will be placed on the student's academic file. Students may apply to have this removed if no further acts of academic misconduct occur during the remainder of their course at WCI.

**Definition of plagiarism**

- Plagiarism occurs when any form of work that belongs to another author, including word sequences, ideas, drawings, diagrams, or any other form of written work is knowingly copied from the original source and submitted as a student or staff member's own work. In order to avoid plagiarism the true source of all information that is not a person’s own work must be referenced and acknowledged.

- Another author’s research data or research project must not knowingly be used, without referencing this author as the creator of the data.

- Computer information must not be copied without referencing the true source of the information.

- Work done by other students or staff members on previous occasions, must not be copied and submitted as an individual’s own true work.

- Students must seek assistance from academic staff members if they are unsure about the definition of plagiarism, or need assistance in ensuring that they are not involved in any form of plagiarism or academic misconduct. Students should not seek advice from other students.

**Definition of collusion**

Collusion occurs when two or more individuals collaborate to attempt to deceive another party about the true author of a piece of work submitted as their own work.

- In order to avoid collusion, students must not knowingly assist another student in the wrongful presentation of plagiarised or copied work. In doing so, this student will also be penalised.

- Students must not incorrectly represent their contribution to a group assignment when they have actually made little or no contribution to the group effort.

- Students must seek assistance from academic staff members if they are unsure about the definition of collusion, or need assistance in ensuring that they are not involved in any form of collusion or academic misconduct. Students should not seek advice from other students.

**Other forms of academic malpractice:**

Other forms of academic misconduct include:

- Any student attempting to coerce another student to assist with an assignment, or hand over an assignment for the purposes of copying that work and submitting it as their own work.
• Buying another student’s work or buying written assessments from a commercial source for the purposes of copying that work and submitting it as the student’s own work.

• Taking unauthorised material including hand written notes, into an examination venue.

• Attempting to copy another student’s work during an examination.

• Attempting to obtain information in any manner, from another student during an examination.

Administrative procedures

• All incidents of student misconduct must be reported to the Manager Higher Education by the staff member concerned, within one business day of the incident of malpractice taking place utilising the WCI Student Academic Misconduct form. Academic malpractice during examinations must be reported to the Manager Higher Education immediately utilising the procedure outlined in the WCI policy on Examination Procedures.

• The Manager Higher Education will meet with the student concerned and ask them to write and sign their own report of the incident using the page provided on the Student Academic Misconduct form. The Manager Higher Education will advise the student of the subsequent actions to be taken and of their right of appeal. The student concerned will then be asked to see the student counsellor for personal support. The student may decline this if they wish.

• In cases where a number of students are involved in an incident of misconduct, a separate form must be completed and signed by each student.

• The Manager Higher Education will complete and sign the Manager Higher Education’s Report on the form and will ensure that the form is signed by all persons involved with the incident of misconduct, including, the person reporting or any person being the recipient of, the act of misconduct.

• The Manager Higher Education will then forward the form to the respective Board of Examiners for their consideration and action, within five working days of the form being signed by all parties concerned.

• The Board of Examiners will form a Disciplinary Committee to investigate the case, interview all parties concerned, and determine any penalty. The Board of Examiners will notify the student in writing of the date and time that they will need to attend the Disciplinary Committee hearing, and of the procedure to expect.

• The student must attend the Disciplinary Committee meeting at the appointed time to explain the reason for the misconduct. The Disciplinary Committee may also request that other relevant individuals also attend the meeting in order to provide additional information. At the completion of the hearing the student may ask questions if they wish. If the student declines to attend the Disciplinary Committee meeting, the hearing shall proceed in the absence of the student.

• Penalties can only be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee after they have investigated the nature of the misconduct. The Disciplinary Committee will advise the student of their right to appeal against any decision made by the committee and the process required if they wish to do this.

• The student counsellor may attend the meeting to support the student if the student wishes.

• Neither the student nor any other person participating in the hearing is entitled to be legally represented at the Disciplinary Committee meeting.

• All reports of misconduct and any penalty imposed will be placed on the student’s file.
• Any student involved in any form of misconduct must always be seen by the Manager Higher Education and directed to the student counsellor in the first instance.

• Lecturers must ensure that all subject study guides include information on academic misconduct.

• The Disciplinary Committee will notify all parties concerned in writing within five working days of the decision of the Committee and any penalties to be imposed.

**Penalties**

The Disciplinary Committee may decide to undertake any of the following actions as a result of plagiarism or collusion.

• Dismiss the allegation of plagiarism, collusion or other misconduct if it is found to be unwarranted.

• Provide the student with a warning, and advice on how plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic misconduct can be avoided.

• Remove all marks for any plagiarised assessment.

• Place a Statement of Academic Misconduct on the student’s academic record. The student may apply to have this statement removed from their transcript after graduating from their course if no other incidents of misconduct take place.

• In the case of repeated incidences of serious acts of academic misconduct, a student may be refused enrolment in a WCI Associate Degree course.

**Recording of penalty**

In the case of academic misconduct by a student, a report from the Manager Higher Education, detailing all processes of the investigation relating to the incident of misconduct and any penalty imposed by the Board of Examiners, will be placed on the student’s file.