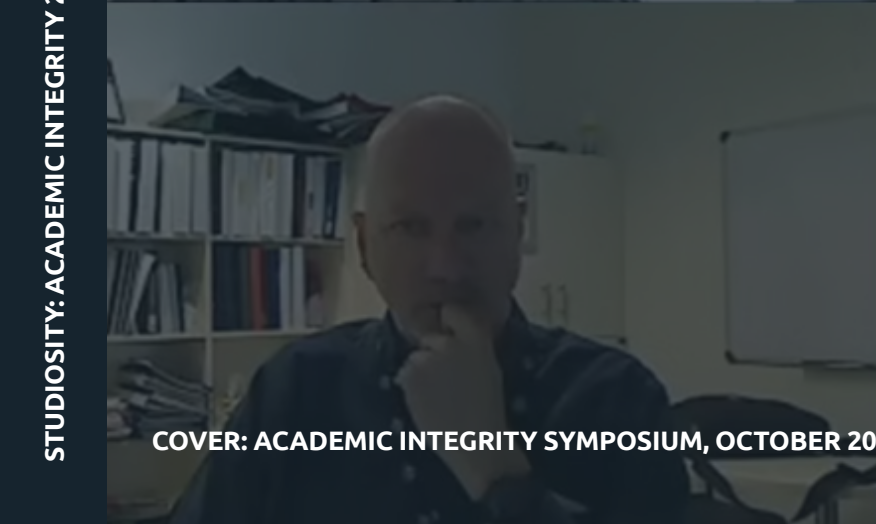
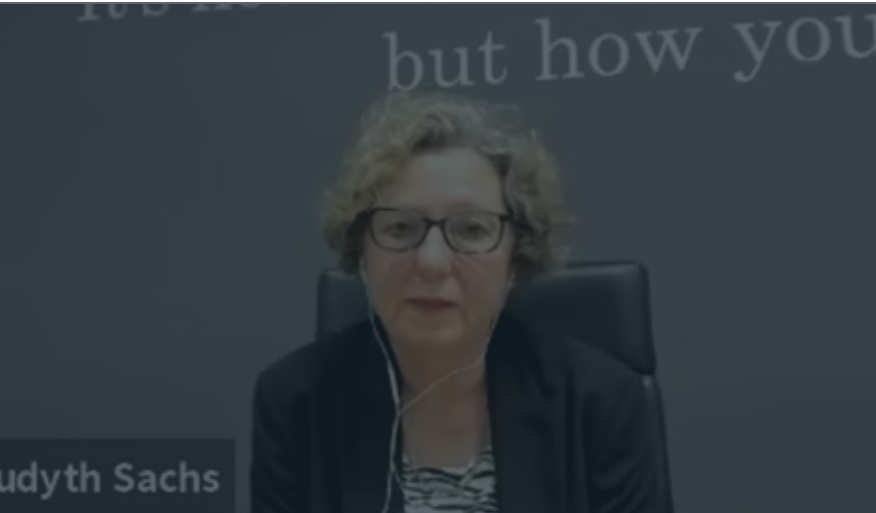


STUDIOSITY  
**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**  
POLICY

20  
22



STUDIOSITY: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY 2021-2022

COVER: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY SYMPOSIUM, OCTOBER 2020

Studiosty

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY STUDIOSITY, 2021-2022**

Studiosity is committed to maintaining the highest levels of academic integrity by creating, using, and sharing information in a manner that is responsible, honourable, and, at all times, ethical.

Studiosity considers the upholding of academic integrity to be the responsibility of **all staff** within the organisation, as well as all Subject Specialists and Student Mentors.

Studiosity takes an educative - not punitive - approach to ensure students, Subject Specialists, Student Mentors, and staff are provided with the support needed to effectively address any academic integrity issues that may be identified.

### **Studiosity's Academic Integrity Policy has been developed with guidance from the following resources:**

Australian Government Federal Register of Legislation. (2015). Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015. Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2015L01639>.

Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2018). Higher Education Standards Framework. Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.au/standards-0>.

Proofreading. (2020). in Cambridge Dictionary. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/proofreading>.

