

# Student Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy

## Section 1 - Policy Statement

(1) The Student Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy sets out the University's principles and commitment to academic integrity and provides a framework for dealing with instances of alleged academic misconduct by students.

## Section 2 - Policy Scope

(2) This Policy applies to any:

- a. academic staff member in terms of the promotion of academic integrity and the detection of, and dealing with, academic misconduct by students;
- b. student in a coursework program;
- c. student in any sub-bachelor, undergraduate and postgraduate units offered by ACU, including coursework units in any Higher Degree by Research program;
- d. research project and thesis units completed as part of an honours or postgraduate coursework program; and
- e. person who was a student at the time of any alleged academic misconduct.

(3) This policy does not apply to students enrolled in Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs, except where alleged instances of academic misconduct relate to coursework units. For HDR students, all other alleged instances will be dealt with under the [Research Code of Conduct](#) and the [Complaints and Investigations Procedure](#).

## Section 3 - Definitions

(4) Terms used in this policy and associated procedure are consistent with the [Glossary of Student and Course Terms](#). The following specific definitions also apply:

Term	Definition
Academic integrity	Academic integrity means acting with the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in learning, teaching and research.
Academic Integrity Officer	Academic Integrity Officer is an academic staff member who has a leadership role in academic integrity matters and is responsible for receiving allegations, determining evidence of academic misconduct, and applying penalties for academic misconduct.
Academic misconduct	Academic misconduct is any action or attempted action that may result in an unfair academic advantage to one or more students.
Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee	Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee is a committee convened to determine allegations of academic misconduct that may lead to serious penalties that affect a student's enrolment or their eligibility for an award.

Term	Definition
Legitimate cooperation	Legitimate cooperation is the legitimate cooperation and collaboration by students sharing materials or data collected and discussing the interpretation of such material. Examples of legitimate cooperation and collaboration include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informal study/discussion groups;</li> <li>• discussion of general themes and concepts;</li> <li>• interpretation of assessment criteria; or</li> <li>• strengthening and development of academic writing and/or study skills through peer assistance; and</li> <li>• designated group work which requires researching and writing of joint projects, written works or other assessable works.</li> </ul>
Student	Student includes any current or former student of the University.

## Section 4 - Principles

(5) The University is committed to promoting and upholding the academic credibility and standard of its awards.

(6) Academic integrity is a fundamental principle of the University as an institution devoted to the pursuit of excellence in learning, teaching, research and service, and to respecting the value and dignity of each person.

(7) Academic misconduct is a serious matter that:

- a. undermines the integrity of learning and scholarship;
- b. contravenes academic values of respect for knowledge, scholarship and scholars;
- c. represents a form of fraud; and
- d. can lead to disclosure requirements to accrediting/admissions bodies.

## Section 5 - Roles and Responsibilities

(8) The University will support its commitment to academic integrity by:

- a. explicitly communicating the positive value placed on academic integrity in learning, teaching and research;
- b. implementing strategies and systems that assist in the achievement of best practice in relation to the pursuit of academic integrity;
- c. the maintenance of an academic integrity website to define and promote best practice and provide resources for staff and students;
- d. the provision of professional development programs for staff to:
  - i. support the pursuit of best practice in the design and setting of assessment to minimise opportunity for academic misconduct; and
  - ii. build skills in detecting academic misconduct;
- e. the provision of study skills support and resources for students to promote good practice in their academic work, including writing, referencing and research; and
- f. implementing systems to detect academic misconduct.

(9) Schools, Faculties and other organisational units with responsibilities for programs must:

- a. implement mechanisms to assist students to understand good practice in their academic work in the relevant discipline;
- b. provide clear information on assessment requirements in each unit outline; and

- c. ensure that clear advice is provided to students regarding:
  - i. the style guide and referencing/citation system required in the discipline and/or for different assessment tasks;
  - ii. what constitutes legitimate cooperation and collaboration, where it is encouraged and where it is prohibited;
  - iii. group work, especially assessment and the division of tasks among group members to ensure fair assessment; and
- d. be vigilant in the detection of academic misconduct.

