Student Guild of Curtin University

55th Guild Council – Special Meeting #01

Tuesday 5 November 2024

Minutes
Meeting opened 4.02pm

1. **Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners**

"*The Curtin Student Guild would like to pay our respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of our community by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which the Bentley Campus is located, the Wadjuk people of the Nyungar Nation; and on our Kalgoorlie Campus, the Wongutha people of the North-Eastern Goldfields. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this university, city and this region.*"

2. **Attendance**

   2.1. Members Present; Mitchell Craig, Ryan Kirby, Noor Fellah, Tahni Rowe, Dylan Storer, Callum Baxter, Aleena Shaji, Max Zhang, Jacquie Bicanic

   2.2. Others Present; Maryanne Shaddick (minute taker), David Luketina (Managing Director), Jo-Ann Naidu (Manager Student Assist)

   2.3. Apologies and Leave of Absence; none

   2.4. Absent; Sarina Pun, Ella Marchionda, Rey Nairn, Shiura Yoosuf

3. **Disclosure of any potential or perceived Conflicts of Interest. None**

4. **Business on Notice**

   4.1. Changes to *Statue No. 10 – Student Discipline* and Rules made pursuant to

Background:
The Academic Registrar is consulting on the definition change of poor academic practice to remove the part of the definition that references dishonesty and to make it more general. They are also seeking feedback on removing the cap penalty for 20% for misconduct to be classed as poor academic practice. This would mean that a student could receive a penalty of up to a 100% reduction without the case having to go to a SDP with student representation.

The Academic Registrar failed to notify the Guild whilst this change was open for consultation which is why a Special Meeting of the Guild Council is being called to discuss as per the register of delegations.

Motion: That the Guild Council approve the Vice President – Education to give feedback and recommendations on behalf of Guild Council on changes to Statute No. 10 – Student Discipline and the rules made pursuant to Statute No. 10 – Student Discipline according to the following position:

Guild Council authorises the President and Vice President Education to give feedback and recommendations on behalf of Guild Council on changes to Statute 10 Student Discipline and the rules made pursuant to Statute 10 Student Discipline according to the following position.

The Guild accepts the definition change regarding Poor Academic Practice to allow cases to be processed faster. The Guild does not support a penalty of up to 100% mark reduction, the most the Guild is willing to support is a 40% mark reduction. The Guild is of the opinion that anything requiring a reduction above 40% no longer has a moderate impact and therefore is no longer Poor Academic Practice. The Guild only supports these changes on the understanding that this is an interim change whilst a more permanent solution is created.

Moved: Veronika Gobba (Vice President – Education)
Seconded: Jasmyne Tweed
Carried

Veronika Gobba provided the members of the Guild council a background on the issue noting that some students had been waiting since April to get their cases heard and the bulk of them were to do with Gen AI. The university wanted to make an interim change to help manage the backlog of cases before overhauling the rules more comprehensively in the next year. Veronika noted that if the 20% cap was lifted it was possible for a student to be hit with a 100% penalty and the decision made by an enquiry officer rather than a panel with student and staff representation. Veronika reinforced that a big part of the change was removing the element of dishonesty from the definition. It was noted the consultation would go on for a while and would pass through many university committees. As well, Veronika noted that the Guild Council needed to agree on a stance about the proposed change.

There was discussion about the meaning of poor academic practice, what constituted dishonesty and the penalties imposed. Council members were asked if they were comfortable about removing the reference to dishonesty from the definition which would assist in dealing with AI cases. The council discussed the repercussions of removing the cap penalty of 20% and that some cases could result in a 100% penalty. There was a view from a number of councillors that a penalty cap of 40% was appropriate as a student could still pass the assessment. There was discussion about applying penalties in relation to the impact of the poor anaemic practice, especially in relation to the use of AI - whether it was a moderate or high impact.

Many councillors thought it would be a good idea for Jon Yorke's team to develop a matrix or guidelines.

There was discussion about university policy banning the use of AI and the fact that cases of AI had not been able to be treated as poor academic practice as the university has specifically told students not to use it. Therefore the cases displayed dishonesty.

There was discussion about the implications of the proposed changes on collusion and contract cheating cases.

Guild councillors discussed the prevalence of AI tools, for example journal article sites which had AI tools built into them and the requirement for students to use Curtin Grammarly. It was noted the Curtin was looking into how students could use AI.

Student Assist Manager Jo-Ann Naidu was asked her opinion about the benefits of the proposed change. She reported that because so many cases were delayed, students were not able to enrol in the next semester, complete placements and some could not graduate. For international students the situation impacted their visas. Jo-Ann was comfortable with.
a penalty cap if 40%.

The councillors were satisfied to endorse the position.

The meeting closed at 5.07pm

GUILD COUNCIL – 05/11/24

Changes to *Statue No. 10 – Student Discipline* and Rules made pursuant to

Submitted:
Moved: Veronika Gobba (Vice President – Education)
Seconded:

Preamble: The Academic Registrar is consulting on a definition change of poor academic practice. The goal is to make the definition more general and thus workable for Gen AI cases and thus more academic misconduct cases can fall under that category. They are also seeking feedback on removing the cap penalty for 20% for misconduct to be classed as poor academic practice. This could mean that a student could receive a penalty of up to a 100% reduction without the case having to go to a SDP with student representation.

Motion: That the Guild Council:

approve the Vice President – Education to give feedback and recommendations on behalf of Guild Council on changes to *Statute No. 10 – Student Discipline* and the rules made pursuant to *Statute No. 10 – Student Discipline* according to the following position:

Position decided by Guild Council at the meeting to be inserted here

Background:

The proposal is to change the definition and meaning of Poor Academic Practice & Penalty. The current unchanged wording in the Misconduct Rules is:

"Poor Academic Practice means Academic Misconduct that is not dishonest and where the degree of unfair advantage resulting or that may result from the Academic Misconduct is no more than moderate;

Poor Academic Practice Penalty means one or more of the following -
(a) a formal warning;
(b) a requirement for the Respondent Student to attend counselling or a lecture, seminar, workshop or similar activity; 6

(c) a requirement for the Respondent Student to address the issue identified and resubmit the work (but with a reduced maximum mark for the assessment or with a reduced maximum mark for the relevant component);
(d) a reduced grade up to a maximum of 20% in respect of the assessable item in respect of which the Academic Misconduct occurred; and
(e) a fine up to $250;"

The new proposed definition will be circulated to Guild Council members on 5/11/24. However, essentially what is being proposed will water down the definition of Poor Academic Practice, removes the element of whether or not it is dishonest and lifts the reduced grade maximum to 100%.

Student Assist and the Vice President-Education is seeking clarity from the Academic Registrar as to why the current definition cannot allow AI-related cases to fit under that classification, as we are currently confused by the proposed definition change and will report those communications to the Guild Council on 5/11/24.

The Academic Registrar so far has communicated with us that this is a "proposed interim change to the Academic Misconduct Rules", to help speed up the time it takes to get student discipline cases resolved.

The proposal is "intended to be a stop-gap measure to deal with the issue that currently sends all Gen-AI related cases into a full inquiry/discipline panel process. For example, at the time of introducing the poor academic practice (PAP) pathway, it was expected that 2/3 or so of the cases would be treated as such. But because of the definition of PAP and the rise in Gen-AI cases, we are currently finding that only about 12% of cases are being dealt with. So the proposed change is intended to restore that balance allowing more cases to fall into the PAP category."

Attachment/s:

Attachment A – Statute No. 10 – Student Discipline
Attachment B – Academic Misconduct Rules