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. (2017). Good Practice Note: Addressing contract cheating to safeguard academic integrity. Retrieved from <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/good-practice-note-addressing-contract-cheating-safeguard-academic>.

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. (2019). Guidance note: academic integrity version 1.2. Retrieved from <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-academic-integrity>.

**This policy was developed by the Academic Services team in discussion with the Executive Team and in consultation with Chief Academic Officer Professor Judyth Sachs, and the Studiosity Academic Advisory Board (see page 5).**

### **STUDIOSITY**

Global Head Office:  
104 / 11 Chandos Street  
St Leonards NSW 2065  
Australia

#### **Phone**

+61 2 9906 2700

#### **Email**

hello@studiosity.com

#### **Website**

studiosity.com

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## FOREWORD FROM THE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

*Prof Judyth Sachs, CAO*

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From my experience Studiosity is a company where vision, values, and outcomes are aligned. We are driven by a commitment to transforming students' lives and enhancing their life chances by building competence and confidence, through developing core academic and help-seeking skills. The company as a whole and every individual working for it is committed to the sector-wide pursuit of academic excellence founded on the highest standards of integrity.

Studiosity is in a unique position to support both students and our partner institutions in this pursuit, and with the recent and necessary emphasis on, and scrutiny of, academic integrity, we stand ready

*Studiosity is driven by a commitment to transforming students' lives and enhancing their life chances by building **competence and confidence**, through developing core academic and help-seeking skills.*

to provide the highest quality, ethically-sound education support. For students, the focus is on an educative approach as they strive to develop their skills and understanding of academic standards; for partners, the goal is to provide timely, relevant insights into any elements of student behaviour that might indicate a need for further action at the institution level. Furthermore, Studiosity's underlying philosophy demands that we demonstrate our unerring commitment to academic integrity through the actions of each and every member of our team, from senior management to our online Subject Specialists, to Student Peer Mentors working on the platform.

PROF JUDYTH SACHS

*Chief Academic Officer*

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## STUDIOSITY'S ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD

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### ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE

We have always sought advice and collaboration with the best minds; a drive that parallels our mission of enquiry-based learning support for all students. We continue to take guidance from, and work closely with, those whose passion mirrors our own.

Our Academic Advisory Board was formed to provide advice, to ensure the company maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and rigor for our students and partners, and to deliver feedback on innovations and service development.



*First row:*

**Prof Judyth Sachs** - Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Provost Macquarie University; Former Pro Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching at the University of Sydney

**Prof Sally Kift** - Adjunct Professor at JCU, La Trobe, and QUT

**Prof John Rosenberg** - Former Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Global Relations) at La Trobe University

**Prof Chris Tisdell** - Professor and Director, Scientia Education Academy, University of New South Wales

**Prof Cliff Allan** - Former Vice-Chancellor, Birmingham City University

**Prof Rebecca Bunting** - Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire New University

*Second row:*

**Sir Eric Thomas** - Former Vice-Chancellor, University of Bristol

**Prof Petra Wend** - Former Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Queen Margaret University

**Geoff Kinkade** - Former Principal Consultant Gifted & Talented in the WA Department of Education

**Dr Noreen Golfman** - Former Provost and Vice President Academic at Memorial University, St John's, Newfoundland

**Dr Mamdouh Shoukri** - Former President and Vice-Chancellor of York University

**Dr Alan Shaver** - Former President Thompson River University; Former Vice-President and Provost, Dalhousie University

## OUR VISION AND MISSION

Studiosity was founded specifically to meet social challenges. Today, our sole **mission is still to increase life chances with access to personal - anytime, anywhere - learning support.**

There has long been a disparity in access to education resources, exacerbated by the tyranny of distance between remote, rural, regional, and urban populations. Add to this crippling socio-economic barriers even between neighbouring postcodes. Our model sought to overcome the limitations of a student's socio-economic or geographical circumstances by vastly improving access to high-quality help, exactly when help is needed. We connect subject-area specialists - like teachers and lecturers or student peer-to-peer mentors - with a student, online; anytime, anywhere.

