

Purpose

Academic integrity is a fundamental value underpinning teaching, learning and scholarship. This section details the University's approach to ensuring academic integrity and managing academic misconduct for all coursework students.

Relevant to

All students enrolled in:

- enabling programs
- undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs
- single course and cross-institutional enrolments
- Open Universities Australia units delivered by UniSA

Cross-references

- This section relates only to academic misconduct. In cases where a student's misconduct is not academic in nature, refer to [C-19: Prevention of violence on campus](#) and [Statute 7: Student Misconduct](#)
- [A-42: Honours degree programs](#)
- [APPM Section 4: Practicum, Field and Clinical Placements](#)
- [APPM Section 5: Re-marking and Re-submission](#)
- [APPM Section 6: Examination Procedures](#)
- [APPM Section 11: Student Appeals Committee](#)

9.1 Academic integrity

- 9.1.1 The University aims to foster and preserve the scholarly values of curiosity, experimentation, critical appraisal and integrity. Throughout their learning experience, students are encouraged to work collaboratively. However, it is important that students understand the difference between collaboration and collusion. Students are expected to adhere to high standards of academic integrity and honesty at all times. Failure to do so may constitute academic misconduct.
- 9.1.2 Academic integrity and cases of academic misconduct will be managed as an educative process for students.
- 9.1.3 The course outline will include information about academic integrity and, where appropriate, will give examples of what would constitute academic misconduct in that course.
- 9.1.4 Information about plagiarism will be made available in lectures and other teaching material, in study support material provided by the Learning and Teaching Unit or UniSA transnational administration office, as applicable, and in library resources as applicable. The information will include comparisons of acceptable and unacceptable use of referencing, quotations, bibliographies, etc.

9.2 Academic misconduct

- 9.2.1 For the purpose of this policy, academic misconduct includes:
- a. plagiarism (see clause 9.2.2)
 - b. submitting substantially the same work for multiple [assessments](#). This includes work submitted for a UniSA course or any other course at another educational provider. If a

[course coordinator](#) specifically allows this practice, it will be clearly identified in the course outline

- c. breaches of the [examination](#) procedures as set out in [Section 6](#) of this Manual
- d. presentation of data with respect to laboratory work, clinical placements, practicums, field trips or other work, that has been copied, falsified or in any other way obtained improperly
- e. inclusion of material in individual work that has involved significant assistance from another person, where such assistance is not expressly permitted in the course outline
- f. providing assistance to a student in the presentation of individual work, where such assistance is not expressly permitted in the course outline
- g. falsification or misrepresentation of academic records, or any other document submitted in relation to an academic program, and
- h. any other actions that contravene the principles of academic integrity.

9.2.2 Plagiarism is a specific and serious form of academic misconduct, and includes:

- a. direct copying of the work of other persons, from one or more sources, without clearly indicating the origin. This includes both paper-based and electronic sources of material from websites, books, articles, theses, working papers, seminar and conference papers, internal reports, lecture notes or tapes, and visual materials such as photographs, drawings and designs
- b. using very close paraphrasing of sentences or whole passages without due acknowledgment in the form of referencing the original work
- c. submitting another student's work in whole or in part, where such assistance is not expressly permitted in the course outline
- d. use of another person's ideas, work or research data without acknowledgment
- e. submitting work that has been written by someone else on the student's behalf
- f. copying computer files, algorithms or computer code without clearly indicating their origin
- g. submitting work that has been derived, in whole or in part, from another student's work by a process of mechanical transformation (e.g. changing variable names in computer programs)
- h. in any way appropriating or imitating another's ideas and manner of expressing them where such assistance is not expressly permitted in the course outline.

9.2.3 The University recognises that academic misconduct can occur through lack of familiarity with academic conventions and therefore all allegations of academic misconduct will be considered in the context of the following factors:

- a. the extent of the misconduct
- b. the student's intention and/or motivation
- c. contextual factors such as:
 - (i) stage/level of program
 - (ii) number of previous offences
 - (iii) the student's learning background

- d. academic conventions within the relevant discipline
- e. the impact of a particular outcome on a student's progression
- f. information provided to the student about academic integrity as part of their course, and
- g. where applicable, information about the student held in the academic misconduct database (see clause 9.8).

