

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY DECISION-MAKING AND PENALTY GUIDELINES 2023

Issued by: Office of Educational Integrity on behalf of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Dated: 26 April 2023

Last amended:

1 Purpose

- (1) These guidelines:
 - (a) provide a practical guide for unit of study coordinators, Educational Integrity Coordinators and other academics nominated by the deans of each faculty and University school to determine allegations of academic integrity breaches in relation to coursework; and
 - (b) are to be read in conjunction with, and as a complement to, the <u>Academic</u> <u>Integrity Policy 2022</u> and <u>Academic Integrity Procedures 2022</u> (the "policy" and "procedures").
- (2) The guidelines may also be of informational or educational value to teaching staff, examiners and students. However:
 - (a) a staff member must not use the guidelines in a manner inconsistent with the *policy* or *procedures*. This includes but is not limited to:
 - (i) failure to afford a student procedural fairness as specified in clause 24 of the *policy*; or
 - (ii) failure to report a suspected academic integrity breach as specified in clause 25 of the *policy*.
 - (b) a student cannot appeal against an academic decision made under the University of Sydney (Student Academic Appeals) Rule 2021 by:
 - (i) a unit of study coordinator;
 - (ii) an Educational Integrity Coordinator; or
 - (iii) nominated academic,

on the grounds that the student believes that the academic decision was inconsistent with the guidelines.

Note: See subclause 2(c) below.



2 Principles

- (1) These guidelines include the following principles:
 - (a) **Procedural fairness.** Students alleged to have engaged in an academic integrity breach must be:
 - (i) made fully aware of the specific nature of the allegation;
 - (ii) provided with a copy of the available evidence; and
 - (iii) given the opportunity to respond to the allegation in accordance with the *policy* and *procedures*.
 - (b) **Transparency and reliability.** The determination of an alleged academic integrity breach should be based on:
 - (i) the consideration of the available evidence, including any submissions made by or on behalf of a student; and
 - (ii) an assessment that can be supported with reliable evidence.
 - (c) **Academic judgement and discretion** will be applied by the decision maker to determine:
 - (i) whether a student has breached academic integrity; and
 - (ii) whether actions or penalties should be considered.
 - **Note**: See the <u>policy</u> and <u>procedures</u> for specific forms of actions and penalties that may be applied to students in specific circumstances.
 - (d) **No advantage.** Any corrective actions or penalties specified by a decision maker under the *policy* and *procedures* must not enable any student to gain unfair academic advantage over other students.
 - (e) **Mitigation of educational disadvantage.** Any corrective actions or penalties specified by decision makers should give due consideration to extenuating circumstances experienced by a student at the time the breach was made.
 - (f) **Harm minimisation.** Any corrective actions or penalties specified by a decision maker should give due consideration to the minimisation of harm. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - (i) harm to a student's capacity to develop the graduate quality of an integrated personal, professional and ethical identity;
 - (ii) harm to other students, either through unfairness or to their capacity to develop an integrated personal, professional and ethical identity;
 - (iii) harm to the educational or research integrity of the faculty or University school;
 - (iv) harm to the good name and academic standing of the faculty, University school or University generally;
 - (v) harm to the good order and governance of the University where such harm is realised as impeding the ability of others to pursue their education, research and work and to participate fully in the life of the University.



3 Definitions

Words and phrases used in these guidelines and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings they have in the *policy* and *procedures*.

Note: See part 2 of each of the *policy* and *procedures*.

In this document:

Academic Honesty Education Module	means the mandatory online education module all students commencing a coursework award course must complete prior to the census date in their first semester of enrolment.			
collusion	has the meaning given in clause 12 of the <i>policy</i> .			
corrected work	means work that has been amended by a student to ensure appropriate acknowledgement of source material, including attribution of the source or sources of this material, at the instruction of a unit coordinator, Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic.			
development activity	means a workshop or online module designed to assist students to develop their understanding of, and proficiency with, academic writing conventions and standards.			
donor student	means a student who has provided inappropriate information, including assessment questions or answers, to one or more other students, including via social media or other online platforms, and regardless of whether those students are known directly to the donor student or not.			
engagement	means entering in to a transactional or exchange-based relationship with another person or entity in relation to the completion of assessable work, whether for payment or otherwise.			
fail item of assessment	means the application of a numerical mark between 0% and 49% and a Fail (FA) grade to work submitted by a student for a separately weighted item of assessment within a unit of study.			
	Note: See Schedule 1 of the <u>Coursework Policy 2021.</u> .			
fail unit of study	means the application of a numerical mark between 0% and 49% and a Fail (FA) grade to the overall result for a student within a unit of study.			
formal development requirement	means a central, confidential record is held for a student who has previously completed an approved development activity at the instruction of a unit coordinator, Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic.			
formative task	means an item of assessment, typically of lower weighting, that has been designed to evaluate a student's progress towards achieving learning outcomes for a unit that would be measured in a more substantial task.			