Partnerships at the institutional level have been the core of our operations since the start, for several reasons: for ubiquitous access, for educator oversight and insight, to remove financial barriers to students, and to ensure social change is measured at the scale needed. We thank our education partners - universities, institutes, government, and schools, in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Hong Kong, Dubai - for believing as strongly as we do in access to education support, to help us pursue this critical mission.

## THIS POLICY'S PURPOSE

- To define academic integrity in the context of the higher education industry, as well as Studiosity's context;
- To outline the responsibilities of Studiosity's staff, Subject Specialists, and Student Mentors to uphold academic integrity;
- To define strategies that Studiosity employs to uphold academic integrity; and
- To outline consequences for breaches of academic integrity.

## SCOPE AND SUPPORTING POLICIES

This policy applies to all Studiosity staff, Subject Specialists, and Student Mentors.

The Academic Integrity Policy is supported and complemented by other existing Studiosity policies and training materials, including *Help, Not Answers*; and the *Core Skills Approach* (both summarised below).

### Provide Help, Not Answers

Studiosity's approach to providing learning support is based around scaffolding, empowering and building capacity within students to enable feed-forward,, continual learning and advancement.

The main role of our Subject Specialists and Student Mentors is to facilitate learning outcomes through active dialogue and guided questioning and not to simply provide answers to questions. Our Subject Specialists provide tools, assistance, and support to do this, by establishing the student's current level of understanding, what is not known, and what is required to bridge and scaffold their knowledge gap. Students need to be actively engaged with the question during the learning session to ensure a sound educational outcome is achieved.

### Core Skills Approach

During a session, it sometimes becomes apparent that the student lacks a 'core skill' that is necessary to understand and work on the question at hand.

In these situations, the Subject Specialist or Student Mentor identifies the core skill that is missing and discusses this with the student, so that they are better placed to continue with their original question.

In this way, the problematic concept is clearly explored in general terms, so that the student is able to apply their new understanding of the concept to their question and similar questions in the future.

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## DEFINITION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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Australia's Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) defines academic integrity as '*a commitment ... to six fundamental values: **honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage***' (International Centre for Academic Integrity, 2014 AS CITED IN TEQSA). These fundamental values are the basis on which principles and behaviours within the scope of academic integrity are developed.

For the purpose of this document, academic integrity is the moral and ethical code of conduct related to the use, generation and communication of information in an honourable, fair, and responsible manner.



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## RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

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### OUR SUBJECT SPECIALISTS AND MENTORS

*Even the brightest minds in the world can't deliver a million quality study experiences without well-designed technology and stringent accreditation, review, and mentoring policies.*

Our Subject Specialists are highly qualified and demonstrate a strong commitment to the success of the students they interact with. Many are dedicated lifelong learners with a passion for quality education<sup>1</sup>.

Subject Specialists are expected to adhere to all our core policies and are monitored and managed by Mentors to ensure this is always the case.

At the core of Studiosity's strict Quality Assurance Process are these skilled Mentors who develop ongoing relationships with each of our Subject Specialists, providing timely, constructive criticism to help the online team members develop new skills, as well as being a friendly, consistent point of contact. Specialists also have access to an extensive online library of learning resources that describe in detail our policies and processes so they are able to independently check specific requirements as needed.

### POLICY ADHERENCE

Studiosity staff and contracted Subject Specialists have an obligation to understand and uphold academic integrity by acting with honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, courage, and trust.

Studiosity makes every effort to create an environment that fosters the foundations of academic integrity and allows staff and Subject Specialists to fulfil their obligations by clearly documenting the responsibilities and expectations of staff and Subject Specialists in this Academic Integrity Policy.

It is the responsibility of all staff and contracted Subject Specialists to ensure that they are aware of the contents of the most current version of the Academic Integrity Policy, and that they operate within the confines of the policy at all times.

