Student Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy

Section 1 - Policy Statement

(1) The Student Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy sets out Australian Catholic University's (ACU) principles and commitment fostering and maintaining to academic integrity and provides a framework for proportianate handling of instances of alleged academic misconduct by students. The Policy is designed to ensure compliance with the academic integrity expectations of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

Section 2 - Policy Scope

(2) This Policy applies to any:

a. academic staff member in relation to the promotion of academic integrity and the detection of, and responding to, 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 Research 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, considering evidence of academic misconduct, and applying penalties for academic misconduct.
Academic misconduct	Academic misconduct is any action or attempted action which knowingly or unknowingly may result in an unfair academic advantage to one or more students in a course or unit.

Term	Definition
Artificial Intelligence/ Generative-Artificial Intelligence	Artificial Intelligence is the ability of a computer system or application to perform tasks that simulate or replace human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making. This includes but is not limited to browser plug-ins and smart wearables such as smart watches and AI-enabled glasses. Generative Artificial Intelligence refers to a subset of artificial intelligence that analyses or generates data or other content including text, images, audio or other media, in response to user-entered prompts.
Cheating	Breaching any specified conditions for the conduct of examinations or assessment tasks.
Collusion	Unauthorised collaboration on any 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 examinable information for someone else to use or copy in an assessment.
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.
Fabrication or falsification	The falsification or fabricating data, results, images or other information, the inclusion of fabricated or manipulated references or sources, or text manipulation.
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.
Legitimate cooperation	Permitted or authorised 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, but are not limited to: • informal study / discussion groups; • discussion of general themes and concepts; • interpretation of assessment criteria; or • strengthening and development of academic writing and / or study skills through peer assistance; and • designated group work which requires researching and writing of joint projects, written works or other assessable works.
Poor Academic Practice	Poor Academic Practice means academic practice which does not meet ACU's expectations of Academic Integrity but falls short of meeting the material threshold of Academic Misconduct.
Plagiarism	Presenting the thoughts, ideas, findings, evidence or work of another person as your own, including materially misattributing works without full citation and acknowledgement of the author or the source.
Recycling	Reusing all or part of an assessment already submitted in the same or another unit at ACU or elsewhere without the approval of the National Unit Leader and acknowledgement of the source.
Student	Student includes any current or former student of ACU.

Section 4 - Principles

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

(6) Academic integrity is a fundamental principle of ACU 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, in line with the University Mission and Values.

(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. may constitute a form of fraud; and
d. when substantiated can lead to disclosure requirements to accrediting / admissions bodies where ACU is required to do so.

Section 5 - Roles and Responsibilities

(8) ACU 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 learning opportunities for staff to:
    i. support the pursuit of best practice in the design and setting of assessment to reduce vulnerability to 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;
f. implementing systems to detect academic misconduct;
g. taking prompt action to investigate allegations of academic misconduct and where substantiated, enforce appropriate penalties against those who have engaged in academic misconduct; and
h. ensuring that any penalty should be proportionate to the nature of the academic misconduct in question to accord with the overriding purpose of this policy to foster and maintain Academic Integrity.

(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 the relevant Learning Management System (LMS) site; 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. exercise due dilligence in the detection of academic misconduct.

(10) Students must:

a. complete the online academic integrity module for students, or designated equivalent, and any additional educative modules required;
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, from the National Unit Leader or Local Unit Faccilitator, 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 LMS site, 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 and approved use of any artificial intellignce has 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 true academic discourse, where learning, the assessment of student progress and academic quality are pursued without compromise. Consequently, ACU will implement processes and systems to:

a. promote and uphold the academic credibility and reputation of the ACU;
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 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;
b. Contract cheating;
c. Unauthorised or undisclosed use of artificial intelligence;
d. Collusion;
e. Cheating;
f. Recycling;
g. Fabrication or falsification;
h. Offering or accepting bribes: offering or receiving money or sexual or other favours for administrative decisions including for grades;
i. Academic misconduct in research in coursework programs; and
j. Any other act or omission that results in an unfair academic advantage.

(17) In considering whether an allegation amounts to academic misconduct, it is not necessary to demonstrate that a student intended their action to result in an unfair academic advantage. It is sufficient that the act or omission has occurred and it has resulted in an unfair academic advantage, regardless of the intentions of the student.

(18) Any case of alleged academic misconduct will be dealt with by the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure which ensures:

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

(19) Penalties for academic misconduct, including unauthorised or undisclosed use of artificial intelligence, may only be imposed by an Academic Integrity Officer or a Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee following a determination under the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure. No other staff member may reduce a mark, apply a mark of zero or apply a fail grade on the basis of suspected academic misconduct, and assessment requirements must not prescribe penalties for academic misconduct.

(20) 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 for 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.

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

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

Section 10 - Appeals

(22) 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

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

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

(25) The receipt of educational advice for poor academic practice will be recorded on the student file, however no record of poor academic practice will be published on a student's Academic Transcript or Testamur.

(26) Where any breach that constitutes academic misconduct has been proved the misconduct record will be recorded on the student's file, however no record of poor academic practice will be published on a student's Academic Transcript or Testamur.

(27) Access to ACU'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.

(28) 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. to Course Monitoring Committees as required;
b. bi-annually to Faculty Boards; and
c. annually to be tabled at University Learning and Teaching Committee for noting at Academic Board each year.

(29) 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).

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

a. the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) 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 - Associated Information

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

Section 13 - Revisions Made to This Policy

(32) 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 Educations 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)
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”.
8 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)
21 November 2024	Minor	Consequential amendments to align with amended Student Conduct Policy and Managing Student Misconduct Procedure. The description of fabrication and falsification at clause (16) h has been amended to align with the submission of fraudulent documentation being absorbed fully into the Student Conduct Policy. (Resolution AB 2024/250 approved on 14 November 2024).

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description of Revision(s)
12 March 2026	Minor	Position Group name changed from Lecturer in Charge (LIC) to National Unit Leader (NUL).
16 November 2026	Major	Formal review and update to existing policy and procedures.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	24th November 2026
Review Date	24th November 2027
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	11th November 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Helen Murnane Academic Registrar
Responsible Manager	Gerard Goodwin-Moore National Manager, Student Policy and Appeals
Enquiries Contact	Annette Dennis Coordinator, Complaints and Conduct --- Student Administration