The GLA Policy on Academic Misconduct applies to all students within the College of Global Liberal Arts and operates within the framework of the Ritsumeikan University Student Disciplinary Regulations. All student information will be handled in a manner that protects student privacy and confidentiality in accordance with The Ritsumeikan Trust Personal Information Protection Basic Policy.

1. Academic integrity and student responsibilities

The College of Global Liberal Arts is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic integrity refers to the behavior, norms, and standards necessary to the College ensuring the soundness and credibility of its academic practice. In upholding these standards the College commits itself to respecting the freedom of all its members to study, learn, research, create, teach, speak, and publish in pursuit of knowledge and excellence. All students are responsible for understanding what behavior upholds and violates these standards, and for avoiding and reporting any academic misconduct within the College.

2. Academic misconduct and academic poor practice

2.1. Definition of academic misconduct
Academic misconduct constitutes a serious violation of academic integrity. It is behavior that is directly antithetical to the College’s capacity to deliver its curriculum and to certify honest achievement of its objectives.

2.2. Definition of academic poor practice
Academic poor practice constitutes a minor violation of academic integrity and is not directly antithetical to the College’s capacity to deliver its curriculum, though may become so in the case of repetition or continuation, or in the case of developing into more serious violation.

2.3. Responding to academic misconduct and academic poor practice
Response to both academic misconduct and academic poor practice should be guided by the objective of restoring students to good academic practice. However, whereas in cases of academic poor practice appropriate responses are of an educative nature, in cases of academic misconduct appropriate responses are also typically punitive.

3. Factors determining whether a case constitutes academic misconduct or academic poor practice

There is no clear line delineating what constitutes academic misconduct and what constitutes academic poor practice. The following factors may be useful in guiding decisions.

3.1. Factors determining academic poor practice
i. If the violation is unintentional or the result of ignorance for which the student may not be reasonably culpable, it is more likely to be considered academic poor practice;
ii. If the violation is committed by a more junior student with less experience it is more likely to be considered poor academic practice;
iii. If the violation is committed as a result of a reasonable misinterpretation of assignment or assessment instructions it is more likely to be considered academic poor practice;
iv. If the violation is committed as a result of a reasonable misinterpretation of the instructor’s or other students’ intentions it is more likely to be considered academic poor practice;
v. If the violation is the result of a certified or certifiable behavioral issue it is more likely to be considered academic poor practice;
vi. If the violation is the result of some extenuating circumstance that makes the violation unlikely to be repeated in the future it is more likely to be considered academic poor practice.

3.2. Factors determining academic misconduct
i. If the violation is of a more serious nature it is more likely to be considered academic misconduct;
ii. If the violation is intentional it is more likely to be considered academic misconduct;
iii. If the violation is the result of culpable negligence it is more likely to be considered academic misconduct;
iv. If the violation is an instance of repeated behavior it is more likely to be considered academic misconduct;
v. If the violation is committed by a more senior student with greater experience it is more likely to be considered academic misconduct;
vi. If the violation involves obfuscation of evidence, or is denied in the face of obvious evidence to the contrary, it is more likely to be considered academic misconduct;

vii. If the violation compromises other students’ learning, or the capacity of faculty to deliver instruction, or of staff to administer the programme, it is more likely to be considered academic misconduct

4. Schedule of possible responses to violations of academic integrity

4.1. Possible remedial action for academic poor practice
i. Reprimand and explanation of why the behavior constitutes a violation of academic integrity;
ii. Rewriting a portion or the entirety of an assessment item;
iii. Completing a supplementary assessment item to demonstrate improved understanding of good academic practice
iv. Consulting with or completing workshops on good academic practice as offered by the Academic Advising Center (AAC), Student Support Room (SSR), or other support services on campus;
v. Any other remedial action deemed appropriate by the instructor and/or Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

