NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting 1/2017 of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee will be held from 2:00pm – 4:00pm on Tuesday 14 February 2017 in the Senate Room, Quadrangle. The Agenda for the meeting is below.

Dr Matthew Charet
Executive Officer to Academic Board

AGENDA

Non-confidential items

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES
The committee is asked to welcome Karen Cochrane as the new nominee of the President, SUPRA, and Professor Anne Twomey as the new representative for Law, replacing Professor Greg Tolhurst.

Apologies have been received from Helen Agus (Associate Professor Tom Hubble attending instead) and Associate Professor Ann Elias.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS
2.1 Minutes of Meeting 7/2016 on 9 November 2016
2.2 Business Arising

3 STANDING ITEMS
3.1 Report of the Chair
3.2 Report of Academic Board
3.3 Committee Forward Plan

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION
4.1 Decisions Matrix
4.2 Strategic Review of Assessment

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING
5.1 2015 Vice-Chancellor’s Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce Implementation Report
5.2 Academic Board / SEG Phase Four Faculty Review Report – Engineering and Information Technologies

Respect is a core value of the Academic Board
6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 14 March 2017
Senate Room, Quadrangle

Remaining meeting dates for 2017:
Tuesday 14 March
Tuesday 18 April
Tuesday 30 May
Tuesday 11 July
Tuesday 8 August
Tuesday 26 September
Tuesday 14 November

Academic Standards and Policy Committee - Terms of Reference

Purpose
The Academic Standards and Policy Committee assists and advises the Academic Board in ensuring the maintenance of the highest standards and quality in teaching, scholarship and research in the University of Sydney.

Terms of Reference
1. To play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University and co-ordinate and maintain an overview of the academic activities of all academic units.
2. To formulate and review policies, guidelines and procedures in relation to academic matters, particularly with respect to academic issues that have scope across the University, including equity and access initiatives.
3. To determine policy concerning the programs of study or examinations in any Faculty, college or Board of Studies.
4. To advise the Academic Board and Vice Chancellor on policies concerning the academic aspects of the conditions of appointment and employment of academic staff.
5. To play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University by ensuring the body of academic policies and degree resolutions are self-consistent, incorporate the best ideas and are aligned with the strategic goals of the University.
6. In pursuit of the above objectives,
   6.1. request reports from, or refer matters to academic units for consideration and action as required;
   6.2. consider and take action as required on reports or academic submissions from academic units;
   6.3. initiate and oversee, in collaboration with the University Executive, a formal and regular program of review of academic activities of all academic units.
7. To actively seek and evaluate opportunities to improve the University’s pursuit of high standards in all academic activities.
8. To ensure proper communication channels are established with other committees of the Academic Board and University Executive to promote cross-referencing and discussion of matters pertaining to academic standards and policy.
9. To receive regular reports from, and provide advice to the Deputy Vice-Chancellors pursuant to maintaining the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research.
10. To exercise all reasonable means to provide and receive advice from the University Executive and its relevant subcommittees.
11. To provide regular reports on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Board.
12. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board, the Vice-Chancellor or the Deputy Vice-Chancellors.
## RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 7/2016, held on 9 November 2016, be confirmed as a true record.

## MINUTES

### ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICY COMMITTEE

2:00pm – 4:00pm, Wednesday 9 November 2016
Senate Room, Quadrangle (A14)

**Members Present:** Professor Jane Hanrahan (Chair); Helen Agus, Science; Associate Professor Alex Chaves, Veterinary Science; Dr Frances Di Lauro, Arts & Social Sciences; Associate Professor Geoff Frost, Business; Associate Professor Tania Gerzina, Dentistry; Associate Professor Peter Gibbens, Engineering & IT; Professor Manuel Graeber, Medicine; Thomas Greenwell, President, SUPRA; Kerrie Henderson, Office of General Counsel; Associate Professor Glen Hill, Architecture, Design & Planning; Dr Peter Knight, Medicine; Associate Professor Maurice Peat, Business School; Associate Professor Jennifer Rowley, Sydney Conservatorium of Music; Dr Debra Shirley, Health Sciences; Subeta Vimalarajah, Undergraduate Student.

**Attendees:** Jill Baker, Chair, Academic Board Review; Dr Matthew Charet, Secretary; Associate Professor Peter McCallum, Director, Educational Strategy; Dr Anne Rogerson, Arts and Social Sciences (for Item 4.3); Lynda Rose, Office of the Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

**Apologies:** Associate Professor Tony Masters, Chair of the Academic Board; Associate Professor Mark Melatos, Arts & Social Sciences; Professor Pip Pattison, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education); Associate Professor Veyssel Kayser, Pharmacy.

### UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

1 **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

   The Chair welcomed members and conveyed apologies from those unable to attend.

2 **PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

   2.1 **Minutes of Meeting 6/2016 on 12 October 2016**

   Two omissions from the attendance were noted. Members confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 October 2016, as amended.

   **Resolution ASPC16/7-1**

   *That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 6/2016, held on 12 October 2016, be confirmed as a true record as amended.*

   2.2 **Business Arising**

   Mrs Agus raised a matter relating to Item 4.5 of the previous meeting, Academic Delegations of
Authority, regarding the need for an automatic process for termination of candidature for failure by a student to complete an award within specified time limits (as required by the Coursework Policy 2014). Ms Henderson advised that the authority to terminate is provided in by policy so it is a matter of implementing this authority, possibly by the development of appropriate functionality in Sydney Student. The Chair observed that faculty- and degree-specific time limits will also need to be included in any automated system, and undertook to communicate requirements that need to be encompassed with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar). The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) undertook to raise the development of this functionality in future system modifications.

**Action 5/2016**: Chair to communicate with DVC (Registrar) regarding the development of functionality within Sydney Student for automatic termination of candidature. **Responsible**: Chair. **Timing**: As soon as possible.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-2**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the business arising.

### 2.3 Transitional Provisions – Amendment of Terms of Reference

This proposal was tabled and endorsed as presented.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-3**
That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee endorse the amendment of its Terms of Reference and recommend the adoption of the amended Terms of Reference to the Academic Board, with immediate effect.

### 3 STANDING ITEMS

#### 3.1 Report of the Chair

This report was included in discussion of Item 3.2 below.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-4**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Chair.

#### 3.2 Report of the Academic Board meeting, 2 November 2016

A hard copy of this report was tabled, as the Academic Board had met on the day of agenda distribution for the current meeting. In the absence of Associate Professor Masters, the Chair highlighted the passage of three separate amendments to the Assessment Procedures 2011, as endorsed at the previous meeting of the Committee. The Board also discussed the introduction of amended Academic Delegations of Authority and a new Governance of Faculties and University Schools Rule 2016, arising from changes to the organisational design. Discussion continues regarding the structure of the health faculties, and this will be communicated when available.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-5**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 2 November 2016.

### 4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

#### 4.1 Replacement Assessments – Amendment of Assessment Procedures 2011

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) informed the Committee that this proposal builds on the three amendments to the Assessment Procedures 2011 that were approved at the 2 November meeting of the Academic Board. The proposal arises from a desire to finalise examinations by a set point in time, which will enable the confident completion of progression checks and enrolment for the following semester without the need to await outstanding results. The proposal also addresses issues with processes for Special Consideration arising in the formal exam period, and facilitates the scheduling of replacement exams before the end of Week 18 in each semester. The proposal sets out a workable solution to address these issues while maintaining compliance with policy.

In discussion, the submission of replacement examination papers at the same time as the main examination paper was questioned, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) advised that this is not part of the current proposal or the current procedures. Ms Vimalarajah opened discussion
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regarding the 2-6 day notice period for scheduling replacement exams, observing that this arguably provides too little notice for students to adequately prepare. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) advised that by setting a formal period for replacement exams, the student can confidently anticipate that the exam will take place within a clearly defined window of time. As formal examinations end in Week 16 and replacement exams are to be scheduled in Week 18, ample opportunity is therefore available for exam preparation.

It was agreed that group work should first be assessed against the Decisions Matrix as approved by the Academic Board, and referred to the Faculty if a decision is not able to be determined. Associate Professor McCallum advised the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) that specific instances have emerged where this process has not occurred, and he undertook to forward details. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) advised members that changes to the Decisions Matrix are within the purview of the Academic Board, and that a review of current Special Consideration processes will be presented to a future meeting.

Associate Professor McCallum recommended that the reference to standards-based assessment be amended with the deletion of clause 7(4)(a)(i) as it is redundant. The Committee supported this recommendation.

The proposal was endorsed as amended.