indicative outcome	means a statement on the combination of corrective actions and penalties ordinarily specified by an Educational Integrity Coordinator or a nominated academic to remediate a breach of academic honesty as determined under the <u>policy</u> and <u>procedures</u> .				
	Note:	Indicative outcomes refer to any potential outcomes before taking into account any extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to a student breaching academic requirements with reference to 2(1)(e) of the guidelines.			
plagiarism	has the meaning given in clause 11 of the <u>policy</u> .				
policy	means	he <u>Academic Integrity Policy 2022</u> .			
prior finding or findings	means a prior finding or findings related to an academic integrity breach under the <i>policy</i> and <i>procedures</i> (including those resolved under the former policy, or the Registrar under the <u>University of Sydney (Student Discipline) Rule</u> <u>2016</u>) and as held on a central, confidential record. The communication of any such findings to students also carries a formal caution against engaging in future breaches of the <i>policy</i> , whether through negligence or dishonesty.				
procedures	means	he <u>Academic Integrity Procedures 2022</u> .			
recipient	means a student who has received inappropriate information, including assessment questions or answers, from one or more donor students, including via social media or other online platforms, and regardless of whether the donor student or students are known directly to the recipient.				
recycling	has the meaning given in clause 10 of the <i>policy</i> .				
referencing requirements	means the requirement to give proper attribution to another person's or source's ideas, findings or words in accordance with an established referencing and citation style as determined by the relevant discipline.				
	Note:	For examples, see the University Library's <u>Referencing</u> and Citation Styles: Home.			
specified mark reduction	express	he reduction of a numerical mark by an amount ed as a proportion of the total marks available for of assessment or unit of study.			
	Note:	A specified mark penalty should be applied in its absolute form, rather than as a multiplier. For example, where a mark penalty of 10% (i.e., 10 marks out of 100) of the total available marks is specified for work assessed at 70% (i.e., 70 marks out of 100), the final mark after the penalty is applied is 60% ($70 - 10 = 60$).			



specified maximum mark	means the uppermost mark for which a student's work is eligible, expressed as a proportion of the total marks available, for an item of assessment after it has first been assessed on its academic merit relative to the advertised criteria. This can be applied to an original submission or corrected work.		
	Note:	A specified maximum mark does not immediately constitute the mark to be applied to a student's work. Rather, a specified maximum mark should only be recorded if the merit-based mark exceeds the specified maximum. Where the merit-based mark falls below the specified maximum, the lower mark should be recorded.	
stage of candidature	means the academic level to which a student has progressed as measured by the duration of the candidature and credit points gained relative to the requirements of the award course.		
summative task	higher extent f	an item of assessment, typically of moderate to weighting, that has been designed to evaluate the to which a student has achieved one or more g outcomes.	



4 Guidelines

The decision maker must assess the reported conduct with consideration of relevant circumstances, context and intent. The following framework highlights considerations and provides examples of types of academic integrity breaches and the indicative outcomes.

