

# Student Academic Misconduct Procedure



## 1 Purpose

To establish the processes for managing Academic Misconduct in Courses and Coursework programs.

## 2 Scope

This procedure applies to the management of Academic Misconduct in a Course or Coursework Program and to the management of Academic Misconduct in the coursework components of Higher Degrees by Research.

These procedures do not apply to the research components of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs. In cases of Research Misconduct, refer to the Research Code of Conduct: Management of Potential Breaches Procedure. In cases of Staff Academic Misconduct refer to Code of Conduct Policy.

## 3 Procedure Overview

These procedures relate to the University's responses to any allegations of Student Academic Misconduct in a Course and Coursework.

Academic Misconduct includes but is not limited to Plagiarism, Collusion, Cheating and Contract Cheating, Impersonation, Misrepresentation and Falsification, Self-Plagiarism and Solicitation.

The University will actively monitor breaches of Academic Integrity and penalties may be applied retrospectively in circumstances where a breach is identified after completion of a course.

## 4 Procedures

### 4.1 Preventing Academic Misconduct

All Students undertaking a Course or Coursework Program must successfully complete Academic Integrity training modules before the end of their first Teaching Period. The modules will be available through the University's Learning Management System (StudyDesk).

Failure to meet this requirement will result in the withholding of a Student's Grades until the training is complete.

## 4.2 Reporting suspected breaches

Any person with a genuine, reasonable suspicion that someone internal or external to the University may be or have been involved in a breach of Academic Integrity are encouraged to inform the University as soon as possible. Students can report the matter to their Course Examiners or lodge a formal Complaint, as set out in the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure.

The Academic Integrity Officer, in collaboration with the relevant Academic Integrity Unit, will investigate the matter based on the information provided and decide whether further action is needed.

## 4.3 Detection

When an Employee has reason to suspect Academic Misconduct, that person must inform the relevant Course Examiner as soon as practicable. The report of suspected Academic Misconduct can be made via the online reporting system and all available supporting evidence must be provided at that time.

The University has available a range of tools to assist in the identification of possible cases of Plagiarism and Collusion. Reports generated by software tools must be examined thoroughly in context, and the academic judgement of the Employee is relied upon to determine whether or not material is plagiarised, or Collusion has occurred.

## 4.4 Preliminary analysis

A Course Examiner who receives a report or identifies suspected Academic Misconduct, must make a preliminary analysis as soon as possible to determine if either:

1. there is no case for the Student to answer and the matter proceeds no further; or
2. there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the matter should be investigated.

As part of the preliminary analysis, the Course Examiner:

1. examines any documentation relating to the incident;
2. checks the information provided to Students on the Assessment Item; and
3. analyses the Assessment Item.

## 4.5 Reporting and recording

A Course Examiner who determines there is sufficient evidence that the matter should be investigated must report this to the Academic Integrity Officer and the Academic Integrity Unit. All relevant details should be provided, such as relevant assignments, system reports and/or Contract Cheating allegation reports.

In situations where cases are pending at the time of Grade finalisation, the Course Examiner is responsible for setting the Student's Grade to Result Unavailable (RN) until the investigation has been completed and any relevant penalty is known.

The Examinations Office sends all exam incidents to the Course Examiner for initial review and will also report concerns to the Head of School.

## **4.6 Investigation and response process**

All alleged breaches will be investigated according to the principles of Procedural Fairness, as quickly as possible by School Academic Integrity Officers, in collaboration with the Academic Integrity Unit.

Depending on the nature and complexity of the case, the time taken to properly gather the relevant information and to decide a case will vary. The Academic Integrity Unit may deem it necessary to conduct a pre-interview with the Student as part of the information gathering process. Investigations into alleged Academic Misconduct, such as Contract Cheating, can take longer than, for example, a case of alleged Plagiarism or Cheating in an exam.

If the investigation confirms sufficient evidence to advance an allegation, the Academic Integrity Unit will refer the case, with all relevant supporting documentation and evidence, to the relevant Head of School.

The Student will be sent a Notice of allegation by the Associate Director of the Academic Integrity Unit which includes:

1. sufficient details of the alleged breach of Academic Integrity to enable the Student to understand the nature of the alleged breach;
2. an indicative timeframe for investigating the case;
3. the possible outcomes and/or penalties that may be applied if the allegation is upheld;
4. a recommendation that the Student seek independent advice about the allegation from the USQ Student Guild or other similar body, and appropriate personal support from Student Services, if required;
5. an invitation to provide a written statement of how they wish to answer the allegation and any supporting evidence, including counselling reports, within 10 University Business Days of date of the Notice;

6. an invitation to respond to the Notice by scheduling and attending an interview, either in person or online, within 10 University Business Days of the date of the Notice;
7. the option for the Student to be assisted by a support person of their choice at the interview;
8. advice that, if the Student chooses not to attend an interview and/or provide a written submission, the matter will be determined based on the available evidence.