### ON-BOARDING AND TRAINING STAFF

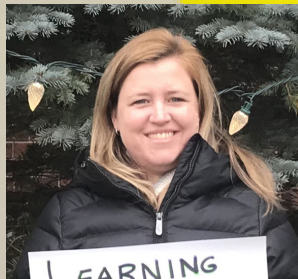
All Studiosity staff members and contracted Subject Specialists are required to complete training related to Academic Integrity during their induction. Furthermore, they are required to revisit training materials as and when they are amended or updated, and when directed to do so by management.

### POLICY MAINTENANCE AND DISSEMINATION

It is the responsibility of the Academic Services and Operations teams to maintain the Academic Integrity Policy and its associated training materials. Furthermore, the Academic Services and Operations teams are responsible for the dissemination of notifications to staff and Subject Specialists relating to policy and training amendments and updates.

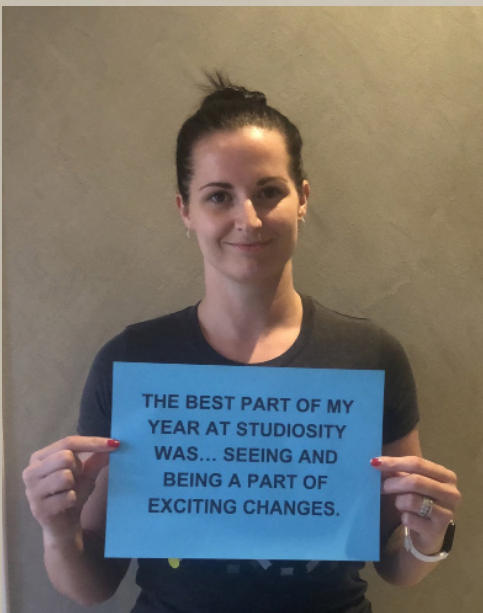
<sup>1</sup> See 'Studiosity FAQ: Subject Specialists, Academic Services and Integrity', available upon request to [partnerservices@studiosity.com](mailto:partnerservices@studiosity.com)