Criteria	No breach	Minor breach	Major breach	Potential Misconduct
Stage of candidature The student's stage of candidature and level of study required for the unit.	Early stage of candidature (e.g., an undergraduate or postgraduate student in their first semester).	Usually applied for early- to mid-stage of candidature (e.g. an undergraduate student in their first year of study or postgraduate student with their first semester).	Usually mid- to late-stage of candidature but can be applied for serious conduct that occurs in a student's first year of study.	Any stage of candidature.
Academic integrity record Prior educational interventions or findings should be considered to understand the student's knowledge of academic integrity requirements.	No prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record.	No prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record.	May have prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. Note : A further minor breach may constitute a major breach unless the conduct occurred before the student was informed of the initial breach.	May have prior findings on record.
Type and extent of the breach Assess the nature and severity of the breach with consideration of the affected components and proportionate impact to the student's submission (see examples below).	Minimal unattributed content and limited to a very small number of instances.	Minor instances of poor academic practice which may reasonably be attributed to inadvertence or a failure to fully understand referencing requirements or acceptable academic practice.	 Instances of inappropriate academic practice which involve: subsequent failure to understand referencing requirements; or show persistent or reckless disregard for appropriate academic practice; or involve a moderate or high volume of unattributed content 	Conduct which may constitute academic misconduct, including serious or repeated academic integrity breaches.
Consideration of the assessment weighting to determine the impact to the student's ability to successfully complete the unit of study.	No penalty applied but corrective feedback may be necessary.	Educationally focussed outcome which may include a minor mark reduction or remedial action. The application of a penalty should not significantly impact the student's ability to pass the unit of study.	Penalty determined based on the severity of the conduct. The assessment weighting may be considered in determining the appropriate penalty relative to the reported conduct.	The assessment weighting does not impact the decision to refer the matter to the Registrar.
Decision maker	 Unit of Study Coordinators (minor plagiarism or recycling) Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic 	 Unit of Study Coordinators (minor plagiarism or recycling) Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic 	Educational Integrity Coordinators or nominated academics. Note: A major breach outcome can only be applied after an allegation has been issued and the decision maker has considered any submissions made in response.	Registrar



Allegation Type	Nature of breach	Experience of the student	Finding	Indicative outcome
Minor plagiarism – arising from failure to understand		Any stage of candidature.No prior findings and/or formal	No breach	Unit coordinator, Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
referencing requirements or inadvertence		development requirements on record.		No penaltyWork to be marked on meritCorrective feedback provided
	Plagiarised material is of low to moderate volume.	candidature.	Minor breach	Unit coordinator, Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
	 Genuine attempt to acknowledge sources, possibly with imprecision in use of referencing conventions. Examples include: (a) not including quotation marks around, or otherwise appropriately identifying, a direct quotation; (b) incorrect referencing; (c) poor paraphrasing; (d) incorrect direct quotation. 	 No prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 		 Mandatory development activity (Avoiding Plagiarism Module) Mark reduction up to 15% of the total available marks for low weighted assessment or 5-10% for moderate to high weighted assessment.
	 Significant portion of unreferenced or poorly paraphrased work. An attempt to acknowledge sources, possibly with imprecision in use of referencing conventions. 	 Any stage of candidature, though students in their first year may be treated as minor if no prior finding on record. May or may not have prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	Major breach	Unit coordinator:
				Refer for review
				Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
				 Mark reduction up to 40% of the total available marks
				May also direct the student to undertake development activity (Avoiding Plagiarism Module)
Plagiarism – arising from	Low volume of plagiarised material, with	Early- to mid-stage of	Minor breach	Unit coordinator:
dishonesty or negligence	insufficient attempt to paraphrase and/or acknowledge all sources.	 candidature. No prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 		Refer for review
	J. J			Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
				 Mandatory development activity (Avoiding Plagiarism Module) Mark reduction up to 40% of the total available marks