**Action 6/2016:** Associate Professor McCallum to communicate issues with the processing of Special Consideration for group work to the DVC (Registrar). **Responsible:** Associate Professor McCallum. **Timing:** As soon as possible.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-6**

*That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that Academic Board:*  
(1) approve the amendment of the Assessment Procedures 2011, as presented, to establish that as part of the administration of the formal exam period the Examinations Office be responsible for the scheduling and administration of replacement written exams in week 18 of each semester; and  
(2) approve the adoption of the amended policy with effect from 1 January 2017.

**4.2 Standardised Statement on Academic Honesty and Use of Similarity Detection Software**

Associate Professor McCallum spoke to this item and advised that it arose from feedback provided to a student survey conducted earlier in the year by Student Support Services. It is proposed to add to every unit of study outline a one page statement outlining what is and is not permitted under the University’s Academic Honesty provisions, as requested by students.

In discussion, concern was expressed at the ‘bloating’ of unit of study outlines with this additional content. Associate Professor McCallum advised that the Director, Educational Innovation, is currently considering the development of a single unit of study outline template which is unlikely to be available before 2018 at the earliest. It was also suggested in discussion that the statement could be accessed via a link, rather than directly included in the outline, and that it could be left up to faculties to determine the best means of implementation. It was also suggested that this information should be incorporated into the online training module completed by all first year students, and that it could be included on the websites of the SRC and SUPRA.

This proposal was endorsed in principle, with specific application to be determined by the Unit of Study Coordinator.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-7**

*That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee:*  
(1) endorse the standardised Statement on Academic Honesty and Use of Similarity Detection Software; and  
(2) endorse in principle the insertion of the Statement in all unit of study outlines from 1 January 2017, with specific application as determined by the Unit of Study Coordinator.

**4.3 Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: Resolutions of Faculty**

Dr Rogerson spoke to this proposal and advised that it addresses redundancies in the existing Resolutions of Faculty. In discussion, a number of concerns were raised and it was agreed that the proposal not be supported, but that the Faculty should liaise with the University Policy Manager to
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agree on a version to be circulated to the Committee for endorsement.

**Action 7/2016:** FASS to liaise with the University Policy Officer to refine the proposal, which is to be circulated to the Committee for endorsement once finalised. **Responsible:** Dr Rogerson / Secretary. **Timing:** As soon as possible.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-8**

That this proposal be further refined, prior to circulation for re-consideration.

**Note:** Subsequent to the meeting, an amended proposal was circulated to and endorsed by the Committee. The above resolution is to be updated, to read:

**Resolution ASPC16/7-8**

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board approve the amendment of the Resolutions of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, as presented, with effect from 1 January 2017.

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 **University of Sydney (Governance of Faculties and University Schools) Rule 2016 – New Policy**

Members were informed that this proposal was endorsed by the Academic Board at its meeting on 2 November. Concern had been expressed at the meeting regarding the structure of the University Schools, and it was agreed that this would be addressed via consultation between the Provost, the Chair of Academic Board and the heads of the three University Schools. An updated version of the proposal is to be circulated to the Board before presentation of the proposal to the 12 December meeting of Senate.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-9**

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the Academic Board’s endorsement of the University of Sydney (Governance of Faculties and University Schools) Rule 2016, for presentation to Senate for approval.

5.2 **University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Academic Functions) Rule 2016 – New Policy**

The final version of this proposal was noted.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-10**

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the Academic Board’s endorsement of the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Academic Functions) Rule 2016, for presentation to Senate for approval.

6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 **Any Other Business**

The Chair asked members to forward any suggestions to the Secretary for charitable organisations, for which donations will be sought at the Academic Board’s end of year function following the final 2016 meeting of the Academic Board on 7 December.

Professor Graeber questioned where responsibility for setting academic standards lies, and was advised that this responsibility has been delegated by Senate to the Academic Board. On behalf of the Board, the Committee undertakes a preliminary assessment of policies and procedures that establish and maintain quality and standards. These policies and procedures may be developed and managed by other parts of the University community and are often developed via extensive consultation, but all proposals relating to setting academic standards ultimately require the approval of the Board as the delegated authority.

