

Academic Integrity Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

- (1) This Policy and associated procedures puts into effect the [Academic Integrity Statute 2015](#) (the Statute). The Statute should be consulted when applying this policy and all associated procedures.
- (2) Academic integrity is a fundamental principle in teaching, learning, research and scholarship. This Policy reflects the University's intent to promote academic integrity among its staff and students and to detect and manage academic misconduct.
- (3) The promotion and assurance of academic integrity is a shared responsibility for all staff and students. The University requires its staff and students to observe the highest ethical standards in all aspects of academic work, and it demonstrates its commitment to these values by awarding due credit for honestly conducted scholarly work, and by penalising academic misconduct and all forms of cheating.

Section 2 - Scope

- (4) Students undertaking coursework at all University campuses, including:
- Students enrolled in all diploma, undergraduate, postgraduate coursework and higher degree by coursework courses;
 - Students not enrolled in a course but enrolled in subjects delivered as part of any University coursework course;
 - Students enrolled in higher degrees by research undertaking coursework as part of their studies. Integrity and academic misconduct in all other aspects of a higher degree by research are covered by the [Research Integrity Policy](#);
 - Students undertaking studies at another university or institution in Australia or internationally as part of a University approved student mobility program;
 - Students undertaking an internship or placement at a third party organisation as part of their studies; and
 - Students whose courses are delivered in partnership with other providers.
- (5) All University staff at all campuses, including the employees of third party organisations responsible for delivering coursework courses in partnership with the University, in terms of their promotion of academic integrity and management of academic misconduct for students.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

- (6) Academic integrity education is integral to the learning experience at La Trobe University. All students will be educated in academic integrity at La Trobe University throughout their studies in ways that appropriately take into consideration students' diverse educational and cultural backgrounds. Academic staff will teach their students appropriate research, scholarship and acknowledgment practices in order to develop academic integrity skills.
- (7) Accusations of academic misconduct are treated seriously. The University puts in place transparent and consistent

processes to ensure:

- a. the validity of accusations of academic misconduct are swiftly decided;
- b. appropriate penalties are applied in response to findings of academic misconduct; and
- c. students accused of academic misconduct are afforded natural justice.

(8) Instances of academic misconduct by students will be classified as either minor offences or serious offences and dealt with according to the La Trobe University [Academic Integrity Statute 2015](#).

Section 4 - Procedures

Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity and Deal With Academic Misconduct

(9) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) portfolio will:

- a. provide academic integrity support and training for students and staff;
- b. provide resources for students and staff which address academic integrity and acknowledgment conventions;
- c. share advice and resources through the University web-site;
- d. ensure that resources are accessible for those with a disability;
- e. notify students of the Statement of Student Responsibility by regularly displaying it in the University's Learning Management System (LMS);
- f. ensure that students and staff have access to effective text-matching software, and information on how to use it;
- g. induct Academic Integrity Advisers (AIAs) into their role;
- h. provide professional development for AIAs;
- i. regularly review policies and procedures against national and international benchmarks to ensure best practice in promoting academic integrity and dealing with academic misconduct.

(10) The Quality and Standards Division will:

- a. provide overall administrative support to both AIAs and the Academic Misconduct Committee via its Academic Integrity Unit (AIU), including correspondence with students against whom allegations have been made;
- b. maintain records of academic misconduct cases and their outcomes in accordance with applicable privacy legislation;
- c. make the information from these records available to AIAs and the Academic Misconduct Committees to inform decisions on penalties for academic misconduct;
- d. induct Academic Integrity Advisers (AIAs) into their role;
- e. provide professional development for AIAs;
- f. regularly review policies and procedures against national and international benchmarks to ensure best practice in promoting academic integrity and dealing with academic misconduct; and
- g. provide an annual report on Academic Integrity and Misconduct trends to Academic Board via the Education Committee.

(11) The Deans of School or their nominees will:

- a. provide appropriate communications to ensure that students are informed of when, where and how they should complete the La Trobe University Academic Integrity Module;
- b. ensure that the University's definition of academic integrity and a link to the University's academic integrity

website are included in subject guides;

- c. ensure that specific discipline education about academic integrity and proper acknowledgment is incorporated in the design of courses;
- d. clearly inform students that rigorous standards in referencing and acknowledgment of sources will be required in their academic work, and that these standards and practices could differ from those they have used previously;
- e. take steps to detect collusion, fraudulent or unethical research or plagiarism, the last of which may include the use of electronic text-matching software and other methods.

Compulsory Academic Integrity Module(AIM)

(12) During their first year of enrolment at La Trobe, all commencing coursework students are required to successfully complete the La Trobe University Academic Integrity Module.

