

Academic Misconduct Policy

1. Purpose

This Policy sets out the principles that underpin UNSW College's approach to upholding academic integrity and managing academic integrity processes and practices.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to staff and students at UNSW College.

3. Policy statement

UNSW College is committed to improving and transforming the lives of its students through outstanding education and advancing a just society. Underpinning this commitment and the pursuit of knowledge are the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is: 'the expectation that teachers, students and all members of the academic community act with honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.'

Academic integrity is important to the future success of all students and where a student acts unethically, it impacts on the academic community and on their own knowledge and future academic success.

3.1 Principles

- (a) Academic integrity is an overriding core value, permeating all aspects of UNSW College's academic operations and activities.
- (b) Academic integrity is founded on honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, openness, transparency, fairness and respect in the conduct of all academic and scholarly activities.
- (c) The characteristics on which academic integrity is founded underpin integrity more broadly, across all of UNSW College's operations and activities.
- (d) The Academic Board sets academic standards and requires achievement or performance relative to these standards to derive from behaviours, actions and conduct that reflect academic integrity.
- (e) The Academic Board monitors and assures academic integrity and fosters a whole of institution culture of academic integrity in which academic integrity is respected and upheld.
- (f) Academic integrity is most effectively respected and upheld when it is embraced as a collective responsibility across the institution and where the institution educates staff and students about academic integrity and the behaviours it requires.
- (g) Academic integrity is supported, and opportunities for breaches of academic integrity are minimised, through the Policies and Procedures framework, through

the appropriate design of courses and assessment items, through assessment standards, through the modelling of appropriate behaviours, and through staff and student support systems.

- (h) Academic staff have opportunities for professional development in which their understanding of academic integrity issues, including how to mitigate the risk of academic integrity breaches, is enhanced.
- (i) Improving and enhancing students' understanding of academic integrity issues is a key feature in their orientation and in their initial courses, and is consolidated through continuing education regarding academic integrity and the behaviours it requires.
- (j) Academic staff and professional staff model academic integrity, including in course delivery, course materials, setting assignments and exams, grading, assessment extensions, admission and credit decisions, reviews and appeals.
- (k) Allegations of breaches of academic integrity will be dealt with expeditiously, and their investigation will be fair, transparent, accord with principles of natural justice, and appropriately respect the privacy of those involved.
- (l) A breach of academic integrity may be characterised as academic misconduct and dealt with under policies and procedures relating to misconduct.
- (m) UNSW College's response to a student's first breach of academic integrity will be more educative than punitive.

3.2 Behaviours

Application of the principles above identifies a range of behaviours as breaches of academic integrity. Some key examples to help in understanding the principles:

- (a) Plagiarism, which is submitting work that is not one's own as if it is one's own, and without acknowledging, citing or referencing the original source of the work.
- (b) Recycling, which is submitting work that is one's own, but which has already been assessed, and failing to clearly indicate this.
- (c) Fabrication, which is making up information, such as experimental or interview data, inventing sources of data, citing publications that one knows, or reasonably should know, to be incorrect or that don't exist.
- (d) Collusion, which is engaging in illegitimate cooperation with other students to complete assessment tasks that are meant to be done individually.
- (e) Cheating in exams, such as by writing notes on one's body or materials taken into the exam room, copying from other students, communicating with other students or people outside the exam room while the exam is in progress, using electronic devices to access information related to the exam while the exam is in progress, or bringing prohibited items, such as unapproved calculators or textbooks into the exam room.

- (f) Contract cheating, which is illegal commercial cheating where one pays someone else, or one accepts payment from someone else, to complete part of or all of an assessment item.
- (g) Offering bribes or inducements to gain an academic advantage and accepting bribes or inducement to give an academic advantage.
- (h) Providing false information or fraudulent documentation, such as academic transcripts and medical certificates, to gain an academic advantage.

3.3 Promoting academic integrity

UNSW College is committed to promoting academic integrity through a variety of proactive and pre-emptive strategies and actions, including:

- (a) Providing clear, comprehensive and easily accessible information regarding academic integrity requirements, behaviours that are breaches of academic integrity, mechanisms used for detecting breaches and the potential academic and personal consequences of such breaches.
- (b) Providing online modules that educate students regarding academic integrity requirements and the avoidance of academic integrity breaches, and including examples of academic work exemplifying academic integrity and examples where it is breached.
- (c) Ensuring that students admitted to programs of study meet the academic and English language proficiency requirements for those programs.
- (d) Emphasising the importance of academic integrity in student orientations, at the commencement of teaching for each subject in a particular teaching period.
- (e) Encouraging students who are concerned that they do not understand academic integrity requirements to seek advice from relevant UNSW College staff.
- (f) Resourcing appropriate levels of academic, English language and well-being support for students.
- (g) Requiring students to make a declaration with each assessment item submitted, including examinations, that they have not breached academic integrity requirements.
- (h) Providing clear and timely feedback to students in cases where they have breached academic integrity requirements, taking care to explain the nature of the breach and how it could have best been avoided.
- (i) Ensuring teaching staff model academic integrity in their teaching practice, taking care to clearly cite and reference sources in presentations and in teaching materials, and regularly reminding students of the importance of academic integrity and related values.
- (j) Fostering a learning environment based on mutual respect and trust between teaching staff and students.