4.2. Possible sanctions for academic misconduct
i. Reduction of marks on an assessment item;
ii. Awarding of ‘0’ on the assessment item;
iii. Awarding of ‘F’ in the course;
iv. Requirement of a written letter of apology by the student;
v. Recommendation of suspension from the University and all current coursework;
vi. Recommendation of withdrawal from the University;
vii. Any other penalty deemed appropriate by the instructor and/or Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

4.3. Factors determining appropriate sanctions for academic misconduct and remedial action for academic poor practice
The severity of response to a violation of academic integrity should be proportional to the seriousness of the violation in question. As with the case of remedial action for academic poor practice, sanctions imposed for academic misconduct should be guided by a concern to restore students to good academic practice, so far as this is possible.
Factors to be considered in determining sanctions for cases of academic misconduct, or remedial action for cases of academic poor practice, include:

i. The severity of the violation;
ii. Whether the student has engaged in previous academic poor practice or academic misconduct;
iii. Whether the violation in question follows a pattern of behavior;
iv. Whether the violation compromises other students or members of the university;
v. Whether the student appears to have acted with malice or other bad intention;
vi. Whether the student appears to have acted in ignorance or negligence but not with bad intention.

5. Communications with students

All communications with students regarding matters of academic integrity should be conducted in a private and confidential manner. Forms and communications delivered electronically to students should be sent to their official Ritsumeikan University email addresses. Hardcopy documents should be sent to students’ postal addresses registered at the College in their name. All students are responsible for checking their Ritsumeikan University email and their postboxes on a regular basis.

6. Meetings with students

Meetings held with students in investigating suspected violations of academic integrity must follow the Guidelines for Meeting with Students. These guidelines apply in the case of instructors conducting initial investigations (see Guidelines for Initial Investigations) or in the case of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs meeting with a student to investigate a suspected violation of academic integrity though not as part of an Academic Misconduct Hearing.

7. Procedures for suspected violations of academic integrity

Suspected violations of academic integrity are to be investigated following the GLA Student Academic Misconduct Procedure (see Appendix 1). This procedure is supported by the documents and guidelines found in appendices 3-15.

8. Academic Misconduct Hearings

Academic Misconduct Hearings are convened by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs after reviewing an instructor’s Student Meeting Outcome form, or after reviewing a Suspicion of Violation of Academic Integrity Outside of a Course form, or after meeting with a student at an instructor’s request, and finding that a case may constitute academic misconduct. Academic Misconduct Hearings are to follow the Procedures for Academic Misconduct Hearings.
9. Appealing findings of Academic Misconduct Hearings

Students have the right to appeal any finding of academic misconduct at an Academic Misconduct Hearing. Appeals are to be governed by the GLA Student Appeal Procedure (see Appendix 2). This procedure is supported by the documents and guidelines found in appendices 16-21.

10. Appealing findings of Academic Appeal Hearings

Students may only appeal the finding of an Academic Appeal Hearing if that finding is for recommendation of suspension or withdrawal from the University. Such appeals are to be governed by Article 16 of the Ritsumeikan University Student Disciplinary Regulations.

10.1. If the President determines that disciplinary action is to be taken as per Article 10-4.3 of the Ritsumeikan University Student Disciplinary Regulations, then as is provided for under Article 3.2 and 3.3 the Dean shall refrain from posting any public notice of the disciplinary action (as per Article 13.1) until such time as the period for appealing this action is closed.

11. Transparency of process and students’ rights

11.1. The procedures for investigating cases of suspected violations of academic integrity should be fully transparent and easily accessible to students. Students should be informed at each stage of the investigative process of the findings of each relevant authority.

11.2. All forms and documents that pertain to investigations conducted under the GLA Policy on Academic Misconduct will be securely stored to protect students’ privacy and confidentiality in accordance with The Ritsumeikan Trust Personal Information Protection Basic Policy. Documentation held by instructors or deans may be destroyed at the full conclusion of a case by submitting that documentation to the GLA Office for shredding and disposal.

11.3. In meetings with instructors or deans students should not be precluded from taking notes of the discussion. They should also not be dissuaded from defending themselves or asking questions to clarify proceedings. Meetings should be conducted in accordance with the norms and standards stipulated in the Guidelines for Meeting with Students.