(13) Students may be exempted from the requirement to complete the AIM if they have successfully completed the La Trobe AIM within the past five years.

(14) The AIM

- a. will introduce students to their responsibilities, the University's academic integrity values, ethical standards, and the importance of honest scholarship;
- b. will advise students on how to avoid academic misconduct and where to go for help in developing the skills required to avoid academic misconduct;
- c. is successfully completed, when students do the requisite number of case studies, answer 8 out of 10 questions correctly, and agree to the Statement of Student Responsibility;
- d. results will be recorded on the student's academic transcript as either an Ungraded Pass (P) or No Result Available (NRA);
- e. will attract no credit points, and students will not be liable for any fees in relation to this module. It will not be included in any weighted average marks because it attracts no credit points, and the result will have no marks assigned to it.

Acknowledgment

(15) To ensure that all students are familiar with the quality and rigor expected of scholarship at La Trobe University, teaching staff will advise students how to appropriately acknowledge the work and ideas of others. This applies to written and non-written work.

(16) All coursework subject outlines will provide students with acknowledgment guidelines, including

- a. the citation guide designated for their discipline area
- b. links to the Academic Referencing Module and the Academic Referencing Tool via the [Academic Referencing website](#).
- c. in the case of written work, advice on academic citation, particularly the requirements for quoting and synthesising sources.

Appointment of Academic Integrity Advisers

(17) Deans of School will normally authorise at least one AIA per school and division.

(18) In schools and divisions where more than one AIA is appointed, each AIA will be given a specific portfolio of responsibility such as specific level/s of study and/or course/s and/or subject/s.

(19) Appointment as an AIA is made for at least one year.

(20) A list of all AIAs and their areas of responsibility will be maintained on the School websites.

(21) AIAs are responsible for:

- a. receiving reports of suspected academic misconduct;
- b. determining if reports disclose evidence of academic misconduct;
- c. conducting hearings on instances of suspected minor academic misconduct;
- d. referring instances of serious academic misconduct to the University Academic Misconduct Committee (AMC) if necessary;
- e. deciding and administering appropriate penalties for minor academic misconduct in line with the [Academic Integrity - Schedule of Responses and Penalties for Academic Misconduct](#); and
- f. maintaining records on all the functions above in consultation with the Academic Integrity Unit (AIU).

(22) AIAs will:

- a. at least twice a year, complete professional development activities provided by Quality and Standards;
- b. engage in moderation sessions to ensure consistency in application of policy across the University;
- c. advise the Director, Quality & Standards of any academic misconduct issues and trends and any areas requiring additional staff and student training and resources.

(23) The responsibilities of AIAs and the processes to be followed are further outlined in the [Academic Integrity - Guidelines for Handling Misconduct](#).

Appointment of Academic Misconduct Committee

(24) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) will appoint an Academic Misconduct Committee (AMC) consisting of no less than four senior members of academic staff of whom one will be appointed Chair and one appointed Deputy Chair.

(25) AMC members will be appointed on an ongoing basis for a term not exceeding two years.

(26) The quorum for the AMC is three. Temporary members of the AMC may be appointed in exceptional circumstances, where conflicts of interest or the absence of committee members mean quorum requirements cannot otherwise be met.

(27) The AMC is responsible for:

- a. conducting hearings on instances of suspected serious academic misconduct as referred by AIU; and
- b. determining and applying penalties for findings of serious academic misconduct.

(28) The Chair of the AMC is additionally responsible for conducting hearings in relation to matters of minor academic misconduct in instances where an AIA is prevented from doing so due to absence from the University or conflict of interest.

(29) The Director, Quality & Standards will conduct an annual review of the operations of the AMC.

(30) The responsibilities of the AMC and processes to be followed are further outlined in the [Academic Integrity - Guidelines for Handling Misconduct](#).

Teaching Staff Responsibilities

(31) Subject Co-ordinators will:

- a. prepare subject guides and resources according to the same standards of referencing demanded of students;
- b. ensure that students are aware of the specific requirements of acknowledgment that apply in the subjects they coordinate;
- c. ensure that students' workloads are commensurate with subject credit point values;
- d. vary from year to year the major assessment tasks, essay topics and examinations they set in subjects;
- e. design assessments which minimise opportunities to plagiarise, for example by setting authentic tasks rather than tasks which just ask students to find answers;
- f. ensure that examinations and assessments are securely stored to prevent any student from gaining an unfair or unjustified advantage;
- g. use the text-matching software licensed for the University's use to enable plagiarism detection, or equivalent tools for non-text assignments;
- h. refer suspected academic misconduct to the AIU along with any supporting materials, for example confiscated materials and text-matching reports.