If a Student is unable to access a suitable support person to attend the interview, they may request a five (5) day extension at any time up to one University Business Day prior to the scheduled date of the interview.

If the indicative timeframe for investigating the case is not met, the Academic Integrity Unit will update Students on the status of the case and expected timelines.

## **4.7 Outcomes and penalties**

The available evidence and any response from the Student will be considered by the Head of School in reaching a final Decision regarding the allegation, which will be that the breach is:

1. Category 1;
2. Category 2; or
3. unsubstantiated or no breach and the case is dismissed.

### **4.7.1 Category 1 classification**

Some Students who engage in Academic Misconduct do so because of inadequate study skills and a lack of familiarity with academic writing conventions.

In response to incidences of misconduct in the early years of study, the University provides for an educative response. These incidences of misconduct include:

1. instances of plagiarism that are deemed to be a consequence of a Student's lack of knowledge of, or skill in, the conventions of academic writing or arising from carelessness rather than a deliberate act of deception;
2. instances of Collusion that are not deemed to be a deliberate act of deception;
3. instances of attempted Collusion that are not deemed to be a deliberate act of deception.

## 4.7.2 Category 2 classification

All other instances of Academic Misconduct in a Course or Coursework Program are regarded as Category 2 breaches.

## 4.7.3 Factors used in determining penalties

In determining the penalty/ies to apply, the Head of School will consider a number of factors including, but not limited to:

1. the intent of the Student;
2. whether the Student is a new and/or inexperienced higher education Student or an experienced higher education Student;
3. the extent to which educational/remedial actions relating to Academic Integrity had previously been required of the Student;
4. the nature and extent of the misconduct; and
5. the impact of the misconduct.

In cases of alleged Academic Misconduct that are sufficiently serious to potentially result in a Student's suspension or expulsion, the Head of School may recommend to the Executive Dean formation of a three-person panel to determine the outcome.

Panel members will be the Head of School, another equivalent manager with appropriate expertise and independence to decide cases of alleged Academic Misconduct and a Student representative. At least one panel member must be from a different school, college or division than the Head of School. Once the panel is formed, it becomes the case decision-maker.

## 4.7.4 Educational/remedial actions

Where a case of Academic Misconduct is substantiated, any remedial actions that are required to be taken by a Student must have an educational component and be designed for the purpose of preventing further Academic Misconduct by the particular Student.

In particular, where Students are in their first four Units of study, Heads of School should use the instance of a Category 1 Academic Integrity breach as an opportunity to encourage Students to increase their academic skills through participation in training and support services. The Head of School may require the Student to attend a session with an Academic Skills Adviser or to participate in a tutorial or online tutorial about Plagiarism and referencing.

Students may be required to show evidence of having undertaken the educational remedial action and be given the opportunity to have this action recorded as having been completed. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the withholding of a Student's Grades until the

educational remedial action is complete.

#### **4.7.5 Category 1 breaches**

If the Head of School's Decision is that a Category 1 incident occurred, outcomes and penalties will be applied as set out in the Academic Misconduct Penalty Schedule.

Any marks deducted will be decided by the Head of School who will inform the Course Examiner. The Course Examiner will be responsible for ensuring the penalty is applied to the Student's Grade and updated in the relevant systems.

The Academic Integrity Unit will record the Student's name and details of the Academic Integrity breach in the Academic Integrity Register as a Category 1 incident.

The Student will receive correspondence from the Head of School that will include the final Decision, the reasons for the Decision, the outcome including any penalties to be applied and information on the Student's right to Appeal the Decision.

#### **4.7.6 Category 2 breaches**

If the Decision is that a Category 2 breach occurred, the Head of School will make a penalty recommendation to the Faculty Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching and Student Success), as set out in the Academic Misconduct Penalty Schedule. The Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) will determine and approve the final penalty or, where the penalty includes suspension or expulsion, recommend approval to the appropriate authority, in accordance with section 4.7.7.

The Course Examiner is responsible for ensuring any penalty to change the Student's Grade or mark is applied and updated in the relevant systems.

The Student's name and details of the Academic Integrity breach will be recorded in the Academic Integrity Register by the Academic Integrity Unit.

The Student will receive correspondence from the case decision-maker that will include the final Decision, the reasons for the Decision, the outcome including any penalty to be applied subject to an internal Appeal period, and information on the Student's right to Appeal the Decision.