(10) Students must:

- a. complete the online academic integrity module for students;
- b. comply with the expected standards of academic integrity including:
  - i. individually undertaking all work and assessment and other requirements for a unit and course; or
  - ii. ensuring that they contribute fairly to the formulation of ideas and conclusions within designated group work and acknowledge the group and independent work of each student in accordance with the assessment requirements.
- c. seek clarification, if necessary, to ensure they clearly understand:
  - i. assessment conditions and requirements, including any authorisation or restriction in the use of artificial intelligence and other assistance tools; and
  - ii. appropriate writing, referencing and assessment practice in their units and course(s).
- d. state clearly, using the referencing system described in the Unit Outline, where they sourced material on which they have based their work;
- e. properly acknowledge the thoughts, ideas, experimental works, conclusions, drawings, designs, data, computer programs or other creative work they have extracted, developed or summarised;
- f. complete an assessment cover sheet or online declaration for all non-examination assessment tasks stating that the work is that of the student (or group in the case of designated group work) and that all cited works have been acknowledged and referenced.

(11) Responsibility for dealing with matters of academic misconduct is set out in the [Student Academic Misconduct Procedure](#).

## Section 6 - Academic Integrity

(12) Academic integrity is integral to the context of true academic discourse, where learning, the assessment of student progress and academic quality are pursued without compromise. Consequently, the University will implement processes and systems to:

- a. promote and uphold the academic credibility and reputation of the University;
- b. protect the standard of its awards;
- c. advise its students of the importance of academic integrity, and provide them with guidance on best practice in support of their learning; and
- d. educate students about the importance of intellectual property and its relevance in relation to their own work and that of others.

(13) Any student who fails to complete the academic integrity module for students by the commencement of the examination period of the relevant study period will have their results withheld until such time as the module is

complete.

## Section 7 - Poor Academic Practice

(14) Poor academic practice constitutes a very minor contravention of the expected academic standards for university-level study in Australia, including but not limited to:

- a. lack of familiarity with academic writing conventions; and/or
- b. poor referencing or paraphrasing practice.

(15) Poor academic practice is not academic misconduct. A determination of poor academic practice is a possible outcome from the initial assessment of a report of suspected academic misconduct or any investigation.

## Section 8 - Academic Misconduct

(16) Academic misconduct may take several forms. These include but are not limited to:

- a. Plagiarism: presenting the thoughts, ideas, findings or work of another person, persons, or entity, without full citation and acknowledgement of the author or the source.
- b. Contract cheating: where a student contracts, attempts to contract, or is contracted by, a third party to prepare part or all of an assessment, or to sit an examination for them (paid or unpaid). Third parties may include family and friends, file sharing websites, editing services, or assessment writing services.
- c. Unauthorised or undisclosed use of artificial intelligence: using generative (content production) artificial intelligence, paraphrasing and translation tools unless their use is authorised in the assessment requirements and is properly acknowledged.
- d. Collusion: unauthorised collaboration on an assessment. This includes working with one or more students on an assessment that is not designated group work; copying another student's assessed work; and sharing assessed work or information for someone else to use or copy. It may include copying from, and sharing material on, file sharing websites.
- e. Cheating: breaching any specified conditions for the conduct of examinations or assessment tasks; or assisting any other student to cheat.
- f. Offering or accepting bribes: offering or receiving money or sexual or other favours for administrative decisions including for grades.
- g. Recycling: reusing all or part of an assessment already submitted in the same or another unit at this University or elsewhere without the approval of the Lecturer in Charge and acknowledgement of the source.
- h. Fabrication or falsification includes:
  - i. falsifying or fabricating data, results, references, sources or other information; or
  - ii. text manipulation which is intended to deceive; or
  - iii. submitting fraudulent documentation for the purpose of receiving an academic advantage.
- i. Academic misconduct in research in coursework programs: includes any behaviour described in (a)-(h) above in relation to proposing, conducting or reporting research.
- j. Any other act or omission that results in an unfair academic advantage.

(17) Any case of alleged academic misconduct will be dealt with by the [Student Academic Misconduct Procedure](#) which ensure:

- a. equity;

- b. consistency;
- c. procedural fairness;
- d. timely resolution of the case; and
- e. achievement of appropriate and effective outcomes.

## Section 9 - Academic Misconduct Penalties

(18) An Academic Integrity Officer may impose one or more of the following penalties:

- a. require the student to participate in specified academic skills development;
- b. reduce the student's mark in the relevant assessment task in line with the extent of the academic misconduct;
- c. require the student to re-sit or re-submit an assessment for a mark or grade that is no higher than the first version attempted or submitted;
- d. require the student to undertake remedial work for the assessment and impose a maximum mark of 50% or 'satisfactory' for the assessment; or a result of Pass PA (50%) or Pass Ungraded PS for the unit as appropriate;
- e. require the student to undertake another form of assessment in lieu of the assessment work in question and impose a maximum mark of 50% or 'satisfactory' for the assessment; or a result of Pass PA (50%) or Pass Ungraded PS for the unit as appropriate;
- f. apply a mark of zero (0) or 'unsatisfactory' for the assessment;
- g. recommend to the Head of School, or equivalent that a fail grade NN with a mark of zero (0) or fail NU be applied overall in the unit.