- (k) Ensuring that assessments are set using methods that are relevant, valid, fair and appropriate to each course and that accord with good practice in the higher education sector, including regular variation of assessment questions, use of authentic assessment tasks, face-to-face assessment tasks, and in-class assessment tasks.

3.4 Detecting breaches of academic integrity

Breaches of academic integrity may be detected in various ways, including through:

- (a) The use of data matching software or web search engines to identify, for example, use of unacknowledged sources, copying and collusion, use of the same content, in whole or in part, in different assessments.
- (b) Markers noticing unacknowledged sources, unusual similarities between assessment items submitted by different students or unusually high levels of competence relative to the norm for a student's program level.
- (c) Checking sources cited in assessments to verify authenticity.
- (d) A student's marks not being consistent across similar courses or between different modes of assessments.
- (e) Reporting of alleged breaches of academic integrity by students or other members of the UNSW College community.
- (f) Teaching staff talking with colleagues about the performance or behaviour of particular students.

3.5 Breaches of academic integrity: investigation and consequences

A breach of academic integrity is a serious matter and UNSW College's approach to investigating alleged breaches and the imposition of penalties reflects this, as follows:

- (a) An investigation of an alleged breach will not be commenced unless there is some evidence that a breach has occurred.
- (b) Investigations of alleged breaches will be fair, transparent, evidence-based, consistent with the principles of natural justice, and, in particular provide the person concerning whom the breach is alleged with an opportunity to respond to the evidence or explain what they believe occurred.
- (c) A student responding to an alleged breach is entitled to access UNSW College's standard support services during an investigation.
- (d) Allegations will not be substantiated unless the evidence considered in the investigation demonstrates a high probability that a breach of academic integrity has occurred.
- (e) There will be provision to appeal a decision that there has been a breach of academic integrity and to appeal any penalty imposed, as indicated in the [Academic Misconduct Procedure](#) and the [Student Review and Appeal Policy](#).

- (f) UNSW College’s approach to initial breaches of academic integrity is educative provided that they are not of a high level of seriousness, such as engaging in contract cheating or impersonation in an examination.
- (g) Penalties imposed for breaches of academic integrity will be calibrated to the seriousness of the breach, to any extenuating circumstances that might exist, and to the frequency and seriousness of any prior breaches of academic integrity.
- (h) Penalties imposed may include:
 - i. the resubmission of an assessment with a mark penalty;
 - ii. undertaking a substitute assessment with a mark penalty;
 - iii. a zero mark for the assessment, possibly resulting in a failing grade for the relevant course;
 - iv. a failing grade for the course;
 - v. suspension from UNSW College for a prescribed period;
 - vi. expulsion from UNSW College, and / or criminal charges;
 - vii. rescission of a qualification / testamur already awarded.

4. Roles, responsibilities and delegations

Role	Responsibility
Academic Board	Set academic standards and promote a culture of academic integrity across the whole institution.
Academic Staff	Educate and advise students regarding academic integrity, model academic integrity in their own academic, scholarly and professional activities, and identify breaches of academic integrity.
Students	Understand the requirements of academic integrity, promote academic integrity to fellow students and urge them to seek advice where appropriate, and avoid breaches of academic integrity.

5. Definitions

Definitions and Acronyms	
Academic Integrity	Acting in academic and scholarly contexts with honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, openness, transparency, fairness and respect.
Academic Standards	Benchmarks or indicators that are used to define a level or quality of achievement or performance in academic activities and academic outcomes, such as student selection, teaching, curriculum, assessment, learning outcomes, and research.

Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents	
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth) • Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth) • Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth) • National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth) • TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Integrity, Version 1.2
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Policy • Student Code of Conduct • Staff Code of Conduct
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Procedure

6. Policy Governance

Academic Misconduct Policy	
Category/Business Group	Academic Programs
Published Externally (Yes/No)	Yes
Approver	Academic Board
Responsible Officer	Executive Director Academic
Contact Officer	Executive Director Academic
Effective Date	17/08/2023
Next Review Date	17/08/2026
Version	1.0

Revision History

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	Academic Board	08 August 2023	17 August 2023	N/A

Please visit our website to ensure that you have the latest version of this Policy. Policies are available at: unswcollege.edu.au/about/policies