A Decision to initiate suspension or cancellation of an International Student's Enrolment must be implemented in accordance with Standards 9 and 10 of the National Code 2018. Any such Decision must not be implemented until after the University's internal Appeal process is completed. If the internal Appeal process upholds the Decision to suspend or cancel Enrolment, the Student will be advised of the need to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs regarding the impact on their visa. Any changes to the Student's Enrolment will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs via the University's International Compliance Office.

#### **4.7.7 Penalties of suspension or Expulsion**

If a Category 2 breach has occurred and the proposed penalty includes a period of suspension, all details of the case will be recorded in the online system, and the Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) will provide the Executive Dean with:

1. All documentation relating to the incident;
2. the rationale for imposing a penalty of suspension;
3. the period of the proposed suspension; and
4. details of any conditions that would need to be completed prior to readmission.

Suspension periods of up to 12 months are approved by the Executive Dean. Suspension periods of between one and three years are approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on the recommendation of the Executive Dean.

For information on readmission after suspension, refer to the University's Admission Procedures.

If a Category 2 breach has occurred and the proposed penalty includes permanent expulsion, all details of the case will be recorded in the online system and the Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) will provide the Executive Dean with:

1. All documentation relating to the incident; and
2. the rationale for imposing a penalty of expulsion.

With no further Appeal pending, the Executive Dean will recommend a penalty of Expulsion in writing to the Vice-Chancellor, via the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), including a copy of the supporting evidence and rationale.

## **4.8 Withdrawal of Allegation**

The Head of School may withdraw an allegation of Academic Misconduct at any stage during the process. The rationale for the withdrawal of an allegation will be recorded in the online system.

## **4.9 Record keeping and reporting**

At each stage of the process, appropriate records of all relevant documentation will be maintained via the online system including:

1. any work where the Academic Misconduct is alleged to have occurred;
2. records of any meetings, telephone calls and emails with the Student, or any other details in any way connected with the allegation and inquiry;
3. copies of all correspondence;
4. Decisions reached on the allegation.

A Decision reached in a matter of Academic Misconduct will be recorded in the Student Academic Misconduct Register where Category 1 or 2 misconduct is the outcome and copies of all relevant documentation maintained on the Student's record in the University's records management system.

It is recommended that Students keep a record of all material and evidence submitted in relation to an allegation of Academic Misconduct.

At least once a year, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will submit a report to Academic Board through the Education Quality Committee, listing breaches by Course, category, severity, the penalties imposed, the number that proceeded to Appeal, and including trend analysis and actions to address identified root causes.

No individual Student names or numbers will be listed in the report.

## **4.10 Student Academic Misconduct Register**

The Student Academic Misconduct Register will be used to:

1. retain relevant records of Academic Misconduct of individual Students in accordance with the Records and Information Management Policy and the approved University Sector Retention and Disposal Schedule;
2. maintain a confidential database;
3. record, for each case of Student Academic Misconduct including Caution of Potential Academic Misconduct;
  - a. the name of the Student, Student number, Course and Program;
  - b. the date and nature of the Academic Misconduct;
  - c. the outcome of the inquiry, that is, Category 1, Category 2 or unsubstantiated;
  - d. the penalty, if any, imposed.



## 4.11 Appeals

Where any penalty for Academic Misconduct is imposed as provided for in the Academic Misconduct Penalty Schedule, a Student may Appeal under the provisions of the Student Appeals Procedure provided they are able to establish grounds to do so. The Student will be informed of the right of Appeal in the correspondence advising of the imposition of a penalty.

## 5 References

Exemplary Academic Integrity Project (EAIP): Embedding and extending exemplary Academic Integrity Policy and support frameworks across the higher education sector (2013), Plain English definition of Academic Integrity, Office for Learning and Teaching Strategic Commissioned Project 2012-2013, [www.unisa.edu.au/EAIP](http://www.unisa.edu.au/EAIP).

## 6 References

Nil.

## 7 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

## 8 Procedure Information

<b>Accountable Officer</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Executive Deans (BELA/HES)
<b>Policy Type</b>	University Procedure
<b>Policy Suite</b>	<a href="#">Student Academic Integrity Policy</a>
<b>Subordinate Schedules</b>	<a href="#">Academic Misconduct Penalty Schedule</a>
<b>Approved Date</b>	30/11/2020
<b>Effective Date</b>	22/2/2021
<b>Review Date</b>	22/2/2024
<b>Relevant Legislation</b>	<a href="#">Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</a> <a href="#">Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</a> <a href="#">National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to</a>