(32) Teaching staff will:

- a. present research and scholarship according to ethical standards;
- b. teach their students how to conduct honest scholarship according to the University's values, standards and practices;
- c. familiarise themselves with the advice and resources for staff and students on the University website;
- d. respond to students' queries and concerns about proper acknowledgment and avoiding academic misconduct, including issues of plagiarism and collusion;
- e. only accept written work for assessment in hard copy if it is accompanied by the Assignment Declaration Form available on the [Academic Integrity website](#);
- f. refer any instances of suspected academic misconduct to the AIU.

Students' Responsibilities

(33) Students will:

- a. not submit their own academic work for assessment if it has already been submitted for assessment at another time (including at another institution), without the express permission of the academic staff member who will assess the work;
- b. never purchase or commission work and submit this as if it were their own work;
- c. ensure that they do not knowingly or carelessly make their work available to other students in any form;
- d. comply with exam conditions, for example, not bring unauthorised materials into the exam;
- e. observe and apply the University's academic integrity values, ethical standards, and practices of honestly conducted scholarship;
- f. consult and use the University's guides and information in order to avoid plagiarism and academic misconduct;
- g. consult with staff when in doubt about any matter where plagiarism or other academic misconduct may be involved;
- h. attend individual meetings or group instruction sessions when they are counselled to do so by their teachers, subject coordinators or an AIA;
- i. declare all printed, electronic, graphical, artistic work, and other kinds of sources from which they obtained

- material or ideas used in work submitted for assessment;
- j. acknowledge sources in the ways approved and expected by the discipline and school in which the assignment is set;
 - k. produce assignments independently, except when they are asked to participate in a group project requiring a joint group response to a task;
 - l. ensure that when doing group work, the scholarship of the group's submissions has been honestly conducted and properly referenced;
 - m. read and comply with the Statement of Student Responsibility shown on the University's website;
 - n. use text-matching software appropriately, including as a learning tool to check for potential text matches before submitting work for assessment;
 - o. retain copies of submitted (written) assignments for a minimum of one year;
 - p. use the Assignment Declaration Form available on the [Academic Integrity website](#) if asked to submit hard copies of work for assessment.

Section 5 - Definitions

(34) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. Academic integrity: means being honest in academic work and taking responsibility for learning the conventions of scholarship.
- b. Academic misconduct: as per the [Academic Integrity Statute 2015](#) includes:
 - i. cheating, plagiarism or any other conduct engaged in by a student with a view to gaining for himself, herself or another person an unfair or unjustified advantage in an examination or assessment, or in relation to or for a formal examination or assessment, whether such advantage occurs or not;
 - ii. conduct which constitutes a breach of any rules relating to a formal examination or assessment;
 - iii. conduct engaged in by a student with a view to gaining for himself, herself or another person an unfair or unjustified advantage in relation to any other requirements of a course or subject, including without limitation class attendance or participation requirements pertaining to placements, whether such advantage occurs or not; and
 - iv. any prescribed conduct.
 - v. The Statute further defines academic misconduct as being either serious or minor.
 - vi. Serious academic misconduct includes academic misconduct which
 - is, or appears from the evidence to be, accompanied by a clear or demonstrable intention to flout or contravene the University's requirements for academic honesty (including those set out in this Statute and the AIP, the GRP or any other policy or procedure regarding academic misconduct);
 - is, or appears from the available evidence to be, carefully and deliberately planned, repetitive, organised or systematic in nature; or
 - is, or appears from the available evidence to be, significant in scale or scope
 - vii. Minor academic misconduct means academic misconduct which, in all the circumstances, falls short of serious academic misconduct;
- c. Cheating: per the Statute means cheating in relation to a formal examination or assessment and includes a failure to comply with any reasonable direction or instruction of an officer, employee or agent of the University relating to the conduct of the formal examination or assessment.
- d. Collusion: a form of cheating which occurs when people work together in a deceitful way to develop a submission for an assessment which has been restricted to individual effort.
- e. Ethical standards: principles of right and wrong that govern practices and endeavours.

- f. Plagiarism: “occurs when someone uses words, ideas, or work products attributable to another identifiable person or source:
- i. without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained
 - ii. in a situation in which there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship
 - iii. in order to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain which need not be monetary” (Fishman, T. [International Center for Academic Integrity](#))
 - The related concept of self-plagiarism refers to the re-submission of work as if it were original. Students must not submit their own academic work for assessment when it has already been submitted for assessment at another time (including at another institution), without the express permission of the academic staff member who will assess it.
- g. Reference: includes citation details of a source text.
- h. Scholarship: is research which builds on the work of others.

Status and Details

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