Allegation Type	Nature of breach	Experience of the student	Finding	Indicative outcome
Plagiarism – arising from dishonesty (continued from previous page)	 Moderate to high volume of plagiarised material, for example a significant portion of unreferenced or poorly paraphrased work. Limited or no attempt to paraphrase or acknowledge source material appropriately or accurately, demonstrating reckless disregard for academic standards. Citing sources which have not been read without acknowledging the secondary source from which the information has been obtained. 	 Any stage of candidature. May or may not have prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	Major breach	 Unit coordinator: Refer for review Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: No prior finding: Fail low weighted assessment (0%) or mark reduction between 25 - 50% of the total available marks for moderate to high weighted assessment Prior finding: Fail item of assessment (0%) May also direct the student to undertake development activity (Avoiding Plagiarism Module)
Recycling	 Recycled material is relevant to task, minimal and limited to a small number of instances. Genuine, but insufficient attempt to paraphrase from, or no acknowledgement of, the previously submitted work. Cautionary feedback sufficient. 	 Any stage of candidature. No prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	No breach	 Unit coordinator, Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: No penalty Work to be marked on merit Corrective feedback provided
	Recycled material is relevant and of low or moderate volume without acknowledgement of prior use.	 Any stage of candidature. No prior findings on record. 	Minor breach	 Unit coordinator, Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: Mandatory development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) Mark reduction up to 15% of the total available marks for low weighted assessment or 5-10% for moderate to high weighted assessment
	 Recycled material is unacknowledged and of moderate or high volume. The extent of recycling may demonstrate limited or no engagement with the assessment task and/or learning outcomes specific to the unit of study. 	 Any stage of candidature. May or may not have prior findings on record. 	Major breach	 Unit coordinator: Refer for review Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: No prior finding: Specified maximum mark of 50% or appropriate mark reduction for moderate to high weighted assessment Prior (equivalent) finding: Fail item of assessment (0%) May also direct the student to undertake development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module)



Allegation Type	Nature of breach	Experience of the student	Finding	Indicative outcome
Collusion (i.e. working with another student or group of students in completing assessment tasks or copying the work of another student)	 The task is a formative task or of low weighting relative to the overall assessment. Students have worked together but have genuinely misunderstood the limits of acceptable collaboration. Provision of work (donor student) was inappropriate but done in good faith. Collusion results in minor similarities between submissions, with evidence of their individual contribution to the submitted work. 	 Early stage of candidature. No prior findings on record. 	Minor breach	 Unit coordinator: Refer for review Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: Donor: No penalty Recipient: Mark reduction for the affected component, generally up to 40% of the total available marks May direct the students to undertake development activity (Academic Honesty Education Module)
	 Student has copied work from another student or students have worked together in completing an individual task. Evidence of illegitimate cooperation is obvious. Collusion results in substantial similar submissions (e.g. can include large portions of identical matched text or instances where the submitted work follows the same structure, key points and references, potentially reworked to avoid detection). 	 Any stage of candidature. May or may not have prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	Major breach	 Unit coordinator: Refer for review Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: No prior finding: Fail item of low weighted assessment (0%) or appropriate mark reduction for moderate to high weighted assessment Prior finding: Fail unit of study (0% - 49%)
C	• Systematic and/or sophisticated attempt to conceal extent of cooperation, which may span multiple units of study.	 Any stage of candidature May have prior (equivalent) finding or multiple findings on record. 	Potential misconduct	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: • Refer to Registrar
Contract cheating, including the submission of work that has been completed by, or with contribution from, a third party. It also includes the engagement of a third party or accepting an engagement from another student to complete or contribute to an assessment	• The work contains a low to moderate amount of material plagiarised or paraphrased from the work of another student, for example a paper taken from a document sharing platform, but which is counterbalanced by sufficient evidence of substantial contribution of original content by the student submitting the work.	 Any stage of candidature. May have prior (equivalent) finding on record. 	Major breach	 Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: No prior finding: Fail item of low weighted assessment (0%) or appropriate mark reduction for moderate to high weighted assessment Prior finding: Fail for unit of study (0 - 49%) May also direct the student to undertake development activity (Academic Honesty Education Module)



Allegation Type	Nature of breach	Experience of the student	Finding	Indicative outcome
Contract cheating (continued from previous page)	 Submitting work for assessment that has been completed by, or with contribution from, a third party (incl. from essay mills, sharing sites, or other third-party sources). Engaging a third party to complete or contribute to an assessment (includes impersonation at an examination or attending a learning activity). Accepting an engagement from another student to complete or contribute to an assessment. 	 Any stage of candidature. May or may not have prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	Potential misconduct	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: • Refer to Registrar
Exam cheating	• Demonstrably inadvertent possession of prohibited materials and/or minor breach of examination conditions, with materials surrendered voluntarily at the start of examination by the student.	 Any stage of candidature. No prior examination incidents on record. 	No breach	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: • No penalty • Warning as appropriate
	 Possession of prohibited materials and/or minor breach of examination conditions, with materials surrendered immediately upon discovery. Insufficient evidence to suggest any advantage gained. 	 Any stage of candidature. No prior examination incidents on record. 	Minor breach	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:Mark reduction up to 40% of the total available marks
	 Possession or access (or an attempt to) prohibited resources during a closed book assessment or restricted materials assessment. Communicating or consulting (or an attempt to) with another student or unauthorised person. 	 Any stage of candidature. May or may not have prior findings on record. 	Major breach	 Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: No prior finding: Fail item of assessment (0%) or appropriate mark reduction for moderate to high weighted assessment Prior finding: Fail for unit of study (0 - 49%)
	• Sophisticated attempt to conceal materials, (incl hiding notes outside of venue, external device/monitor, attempts to obscure online invigilation)	Prior findings on record	Potential misconduct	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: • Refer to Registrar