9.3 Student responsibility

- 9.3.1 As part of the University's procedures for identifying instances of academic misconduct, work submitted by a student for [assessment](#) will be subject to testing using text comparison software, unless otherwise approved by the head of school. It is a condition of enrolment that students give their consent to this process.
- 9.3.2 All students are required to sign the following statement on their enrolment:
I authorise the University to test any work submitted by me for instances of plagiarism using text comparison software. I understand this will involve the University or its contractor copying my work and storing it on a database to test work submitted by others, as described in the Academic Integrity website.
- 9.3.3. Students are also required to electronically authorise the above statement, together with a declaration that all written assignments submitted for the course are their own work, the first time they logon to each of the [learnonline course sites](#), and each time an [assessment](#) activity is submitted by the uploading of a file.
- 9.3.4 Any cover sheets submitted must include the following statement:
I declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own, except where acknowledgement of sources is made.
I authorise the University to test any work submitted by me, using text comparison software, for instances of plagiarism. I understand this will involve the University or its contractor copying my work and storing it on a database to be used in future to test work submitted by others.
I understand that I can obtain further information on this matter at <http://www.unisa.edu.au/learningadvice/integrity/default.asp>
- 9.3.5 The University may refuse to accept any work where the student has not consented to their work being subject to testing using text comparison software.

9.4 Academic Integrity Officers

- 9.4.1 Each school has at least one member of staff in the role of academic integrity officer. These staff have undertaken appropriate professional development to gain expertise in handling cases of academic misconduct within their discipline. Their role enables:
- a. consistent interpretation and implementation of policy
 - b. streamlined management of reported instances of academic misconduct within each discipline, up to the level of involvement of formal committees
 - c. consistent use of plagiarism detection tools in sampling and targeting student work within each discipline
 - d. consistent judgments to be made on cases of academic misconduct
 - e. consistent outcomes when academic misconduct is proven, and
 - f. regular reporting to relevant heads of schools, school boards and division teaching and learning committees.

- 9.4.2 Where required, the head of school may approve other staff members to act as authorised nominee for the academic integrity officer for a period of time or to handle a particular case. This may be for reasons of workload, absence, or conflict of interest (perceived or actual). It is expected that the authorised nominee will have also undertaken professional development to gain expertise in handling cases of academic misconduct within their discipline.

9.5 Initial inquiry into alleged academic misconduct

- 9.5.1 Where an academic staff member has concerns that the action of a student may involve academic misconduct (see clause 9.2.1), they will discuss the issue with the school academic integrity officer in the first instance.
- 9.5.2 If the academic integrity officer believes the issue warrants further investigation, the academic integrity officer will notify the student of their concerns in writing within five working days, and request that the student attend a meeting to discuss the matter. The meeting should occur within 20 working days of the initial notification. Where the student is unable to attend the meeting, the discussion may occur via email or teleconference.
- Where the student does not respond to the meeting request or refuses to participate, see clause 9.5.5 below.
- 9.5.3 The student may be assisted or represented at the meeting by:
- a representative of [UniLife](#), or in the case of offshore students, a representative of the UniSA partner institution
 - any staff member or student of the University.
- 9.5.4 If, as a result of the discussion with the student, the academic integrity officer determines that:
- no academic misconduct was involved, then no further action will be taken and no record of the discussion will be entered in the central database (see clause 9.8)
 - the action of the student constitutes academic misconduct, then the academic integrity officer will provide academic counselling to the student and may decide on a further course of action from the following options:
 - re-submission of the [assessment](#), if re-submissions are provided for in the course outline, or
 - another outcome appropriate to the case but with an impact less serious than a zero in the [assessment](#) component of the course, or
 - failure, with a zero score, in the [assessment](#) component of the course
 - a more serious outcome is appropriate, then the academic integrity officer will provide their record of the initial inquiry to the head of school with a recommendation that the head of school initiate a formal inquiry.
- 9.5.5 The academic integrity officer will decide on the most appropriate outcome, irrespective of whether the student chooses to participate in the initial inquiry.
- 9.5.6 Where the academic integrity officer has determined that there was academic misconduct, they will:
- record the case in a central database (see clause 9.8)
 - provide a report to the student and the [course coordinator](#) within ten working days of the meeting with the student, and
 - forward a copy of the report to Campus Central or UniSA transnational administration office, as applicable, to be retained on the student's file.