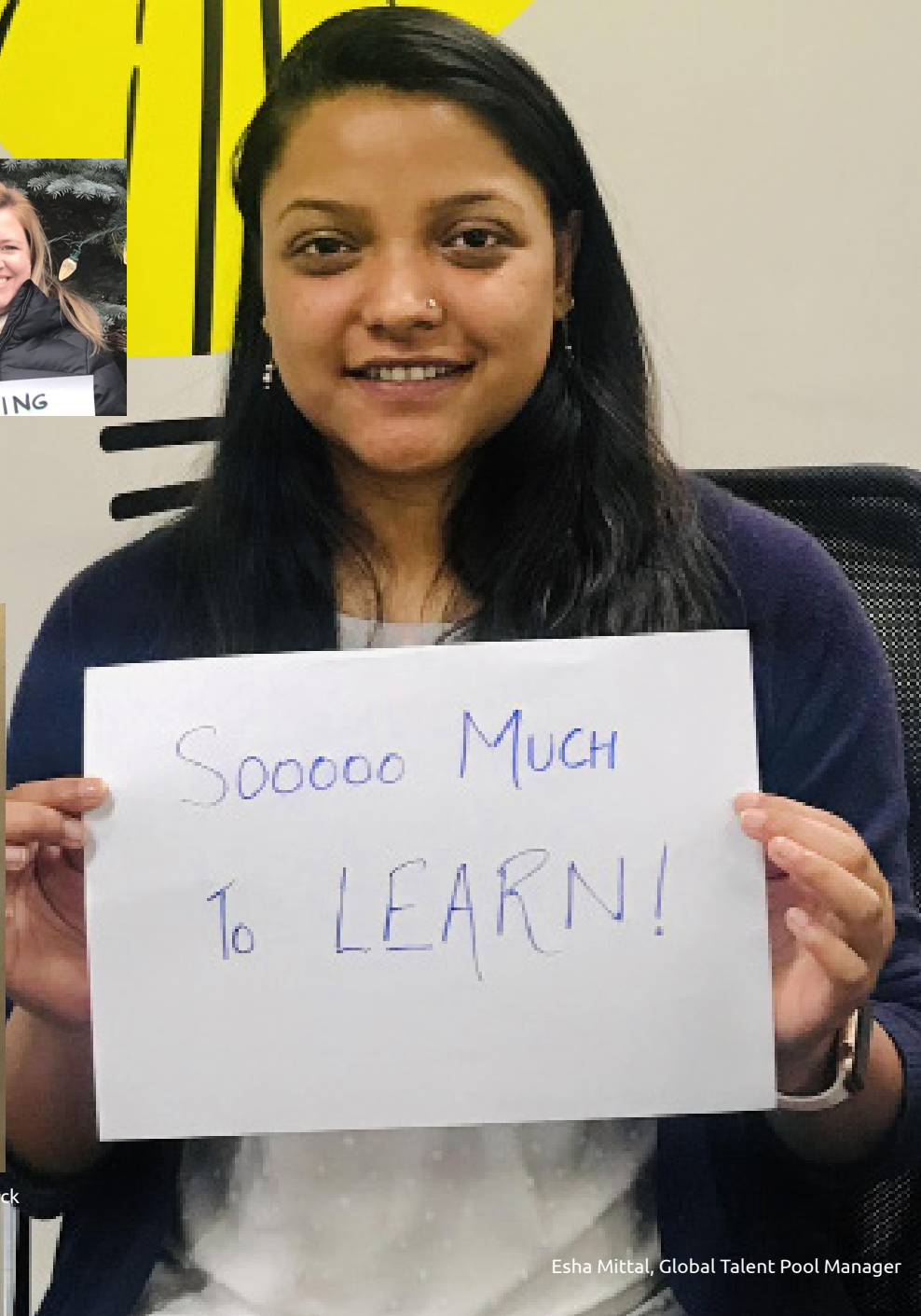


*above*

Ben Spezzano, Mentor  
Kausar Rangila, Mentor  
Stacey Rose, Mentor  
Genevieve Turcotte, Mentor



Kate Dekker, Manager Operations - Writing Feedback



Esha Mittal, Global Talent Pool Manager

## STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

### REQUIREMENTS OF OUR SUBJECT SPECIALISTS

In all interactions with students, Studiosity aims to deliver educational experiences that are academically sound, honest, and ethical. In order to do so, our Subject Specialists:

#### *Work within the guidelines of our Help, Not Answers policy*

Subject Specialists facilitate, through guided questioning, consolidation of current knowledge. Using our Core Skills Approach, Subject Specialists also work to scaffold learning and reduce critical gaps in knowledge.

#### *Focus on encouraging active engagement from students throughout Connect Live sessions*

Subject Specialists aim to encourage each student's active engagement throughout Connect Live and Student Connect sessions to ensure educationally sound outcomes, with students gaining the ability to apply new knowledge learned in the session to similar problems and/or situations in the future.

#### *Focus on providing useful and informative feedback to students in Writing Feedback submissions*

Our approach to providing feedback is based around empowering and building capacity within students to enable continual learning and advancement. Accordingly, we require Subject Specialists to facilitate sound learning outcomes for students, and not simply to provide answers to questions or make corrections. The primary role of Writing Feedback Subject Specialists is to provide tools and assistance to students to allow them to improve their own work and develop their own skills to apply to similar questions in the future.

#### *Monitor and respond to student behaviour*

Subject Specialists are required to make note of potential plagiarism in students' work and requests from students for direct answers, solutions to problems, drafting of content, or the exchange of personal information. If such occasions arise:

- Connect Live Subject Specialists will advise the student of the issue, with specific messaging designed to help initiate a discussion of

potential plagiarism or to clarify how the Specialist can (and cannot) work with the student.

>> If considered necessary, the Specialist will flag the session as "Academically At Risk" so that the partner institution may follow up if deemed appropriate.

- Subject Specialists are required to report instances where a student has sought to exchange email addresses as this has implications for both inappropriate sharing of personal information and potential collusion.
- Writing Feedback Subject Specialists will provide feedback on the significance of plagiarism and the importance of crediting sources in writing. They will also direct students to their educational institutions referencing resources and/or student support services.