	<p><a href="#">Overseas Students 2018</a></p> <p><a href="#">Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Amendment (Prohibiting Academic Cheating Services) Bill 2019</a></p>
<b>Related Policies</b>	<p><a href="#">Code of Conduct Policy</a></p> <p><a href="#">Privacy Policy</a></p> <p><a href="#">Records and Information Management Policy</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student Code of Conduct Policy</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student Grievance Resolution Policy</a></p>
<b>Related Procedures</b>	<p><a href="#">Assessment Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Grades Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student Appeals Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student Grievance Resolution Procedure</a></p>
<b>Related forms, publications and websites</b>	<p>The following forms and Notices may be accessed in <a href="#">SharePoint</a> (restricted access):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Academic Misconduct Report Form</li> <li>• Notice of Caution of Potential Academic Misconduct</li> <li>• Notice of Allegation of Academic Misconduct</li> <li>• Notice of Unsubstantiated Academic Misconduct</li> <li>• Notice of Category 1 Misconduct</li> <li>• Notice of Category 2 Misconduct</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">State Ombudsman</a></p>
<b>Definitions</b>	<p><b>Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary</b></p> <p><a href="#">Academic Integrity</a></p> <p>Academic Integrity means acting with the values of honesty, trust, fairness and respect in learning, teaching and Research. It is</p>

important for Students, academics, Researchers and all staff to act in an honest way, be responsible for their actions, and show fairness in every part of their work. Staff should be role models to Students. Academic Integrity is important for an individual's and an institution's reputation (EAIP, 2013).

### [Academic Misconduct](#)

Academic Misconduct encompasses all behaviours, including doing as well as attempting to do, any of the acts, omissions or activities that constitute Academic Misconduct: involving the misrepresentation of academic achievement; or undermining the core values (honesty, trust, fairness and respect) of Academic Integrity; or breaching Academic Integrity; whether intentional or unintentional. Academic Misconduct includes, but is not limited to the following: Plagiarism; submitting (for Assessment or review) work prepared by another person; Collusion, such as any unauthorised collaboration in preparation or presentation of work, including knowingly allowing personal work to be copied by others; all forms of Cheating in examinations and other Assessment tasks; Contract Cheating and Solicitation; offering or accepting bribes (money or sexual or other favours), e.g. for Admission or for Marks/Grades; and fabrication or falsification of information or Student identity (TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Integrity, Version 1.2, 28 March 2019).

### [Academic Year](#)

A period of time consisting of Semesters and teaching periods that all commence in the same calendar year.

### [Admission](#)

The process of submission and assessment of applications for entry to study at the University.

### [Appeal](#)

A formal, written request made by a Student or Employee to a higher authority to have a Decision overturned.

### [Assessment](#)

The process of evaluating the extent to which Students have achieved the objectives of a Course.

### [Assessment Item](#)

An individual Assessment task as outlined in the Assessment

schedule for a Course. Assessment Items may consist of Assignments or Formal Examinations and may be Formal, Informal, Formative or Summative in nature.

### [Cheating](#)

Where a Student attempts to gain an unauthorised academic advantage, or assists another Student to do so, in a way that is dishonest or unfair. Examples of cheating may include but are not limited to: unauthorised use of information, materials, devices, sources or practices in completing academic activities; failing to comply with examination or Assessment rules or directions; and impersonation of a Student or University Employee or allowing oneself to be impersonated in order to gain an unauthorised academic advantage relative to other Students.

### [Collusion](#)

Where a piece of work is produced, in whole or in part, by working closely with one or more individuals or in a group but is presented as if it were the Student's own work. Examples of Collusion may include but are not limited to: working through an assessed task or question and writing the answers or determining the precise approach together so that submitted Assessment is very similar in content, structure and style; and sharing answers or giving access to questions and answers or completed Assessment Items or tasks.

### [Complaint](#)

A Complaint is an “expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the University, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required”.

### [Contract Cheating](#)

When a Student engages another party, whether paid or unpaid, to produce an Assessment Item on their behalf and submits it as their own original work. It may involve a Student purchasing the assessment task from a commercial service, including internet sites, whether pre-written or specially prepared for the Student concerned, or submitting an Assessment Item produced by a third party, including a friend, family member, fellow or former Student, or Employee of the University.

### [Course](#)

A discrete element of a program, normally undertaken over a single

Teaching Period, in which the Student enrolls, and on completion of which the Student is awarded a grade.

### [Course Team](#)

Consists of the Examiner and Moderator of the Course and any other people involved with the preparation, delivery and grading of the Course.

### [Coursework Course](#)

A subject of study, defined by a Course Specification, for which Students may be awarded a Final Grade where the method of teaching and learning that leads to the acquisition of skills and knowledge and does not include a major research component.