Observing that this is the final meeting for 2016, the Chair thanked members for the contributions they have made to the business of the Committee, and made particular note of Associate Professor McCallum’s work on academic honesty and curriculum reform.
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Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 14 February 2017
Senate Room, Quadrangle

A full copy of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee papers is available at: sydney.edu.au/secretariat/pdfs/academic-board-committees/academic-standards/2016/20161109%20ASPC%20Agenda%20Pack.pdf
### RECOMMENDATION

*That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 7 December 2016.*

### REPORT OF ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING

**Items related to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee**

The Academic Board:

- Noted the report from the meeting of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee held on 9 November 2016 and:
  - Approved the amendment of the Terms of Reference of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee, with immediate effect;
  - Approved the amendment of the *Assessment Procedures 2011*, as amended, to establish that as part of the administration of the formal exam period the Examinations Office be responsible for the scheduling and administration of replacement written exams in week 18 of each semester; and approved the adoption of the amended policy, with effect from 1 January 2017; and
  - Approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, as amended, with effect from 1 January 2017.

**Other matters**

The Academic Board also:

- Held a small-group discussion on the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) and the University's preparedness for TEQSA re-accreditation in 2017;
- Noted changes to membership for 2017;
- Provided the Chair and Deputy Chair to act on behalf of the Board to consider and decide on any urgent matters that arise between this meeting and the first meeting of 2017;
- Noted the report from the Chair of the Academic Board on matters considered by Senate at its meeting of 31 October 2016;
- Noted the General Report of the Chair of the Board, including an update on the Academic Board review and a reminder regarding nominations for the Alumni Council Graduate Medals;
- Noted the report of student members on the Academic Board review, Academic Honesty, the Safer Communities Project, new student representatives, and the SUPRA Supervisor of the Year 2016;
- Noted the Vice-Chancellor’s Report on matters considered by Senate at its meeting of 31 October 2016;
- Noted the General Report of the Vice-Chancellor; and
- Discussed a question on notice relating to changes to professional staffing within the Faculty of Science;
- Approved the 2017 Academic Calendars for the Faculty of Education and Social Work, Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Veterinary Science, with immediate effect.

- Noted the report from the meeting of the Admissions Committee held on 9 November 2016.

- Noted the report from the meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee held on 16 November 2016, and:
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- Approved the amendment of the Terms of Reference of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, with immediate effect;
- Approved a proposal from the DVC Education Portfolio to endorse the learning outcomes for the new majors, with effect from 1 January 2018;
- Approved a proposal from the DVC Education Portfolio to introduce a Languages program to the Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Advanced Studies and approved the introduction of Course Resolutions arising from this proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018;
- Approved a proposal from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music to introduce the Bachelor of Music degree, approved the introduction of Course Resolutions arising from this proposal, and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of Senate related to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, to both introduce the new degree and rescind the existing Bachelor of Music Studies, Bachelor of Music Studies and Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)/Bachelor of Music Studies and Bachelor of Music Studies and Doctor of Medicine, with effect from 1 January 2018;
- Approved a proposal from the Sydney College of the Arts to introduce the Bachelor of Visual Arts/Bachelor of Advanced Studies, approved the introduction of Course Resolutions arising from this proposal, and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of Senate related to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Sydney College of the Arts, with effect from 1 January 2018;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to amend the Faculty resolutions, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Bachelor of International and Global Studies and approved the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Bachelor of Political, Economic and Social Sciences and approved the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Diploma of Arts and amend the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Diploma of Language Studies and approved the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Diploma of Social Sciences and approved the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music to amend the Bachelor of Music (Composition), Bachelor of Music (Performance), and Diploma of Music and approved the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies to amend the Bachelor of Engineer Honours (Biomedical stream) and approved the amendment of the table of Units of Study arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to amend the Bachelor of Applied Science (Exercise and Sport Science) / Master of Nutrition and Dietetics and approved the amendment of the unit of study table arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Sydney Law School to amend the Bachelor of Laws and approved the amendment of the elective unit of study table arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017; and
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the Bachelor of Science (Advanced) / Doctor of Dental Medicine and approved the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017.

- Noted the report from the meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee held on 16 November 2016 and:
  - Approved the amendment of the Terms of Reference of the Graduate Studies Committee, with immediate effect;
  - Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Master of Cultural Studies and approved the amendment to the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
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- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Graduate Diploma in Development Studies and approved the amendment to the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Graduate Certificate of Human Rights and approved the amendment to the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Graduate Diploma in International Security; and approved the amendment to the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Graduate Diploma in International Studies and approved the amendment to the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Master of Public Policy and approved the amendment to the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017; and
- Approved a proposal from the Sydney Law School to amend the Juris Doctor and approved the amendment to the course resolutions and the table of units of study arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2017.
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<td>Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015</td>
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X = item planned for discussion
Grey shading = item discussed
RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board amend the Assessment Procedures 2011 to include as Schedule 3 the Decisions Matrix (Special Consideration and Special Arrangements), as presented, with effect from Semester 1 2017.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Special Consideration and Special Arrangements procedures, process and online platform (system) was introduced in semester 1, 2016. The Decisions Matrix (Special Consideration and Special Arrangements) has allowed for consistent outcomes where previously there had been significant variation. Overall the standardised approach has streamlined what was previously 16 faculty specific, and somewhat disparate, practices ultimately enhancing the student experience.