If potential plagiarism is deemed to be extensive, the submission is cancelled and the student is invited to resubmit their document when it is primarily in their own words. Information is also provided on the importance of referencing and acknowledging sources.

### REQUIREMENTS OF ALL STUDIOSTY STAFF

To maintain high levels of academic integrity at an operational level, Studiosity staff will operate within frameworks that are responsible, honourable, and ethical. Through adherence to such strategies, Studiosity staff will:

#### *Handle student interactions with the respect and ethicality that they deserve*

Studiosity staff will obtain explicit written permission from students before using their work for any sales, marketing, or demonstrative purposes. In obtaining permissions, students will be fully informed of how their work may be used and all identifying information will be removed.

#### *Maintain transparency of reporting processes*

Studiosity staff will ensure that partner institutions and students are aware of Studiosity's reporting

practices including:

- Mandatory reporting in accordance with child protection regulations;
- Academically At Risk reporting; and
- Emotionally At Risk reporting.

Transcripts of live sessions and reviewed submissions are made available for review by our educational partners.

### ***Communicate clearly with partner institutions and students***

To ensure that Studiosity is doing everything it can to create clear expectations for users of its services, Studiosity staff will provide up to date and accurate messaging to partner institutions and students, amending and updating as and when necessary.

### ***Review, amend, and update core policies and procedures regularly***

This includes the Academic Integrity policy. The purpose is to ensure that all policies and procedures continue to reflect best practice across all elements of Studiosity's activities and encompass current approaches to addressing academic integrity challenges.

### ***Foster a working environment that upholds the highest standards of academic integrity***

Studiosity management and staff will, at all times, do what is necessary to foster a workplace culture that is collectively committed to academic excellence, honesty, and integrity. Academic integrity should remain at the core of all business practices, plans, and decision making processes.

### ***Maintain service quality assurance processes with a core focus on educating Subject Specialists and upholding academic integrity***

Specialists' interactions with students are subject to quality assurance processes that include checking for adherence to Studiosity's Academic Integrity policy and our Help, Not Answers policy. Our QA teams consider whether Specialists have provided support that furthers the student's understanding of the relevant concepts through appropriate use of leading questions, examples (separate from the student's immediate question) and explanations.

Where a Specialist has breached this policy, depending on the severity of the violation, the QA team's initial approach will be to educate the Subject Specialist through the provision of written feedback explaining the issue with specific examples from the session transcript or submission, as well as direct instruction on how to address the issue.

If the specific case is sufficiently serious, or where the Specialist has previously received feedback on an academic integrity issue, the matter will be escalated to the relevant Quality Assurance Team Leader or Quality Assurance Manager for further action as warranted. This may include a formal warning, a suspension of service access while completing retraining or contract termination.

### ***Maintain academic integrity audit compliance procedures***

#### **Studiosity staff**

Each team within Studiosity will develop and apply clearly defined business processes that describe their specific procedures for ensuring our academic integrity standards are upheld.

#### **Academic Services Quality Assurance (QA) Teams**

The Academic Services team is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of QA processes that aim to support and enforce practices that are in compliance with Studiosity's academic integrity standards. Furthermore, the Academic Services team is responsible for maintaining the sufficient and ongoing training and education of the QA Team.

#### **Subject Specialists and Student Mentors**

The Academic Services QA Teams are responsible for the day-to-day reviewing of active Subject Specialists and Student Mentors and the sessions and submissions that they work on. The QA Team maintains up to date records of interactions with Subject Specialists and Student Mentors, and report breaches directly to Academic Services as and when required.

## BREACHES AND CONSEQUENCES

Breaches of academic integrity by Studiosity staff, Subject Specialists, and Student Mentors are considered to be:

### *Providing answers to students*

A Subject Specialist will be deemed to have breached the policy if:

- they provide direct answers or worked solutions (either in part or in full) to problems;
- they supply material, either of their own or from other sources, that directly answers the student's question;
- in explaining a concept, they make use of the student's specific question, rather than using separate, unrelated examples;
- they undertake research on the student's behalf and provide resources, in contravention of our *Help, Not Answers* policy;
- they offer their own ideas or interpretation of a text;
- they edit, correct or draft material for the student (see also Proofreading below).