Allegation Type	Nature of breach	Experience of the student	Finding	Indicative outcome
Fabricating data, information or sources		 Any stage of candidature. No prior findings on record 	Minor breach	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
				 Specified mark reduction of 5% or 10% of the total available marks May also direct the student to undertake development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module)
	• Evidence of systematic or deliberate attempt to mislead the examiner, either by concealing:	Any stage of candidature.May or may not have prior	Major breach	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
	(a) the extent and/or quality of the empirical or scholarly research or(b) the actual sources of paraphrased or plagiarised material.	findings on record.		 No prior finding: Fail item of low weighted assessment (0%) or appropriate mark reduction for moderate to high weighted assessment Prior finding: Fail unit of study (0% - 49%)
		Multiple findings on record	Potential misconduct	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
				Refer to Registrar
Inappropriate publication or upload of an assessment, University teaching or course material to a file-sharing or	• A single instance of upload of own assignment to a document sharing platform.	Any stage of candidature.No prior findings on record.	No breach	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic: • No penalty • Warning as appropriate
online platform	Publishing confidential questions from an	Any stage of candidature.	Major breach	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated
	exam, quiz or assessment to an online platform.Uploading multiple assignments to a document sharing platform.Evidence that material was uploaded to obtain solutions.			 academic: No prior finding: Fail low weighted assessment (0%) or appropriate mark reduction for moderate to high weighted assessment
	• Evidence of systematic or calculated provision of an assignment or answers.	Any stage of candidature.	Potential misconduct	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
	 Multiple uploads of University teaching or course materials. 			Refer to Registrar



Allegation Type	Nature of breach	Experience of the student	Finding	Indicative outcome
Inappropriate use of digital technology to complete an	Submission of content generated by software with limited evidence of the student's original	Any stage of candidature.	Major breach	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
assessment task (incl. use of generative artificial intelligence tools, paraphrasing or translation software)	contribution to the piece of work.No attempt to acknowledge the tools.			 No prior finding: Fail low weighted assessment (0%) or appropriate mark reduction for moderate to high weighted assessment Prior finding: Fail unit of study (0% - 49%)
	Submission of content solely generated by software, which is presented as the student's	Any stage of candidature.	Potential misconduct	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
	own original content.			Refer to Registrar
Breach of rules, codes or policies other than the <u>Academic</u>	 Breach of other rules, codes or policies, including but not limited to: 	Any stage of candidature.	Potential misconduct	Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic:
Integrity Policy 2022 (see note below)	 misuse of University's ICT resources and intellectual property promoting or advertising commercial cheating service facilitating misuse of University resources or property by a third party (incl. ICT resources, IP or venues). 			Refer to Registrar

Note: Where a unit coordinator, Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic detects a potential breach of rules, codes or policies other than the <u>Academic Integrity Policy 2022</u>, the potential breach should be referred to the Registrar for investigation under the <u>University of Sydney (Student Discipline) Rule</u> <u>2016</u> on grounds of personal, rather than academic, misconduct. While such breaches may be associated with an academic integrity breach or academic misconduct, their investigation and determination is beyond the scope of the <u>policy</u> and <u>procedures</u>.



NOTES

Academic Integrity De	ecision-Making and Penalty Guidelines 2023
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Related documents:	Academic Integrity Policy 2022
	Academic Integrity Procedures 2022
	<u>University of Sydney (Student Academic Appeals) Rule 2021 (as amended)</u>
	University of Sydney (Student Discipline) Rule 2016

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision Amendment

Commencing