### [Decision](#)

A determination made by an Employee, contractor or other authorised delegate in the course of their duties on behalf of the University.

### [Employee](#)

A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the USQ Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University.

### [Enrolment](#)

The process of admitting Students to one or more Courses for the current Academic Year.

### [Examiner](#)

A University staff member, normally an academic staff member, continuing or fixed term, appointed to be responsible for the conduct and Assessment of a Course in accordance with the prescribed Course Specification.

### [Executive Dean](#)

For the purposes of these Policies and unless otherwise defined in a specific Policy, the term 'Executive Dean' means the chief executive officer of a Faculty.

### [Expulsion](#)

Means the permanent termination of a Student's Enrolment at the University, including the withdrawal of all rights and privileges and the right to use, enter or be within the premises.

### [Grade \(noun\)](#)

A Grade is a code that indicates the status of the Assessment of Student performance against the learning objectives of a Course.

### [Grievance](#)

Typically defined as a concern or Complaint raised by an Employee against a process, action, omission or Decision within the responsibility and control of the University which relates to employment or related internal People Portfolio matters, which has or is likely to have an unreasonable negative impact on the ability of an Employee to undertake their duties, or similar impact on their career.

### [Head of School/College](#)

An academic staff member responsible for the administration of the Course offerings in one or more discipline areas.

### [International Student](#)

A Student who is not an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, an Australian Permanent Resident or the holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa.

### [Misrepresentation and Falsification](#)

Representing data or information incorrectly, improperly or falsely. Examples of Misrepresentation and Falsification may include but are not limited to: Intentional and unauthorised falsification or invention of any information, experimental data or citations in an assessable item; presenting an untrue statement about attendance or participation in practical, performance or professional learning activities for Assessment purposes; submitting a text/code-matching software originality report that falsely represents the originality of an assignment submitted for Assessment; not disclosing any information where there is a duty to disclose such information; and providing false information concerning a formal academic exercise, for example, giving a false excuse for missing a deadline or falsely claiming to have submitted work.

### [Notice](#)

A Notice from the University is a document, whether physical or electronic. A Notice may be: given by hand to the addressee or delivered to the address provided by the addressee to the University; or sent by registered or pre-paid mail to the address provided by the addressee to the University; or sent by electronic communication to the University-issued email account provided by the University to a Student during the period of Enrolment until the completion of their program; or sent by electronic communication to the email address provided to the University by an addressee not enrolled at the University. A Notice is taken to be received if: given by hand to the addressee or delivered to the address provided to the University by the addressee; or sent by registered or pre-paid mail - three University Business Days after the date of posting; or sent by electronic communication - at the time that would be the time of receipt under the Electronic Transactions Act 1999 or its succeeding legislation. A Notice that would be deemed to have been received out of business hours or on a non-University Business Day will instead be deemed received on the next University Business Day.

#### [Pro Vice-Chancellor \(Students\)](#)

The person bearing that title including a person acting in that position.

#### [Self-plagiarism](#)

Self-plagiarism is the unauthorised use of one's own work, in part or in full, for multiple submissions.

#### [Student](#)

A person who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

#### [Teaching Period](#)

The period during which a Course or study unit is offered. Examples of teaching periods include, but are not limited to, semesters, trimesters, blocks, intensives and sessions.

#### [University Business Days](#)

The days of Monday to Friday inclusive between 9am and 5pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST), with the exclusion of gazetted Public Holidays for the relevant campus location, plus the closure of the University between 25 December and 1 January in the

	<p>following year inclusive as specified in the USQ Enterprise Agreement, as well as any closure of the University either at one or several campuses in accordance with a direction of the Crisis Management Team.</p>
	<p><b>Definitions that relate to this procedure only</b></p>
	<p><b>Impersonation</b></p> <p>Falsely representing another Student in an examination or other Assessment activity (e.g. undertaking an examination or a work placement for another Student) or making arrangements for another person to falsely represent himself or herself as someone else for the purpose of undertaking an examination or other Assessment activity.</p>
	<p><b>Solicitation</b></p> <p>Offering, encouraging, inducing or advertising for another individual/Student to contract, commission, pay, procure, or complete on their behalf, Assessment Items or tasks that are likely to result in their use for the purpose of Cheating, misrepresentation and/or Plagiarism.</p>
<b>Keywords</b>	<p>Academic Integrity, plagiarism, Collusion, Cheating, Contract Cheating, Self-plagiarism, Solicitation, Impersonation, misrepresentation, falsification, Assessment, suspension, expulsion, Category 1, Category 2</p>
<b>Record No</b>	<p>14/727PL</p>