11.4. The GLA Office should be apprised of each stage of the investigative process. All forms and documents submitted to the GLA Office shall be kept private and confidential, and only released for review or inspection as stipulated in the academic misconduct and appeal procedures. The GLA Administrative Manager is responsible for the management and security of all forms and documents submitted to the GLA Office in accordance with The Ritsumeikan Trust Personal Information Protection Basic Policy.

11.5. The Assistant Dean of Students acts as student advocate throughout any case of violation of academic integrity or suspected violation, and is responsible for overseeing the integrity of the process. In the case that the Assistant Dean of Students is unable to perform in this role the Associate Dean of Planning serves in their place. If the Associate Dean of Planning is unable to serve then responsibility devolves to the Associate Dean of Recruitment.

11.5.1. The Assistant Dean is to be notified of all Academic Misconduct Hearings and is to review all Academic Misconduct Hearing Outcome forms to ensure procedural fairness.
11.5.2. Student appeals of findings of academic misconduct are initiated through submission of Notice of Intention to Appeal Finding of Academic Misconduct and Appeal of Finding of Academic Misconduct forms to the Assistant Dean.

11.5.3. In adjudicating the merit of an Appeal of Finding of Academic Misconduct to proceed to an Academic Appeal Hearing as per Article 7 of the Procedures for Student Appeals, the Assistant Dean is to act in the interest of justice and the student’s best interests.

11.5.4. On review of an Academic Misconduct Hearing Outcome form the Assistant Dean may also advise students to initiate an appeal if they believe there to be a case of procedural or substantive injustice.

11.6. Students have the right to have a person present for support at Academic Misconduct Hearings and Academic Appeal Hearings. This person however (if not also a witness) is not permitted to speak at these hearings unless granted permission by the chair of the hearing, as per Article 9 of the GLA Student Appeal Procedure.

11.7. Students have the right to have witnesses present evidence or speak on their behalf at hearings as is relevant to clarifying or fully understanding the facts of a case or situation. Witnesses will not be prejudiced against for having spoken for a student unless they are found to have dissembled the truth, intentionally tried to mislead the hearing, or otherwise subverted the procedures and purposes of the hearing.

11.8. Students have the right to appeal findings of academic misconduct at Academic Misconduct Hearings. Appeals are to be conducted in accordance with the GLA Student Appeal Procedure (see Appendix 2 and supporting documentation in appendices 16-21).

11.9. Students have the right to appeal findings of recommendation of withdrawal or suspension from the University at Academic Appeal Hearings. Appeals are governed by Article 16 of the Ritsumeikan University Student Disciplinary Regulations.
GLA Policy on Academic Misconduct: Appendices

Appendix 1: GLA Student Academic Misconduct Procedure
Appendix 2: GLA Student Appeal Procedure
Appendix 3: Guidelines for Initial Investigations
Appendix 4: Guidelines for Meeting with Students
Appendix 5: Procedures for Academic Misconduct Hearings
Appendix 6: Procedures for Recommendation of Suspension or Withdrawal from University
Appendix 7: Student Meeting Request form
Appendix 8: Student Meeting Outcome form
Appendix 9: Academic Poor Practice form
Appendix 10: Academic Misconduct form
Appendix 11: Associate Dean’s Review form
Appendix 12: Suspicion of Violation of Academic Integrity Outside of a Course form
Appendix 13: Academic Misconduct Hearing form
Appendix 14: Academic Misconduct Hearing Outcome form
Appendix 15: Recommendation of Suspension or Withdrawal from University form
Appendix 16: Notice of Intention to Appeal Finding of Academic Misconduct form
Appendix 17: Appeal of Finding of Academic Misconduct form
Appendix 18: Rejection of Appeal form
Appendix 19: Request for an Academic Appeal Hearing form
Appendix 20: Academic Appeal Hearing form
Appendix 21: Academic Appeal Hearing Report form