### *Proofreading*

Proofreading is defined as *'the process of finding and correcting mistakes in text'* (Proofreading, 2020). Subject Specialists are prohibited from proofreading in any and all interactions with students. A Subject Specialist will be deemed to have breached the policy if they:

- highlight every instance of a particular error in a student's work;
- directly edit/change a student's writing, rather than suggesting ways of improving the writing; or
- offer corrections without providing suitable explanations and information that will help the student understand the issue and how to correct it themselves in future assignments.

### *Collusion*

In the context of student - Subject Specialist interactions, collusion includes any attempt to

collaborate on the student's work beyond that allowed under Studiosity's policies. This may include:

- sharing of email addresses;
- the Specialist agreeing to contact the student outside the Studiosity platform;
- any discussion that entails the Specialist providing any direct contribution to the student's work; or
- breaches of the "help, not answers" policy where initiated by either party.

### *Discussing or predicting grades/marks*

Subject Specialists are prohibited from engaging in any discussions with students that amount to the prediction or discussion of potential grades for the assignment in question.

### *Failing to correctly attribute sources*

Studiosity staff and Subject Specialists are required to acknowledge/attribute information used internally, externally, and with students, to its original source.

### *Failing to seek proper permission for use of material including students' work*

Failure to obtain written permission for use of materials, including students' work for sales, marketing or demonstrative purposes, will mean that the material cannot be used for its intended purpose and that substitute material for which permissions have already been obtained will need to be used.

### *Providing feedback and/or advice on content in Writing Feedback submissions*

In accordance with our *Help, Not Answers* policy, Subject Specialists are not permitted to provide students with feedback or opinions on the content of their written work. For example, while Subject Specialists can comment on the strength or development of an argument (under structural feedback), they may not comment on the validity or accuracy of an argument, or provide information

that can be used to support or refute the argument being made.

In line with Studiosity's educative approach to promoting academic integrity, the initial response to a breach of the policy will be to provide the staff member or Subject Specialist with either verbal or written feedback on the issue, including specific guidance on how to avoid future breaches. Repeated instances or cases where the violation is considered sufficiently serious may warrant a formal written warning or further escalation including suspension from access to the service during a period of retraining, or contract termination (for Subject Specialists). Serious or repeated breaches by staff members will be treated in accordance with relevant local employment law.

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## CONCLUDING STATEMENT

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This policy provides a clear statement of Studiosity's unambiguous stance on academic integrity. It offers a framework for all stakeholders to pursue the highest possible standards in this crucial element of academic success, in particular, in developing students as ethical researchers and writers.

### DATA AND PRIVACY

The Studiosity platform uses best-of-breed third party technology service providers such as infrastructure hosting, user experience testing, email, usage reporting and student support. In order to engage these third parties in a responsible manner, each provider is engaged under the EU GDPR framework and as a GDPR processor which ensures ultimate control of all data is maintained with Studiosity.

Studiosity partners are invited to read our *Data Security and Protection Policy* document. It describes the Information Security policy applicable to Studiosity. Because Information Technology is at the heart of, or in support of, nearly every business process within the organisation, it is the responsibility of every employee to ensure the security and safety of our, and ultimately our customers', digital information. The document has the explicit purpose of:

- addressing any written and procedural

requirements needed to meet our PCI DSS SAQ A-EP 3.2 obligations to accept payments for e-commerce services

- establish and maintain the personal information and privacy protection requirements of the Australian Privacy Act 1988 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for EU citizens
- encompassing industry best practice procedures to secure the Studiosity platform and data

Further, Studiosity's *Platform Security Policy* document provides an overview of the Security Architecture of the Studiosity Services Platform.

### POLICY REVIEW

The Academic Integrity Policy is reviewed annually. The current version was reviewed and updated in July 2021.

Next review date: July 2022.

## STUDIOSITY

Global Head Office:  
104 / 11 Chandos Street  
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Australia

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+61 2 9906 2700

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hello@studiosity.com

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studiosity.com