The Decisions Matrix (Special Consideration and Special Arrangements) attached now incorporates changes arising from the following:

- The review undertaken in semester 2, 2016 at the request of the Student Administrative Services Project Control Board (SAS PCB) to assess the success of the Special Consideration and Special Arrangements procedures, processes and online platform (system) introduced in semester 1, 2016.
- The changes in the Assessment Procedures 2011 approved by the Academic Board in November and December 2016 relating to examinations and the Standard Assessment Schedule.

The revised Decisions Matrix is to be used from semester 1, 2017.
SCHEDULE 3: DECISIONS MATRIX (SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS)

General principles:

- All requests for Special Consideration and Special Arrangements are managed by the SAS PSU who use the Decisions Matrix (Special Consideration and Special Arrangements)\(^1\) to ensure that all requests are considered in the same manner.\(^2\) Assessment types or decisions not explicitly covered in the Decisions Matrix are considered non-standard decisions and are referred to the UOS Coordinator to determine the appropriate form of consideration.
- The Decisions Matrix is applied to the first special consideration request for each assessment item. Additional requests (for the same assessment item) are non-standard decisions and are referred to the UOS Coordinator for a consideration decision.
- A special consideration report listing all assessments and the form of consideration granted is available to UOS Coordinators.
- ‘Attendance’ is managed by the faculty directly and not through the Special Consideration and Special Arrangements process managed by the SAS PSU.

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\(^1\) See sections 13 and 14, Assessment Procedures (2011).
\(^2\) See section 14 clause 2, Assessment Procedures (2011).
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<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Assessment description</th>
<th>Form of consideration</th>
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<th>UOS Coordinator</th>
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<td>Exams</td>
<td>Final Exam⁴</td>
<td>Written exam⁵</td>
<td>“Replacement Exam⁶”</td>
<td>Final exam scheduled and managed centrally</td>
<td>Schedule replacement exam⁷</td>
<td>Where the student is unable to attempt the replacement exam and a valid form of replacement assessment or alternative means of assessment is not possible, award a grade of DC (discontinue not to count as failure) if appropriate</td>
<td>Provide replacement exam paper by specified deadline Download special consideration report Construct a valid form of replacement assessment or an alternative means of assessment where the student is unable to attempt the replacement exam Manage and implement DSU adjustments</td>
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³ This may be a faculty, school or department.
⁴ Final exams usually take place in the formal examination period; weeks 15-16 of each semester.
⁵ Exam type could be any of the following: written exam, written exam with non-written elements, or non-written exam. Final exam with non-written components or non-written exam may be scheduled and managed by the faculty.
⁶ All student who make a successful request for special consideration relating to a final examination will receive a replacement assessment usually in the form of a replacement examination in the replacement examination period. (See section 14 clause 13(i)).
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<td>Written exam, worth 30% or greater</td>
<td>“Replacement Exam for in-semester exam”</td>
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<td>Download special consideration report</td>
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7 Replacement examination period, means week 18 in each semester, in which replacement examinations for the formal examination period are scheduled.