- 9.5.7 The student must notify the academic integrity officer in writing of their acceptance or otherwise of the outcome of the initial inquiry, within five working days of receiving the report from the academic integrity officer (see clause 9.5.6 b). Failure to do so will not alter the outcome.
- 9.5.8 If the student does not accept the course of action proposed, then the academic integrity officer will advise the head of school and provide them with the record of their initial inquiry.
- 9.5.9 In cases of academic misconduct that do not relate to a particular course (see clauses 9.2.1 f. and g.) the matter will be referred to the head of school to undertake a formal inquiry. If, at the conclusion of the formal inquiry, the action is determined to constitute academic misconduct, the outcomes specified in clause 9.6.10 c. (iii), (iv), (v) or (vi) may apply.

9.6 Formal inquiry

- 9.6.1 Upon receipt of advice from the academic integrity officer following the initial inquiry, the head of school must convene a formal inquiry, in accordance with clause 9.6.3 below, unless the head of school concludes that:
- a. the evidence in the case is insufficient to proceed. In this case, the head of school will notify the academic integrity officer and the student in writing. No further action will be taken, and any record of the investigation will be removed from the database.
 - b. the action of the student constitutes academic misconduct and warrants an outcome less serious than failure in the [assessment](#) component of the course. In this case, the following actions should be taken:
 - (i) the head of school will meet with the student
 - (ii) an outcome described in clause 9.5.4 b (i) or (ii) will be applied
 - (iii) the matter will be referred back to the academic integrity officer for implementation, and
 - (iv) the academic integrity officer will notify the student and the [course coordinator](#) in writing of the outcome.
- 9.6.2 The student may be assisted or represented at the meeting specified at clause 9.6.1b (i) above by:
- a. a representative of [UniLife](#), or in the case of offshore students, a representative of the UniSA partner institution
 - b. any staff member or student of the University.
- 9.6.3 In accordance with clause 9.6.1 above, the head of school will establish a committee, consisting of:
- a. the head of school (chair)
 - b. a member of academic staff nominated by the divisional pro vice chancellor (usually an academic integrity officer from another school within the division)
 - c. one other member of academic staff
 - d. a nominee of the Director: Student and Academic Services, and
 - e. the president of [UniLife](#) or nominee.
- 9.6.4 The formal inquiry may proceed even if all members are not in attendance, provided there is a quorum of three which includes the head of school as chair.
- 9.6.5 In the interest of natural justice, a copy of the documentation that is provided to the formal inquiry committee must also be provided to the student who is the subject of the inquiry.

- 9.6.6 The academic staff member and/or academic integrity officer who has made the allegation may present their case to the inquiry, but will not serve as a member of the formal inquiry committee.
- 9.6.7 The head of school will notify the student in writing of the details of the alleged misconduct and invite the student to attend or, if unable to attend (in person or via teleconferencing) to provide evidence to the formal inquiry committee regarding the allegation. The letter to the student must include a copy of this policy.
- 9.6.8 The student may be assisted or represented at the inquiry by:
- a representative of [UniLife](#), or in the case of offshore students, a representative of the UniSA partner institution
 - any staff member or student of the University.
- 9.6.9 The formal inquiry may proceed whether or not the student responds or attends.
- 9.6.10 Where the formal inquiry concludes that:
- the action of the student does not constitute academic misconduct as defined above, no further action will be taken. Where the inquiry arose following the removal of a student from a placement (see [Section 4](#) of this Manual), the student may be reinstated in the existing placement or arrangements made to complete an alternative placement.
 - the action of the student constitutes academic misconduct, warranting an outcome equal to or less serious than, failure in the [assessment](#) component of the course, the outcomes described in clause 9.5.4 b. will be applicable and the matter may be referred back to the academic integrity officer for implementation, where appropriate. Where the inquiry arose following the removal of a student from a placement (see [Section 4](#) of this Manual), the student may be reinstated in the existing placement or arrangements made to complete an alternative placement following counselling from the academic integrity officer.
 - the action of the student constitutes academic misconduct, and warrants an outcome more serious than failure in the [assessment](#) component of the course, one of the following outcomes will be determined:
 - failure in the course, or
 - failure in the course and suspension from the course for a period not exceeding one year, or
 - suspension from the University for a period not exceeding three years, or
 - another outcome appropriate to the case but with an impact less serious than expulsion from the University, or
 - expulsion from the University, or
 - referral to police (in the case of fraud).
- 9.6.11 Where the formal inquiry concludes that the action of the student warrants suspension from the University, the student will be notified by registered mail within ten working days that:
- re-admission to the University in any program will not normally be considered during the period of suspension
 - application for re-admission to the University will follow normal procedures and is not guaranteed, and
 - students who gain re-admission will be classified as new students for the purposes of assessing fees and eligibility for Commonwealth support or assistance.