(19) A Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee may impose any of the penalties at clause (18), or one of the following penalties:

- a. exclude the student from the University for a period of up to two standard study periods;
- b. cancel the student's enrolment and prohibit them from any future admission to, or enrolment with ACU; or
- c. recommend that the Vice-Chancellor and President revokes any award that has been improperly obtained.

## Section 10 - Appeals

(20) Any student wishing to appeal a decision made under this Policy may do so in accordance with the [Student Appeals Policy](#).

## Section 11 - Recordkeeping and Reporting

(21) The Academic Integrity Team must maintain a record of all allegations and investigations of academic misconduct.

(22) The Academic Integrity Team must keep a register of all findings of academic misconduct and the penalties imposed under this Policy.

(23) The receipt of educational advice for poor academic practice will be recorded on the student file.

(24) Where any breach that constitutes academic misconduct has been proved the misconduct record will be recorded on the student's file.

(25) Access to the University's academic misconduct register and/or individual student misconduct records in relation

to academic misconduct is limited to:

- a. the Office of the Academic Registrar;
- b. the Academic Integrity Team; and
- c. the Enrolments and Student Records section of Student Administration.

(26) The Academic Integrity Team will provide a summary and analysis of academic misconduct allegations and findings, including the identification of any underlying patterns that may warrant specific intervention or changes to learning and teaching;

- a. bi-annually to Faculty Boards; and
- b. annually to be tabled at Student Administrative Lifecycle and Policy Committee and University Learning and Teaching Committee for noting at Academic Board each year.

(27) Where, during an investigation of academic misconduct, the Academic Integrity Team becomes aware of a contract cheating service, the advertisement of a service or specific information about a third party who supplied work to an ACU student, the Academic Integrity Team will lodge a 'Reporting a suspected academic cheating service form' with the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(TEQSA\)](#).

(28) Where it has been determined that multiple students have engaged in linked contract cheating, the Academic Integrity Team will inform:

- a. the Provost and the Chair, Academic Board; and
- b. the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President, who in turn may decide to lodge a material change notification with TEQSA.

## Section 12 - Revisions Made to This Policy

(29) The revision table includes revisions up until this document was migrated into the current policy platform. Any later changes will show in the Status and Details tab.

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description of Revision(s)
16 July 2014	Major	Formal review and update to existing policy and procedures
29 November 2017	Major	The formerly named Academic Honesty Policy was reconfigured and amended as an outcome of the joint AAC/ULTC Academic Honesty Working Party
15 September 2021	Major	Amendments arising from the cyclical review and from an external review of academic and research integrity for compliance with Higher Education Standards Framework 2015
15 June 2022	Minor	Minor amendments to sections 6 and 8 of the Procedures to allow for withdrawal by students under investigation for academic misconduct and the application of alternative penalties in those circumstances.
19 October 2022	Minor	Minor amendments to academic misconduct definitions and penalties and the requirements for referral and conduct of a Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee (Resolution AB SALPC 2022/31)
17 March 2023	Minor	Minor amendments to capture the use of artificial intelligence more explicitly and to manage external or anonymous reports of academic misconduct. Reporting updated to include matters that constitute a reputational issue or where a TEQSA material change notice is required (Resolution AB SALPC 2023/13)

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description of Revision(s)
28 June 2023	Minor	Minor amendments to the definitions of contract cheating and collusion
18 October 2023	Minor	Amendments to the procedure for handling cases of poor academic practice
31 January 2024	Minor	Minor amendments to replace the penalty of 'termination' with 'exclusion' and Improve clarity between the penalties of "exclusion" and "cancellation".
22 May 2024	Minor	Minor amendment to the definition of poor academic practice in the Policy and to the timelines for reporting, preliminary analysis and investigation of academic misconduct in the Procedure (Resolution AB SALPC 2024/21).

## Section 13 - Associated Information

(30) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	19th December 2023
<b>Review Date</b>	1st January 2025
<b>Approval Authority</b>	
<b>Approval Date</b>	19th December 2023
<b>Expiry Date</b>	22nd May 2024
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Helen Murnane Academic Registrar
<b>Responsible Manager</b>	Gerard Goodwin-Moore National Manager, Student Policy and Appeals
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Catherine McKiver Senior Policy Officer <hr/> Student Administration