- 9.6.12 The head of school will notify the following people of the outcome of the inquiry within five working days:
- a. the student
 - b. the relevant academic integrity officer
 - c. the [course coordinator](#) and program director, and
 - d. Campus Central, or UniSA transnational administration office, as applicable, to be retained on the student's file, and to notify UniSA International, where appropriate.
- 9.6.13 If the outcome of the inquiry is one listed under clause 9.6.10 c., the head of school will include a copy of this policy in their correspondence to the student, and will advise the student of their right of appeal.

9.7 Appeals against outcomes of a formal inquiry

- 9.7.1 The student has the right of appeal against the decision of the formal inquiry committee.
- 9.7.2 The student may appeal in writing to the Director: Student and Academic Services within 20 working days of being notified of the outcome of the formal inquiry. The Director: Student and Academic Services will collect relevant documentation, including the records of prior inquiries (see clause 9.8) and forward this, together with the appeal, to the Student Appeals Committee of the Council for final resolution (see [Section 11](#) of this Manual).
- 9.7.3 Students may continue their program of study pending the outcome of an internal appeal, unless the University considers that this places the student at risk. In these cases, appropriate documentary evidence must be maintained on the student's file.
- 9.7.4 Clinical or field placements may only continue if they are part of a course not affected by the appeal.
- 9.7.5 Should the student's appeal be denied, their current enrolment will be amended accordingly.

9.8 Recording information about academic misconduct

- 9.8.1 The University will store data about academic misconduct and breaches of [examination](#) procedures (see [Section 6](#) of this Manual) in a central database. The data will be stored for a minimum period of seven years from the date of the last incident recorded.
- 9.8.2 No data will be recorded where the academic integrity officer determines that no academic misconduct or breach of [examination](#) procedure occurred.
- 9.8.3 All academic integrity officers will have access to any data stored in the database about a student, for consideration when determining whether the action of that student was academic misconduct, and if so, in determining the appropriate outcome.
- 9.8.4 Where an academic integrity officer determines that a student has breached an [examination](#) procedure but that it does not constitute academic misconduct, the following information will be recorded in the central database:
- a. details of the student, the program, the course and the [examination](#)
 - b. the type of breach (see [Section 6](#) of this Manual), and
 - c. the counselling provided to the student.

- 9.8.5 Where an academic integrity officer determines that academic misconduct occurred (see clause 9.5), the following information will be recorded in the central database:
- details of the student, the program, the course and the [assessment](#) task
 - the type of academic misconduct (see clause 9.2.1 and where applicable 9.2.2)
 - the factors taken into consideration (see clause 9.2.3)
 - the evidence or other material on which the findings were based
 - the outcome (see clause 9.5.4) and the reasons for the outcome, and
 - the student's agreement or otherwise to the specified outcome (see clause 9.5.7).
- 9.8.6 Where a case is referred to the head of school (see clause 9.6.1), the head of school will have access to the data stored regarding the initial inquiry relating to that case, and to any other cases recorded against that student, in order to assist in their determination.
- 9.8.7 Where the head of school concludes that the action of the student does not constitute academic misconduct, any record of the investigation will be removed from the database (see clause 9.6.1 a.).
- 9.8.8 Where the head of school concludes that the action of the student constituted academic misconduct, they will add a record to the database to indicate which outcome was decided upon, and the factors taken into consideration in making that decision.
- 9.8.9 Where a formal inquiry committee is constituted (see clause 9.6), the committee, through the Chair, will have access to the data stored regarding the initial inquiry relating to that case, and to any other cases recorded against that student, in order to assist in their determination. The committee will add a record of its determination to the database, including:
- the factors taken into consideration in determining an outcome (see clause 9.2.3)
 - the evidence or other material on which the findings were based, and
 - the outcome and the reasons for its determination.
- 9.8.10 Where a student appeals the outcome of a formal inquiry (see clause 9.7), the Student Appeals Committee, through the Chair, will have access to the data stored regarding the initial inquiry and formal inquiry relating to that case, and to any other cases recorded against that student, in order to assist in their determination.
- 9.8.11 Notwithstanding the information stored in the database, copies of any decisions communicated to a student resulting from an investigation into academic misconduct or breaches of [exam](#) procedures are to be forwarded to Campus Central or UniSA transnational administration office, as applicable, to be retained on the student's file.
- 9.8.12 The student's transcript will record suspension (only during the period of suspension) or expulsion but will not record any other outcome.