8 Exam type could be any of the following: written exam, written exam with non-written elements, or non-written exam, however administered.
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<td>Placements</td>
<td>Professional experience placement, internship, or site visit</td>
<td>“New or varied Placement”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Download special consideration report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills based assessment</td>
<td>Skills based evaluation</td>
<td>Clinical skills assessment or lab skills assessment</td>
<td>“New or Varied Evaluation”</td>
<td>Not on “non-repeatable list”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Download special consideration report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Download special consideration report
Schedule and inform student of new or varied placement details
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Category</th>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Assessment description</th>
<th>Form of consideration</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>SAS</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>UOS Coordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills based assessment</td>
<td>Skills based evaluation</td>
<td>Clinical skills assessment or lab skills assessment</td>
<td>“Alternative Assessment”</td>
<td>On &quot;non-repeatable list&quot; (e.g. evaluations with specialised resource requirements)</td>
<td>Refer to UOS Coordinator for form of consideration</td>
<td>Download special consideration report</td>
<td>Schedule and inform student of alternative assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills based assessment</td>
<td>Creative assessments/ demonstrations</td>
<td>Performance, recital or jury-assessment performance, or exhibition</td>
<td>“New or Varied Evaluation”</td>
<td>Not on non-repeatable list</td>
<td></td>
<td>Download special consideration report</td>
<td>Schedule and inform student new or varied evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Category</td>
<td>Assessment Type</td>
<td>Assessment description</td>
<td>Form of consideration</td>
<td>Conditions</td>
<td>SAS</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>UOS Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills based assessment</td>
<td>Creative assessments/demonstrations</td>
<td>Performance, recital, jury-assessment performance, or exhibition</td>
<td>“Alternative Evaluation”</td>
<td>On non-repeatable list, (e.g. assessments/demonstrations with specialised resource requirements)</td>
<td>Refer to UOS Coordinator for form of consideration</td>
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<td>Download special consideration report</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Determine appropriate alternative evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Schedule and inform student of alternative evaluation details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitted work</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Essay, report case study, proposal, literature review, portfolio or design</td>
<td>“Extension of Time”</td>
<td>1. Impacted period is less than 20 working days; or 2. The new due date is prior to the return date</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Download special consideration report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honours Thesis</td>
<td>Non-HDR thesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apply extension of time to due date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 New due date is the revised submission date for the assessment and is calculated using calendar days to be consistent with the return date.

10 Return date refers to the date when an assignment or the answers are returned to the student and is usually within 10 working days (14 calendar days) from the original due date of the assessment, unless otherwise specified by the faculty.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Category</th>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Assessment description</th>
<th>Form of consideration</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>SAS</th>
<th>Faculty&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>UOS Coordinator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assessment Category</th>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Assessment description</th>
<th>Form of consideration</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>SAS</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>UOS Coordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submitted work</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Essay, report case study, proposal, literature review, portfolio or design</td>
<td>Determined by faculty</td>
<td>1. Impacted period is greater than 20 working days; or 2. The new due date is after the return date.</td>
<td>Refer to UOS Coordinator for form of consideration</td>
<td>Award a grade of DC (discontinue not to count as failure) if appropriate</td>
<td>Determine appropriate form of consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honours Thesis</td>
<td>Non-HDR thesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Determine consideration longer than 20 working days or set an alternative assessment in cases where remaining student cohort would be disadvantaged</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class assessments</td>
<td>Tutorial quiz, small test or online task</td>
<td>Worth less than 30%</td>
<td>“Mark Adjustment”</td>
<td>Not on “no mark adjustment allowed” list</td>
<td>Download special consideration report</td>
<td>Make mark adjustment (re-weight, average etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small continuous assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 New due date is the revised submission date for the assessment and is calculated using calendar days to be consistent with the return date.

12 Return date refers to the date when an assignment or the answers are returned to the student and is usually within 10 working days (14 calendar days) from the original due date of the assessment, unless otherwise specified by the faculty.

13 Students will be encouraged to check with their unit of study coordinator if any repeat sessions will be available before submitting a special consideration application.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Category</th>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Assessment description</th>
<th>Form of consideration</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>SAS</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>UOS Coordinator</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-class assessments</strong></td>
<td>Tutorial quiz, small test or online task</td>
<td>Worth less than 30%&lt;sup&gt;14&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>“New or Varied Assessment”</td>
<td>On “no mark adjustment allowed” list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide an alternative assessment where a student has missed more than one third of the regular assessment components</td>
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</table>

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<sup>14</sup> Students will be encouraged to check with their unit of study coordinator if any repeat sessions will be available before submitting a special consideration application.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Category</th>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Assessment description</th>
<th>Form of consideration</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
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<td>In-class assessments</td>
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<td>Oral presentation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Download special consideration report</td>
<td>Schedule and inform student of new or varied presentation details</td>
<td>Provide alternative assessment if new or varied presentation is unable to be provided</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Category</td>
<td>Assessment Type</td>
<td>Assessment description</td>
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<td>Conditions</td>
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<td>Faculty</td>
<td>UOS Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class assessments</td>
<td>Optional assignment or small test</td>
<td>Includes formative assessments</td>
<td>“No action required”</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
<td>&quot;Alternative Assessment&quot; for the impacted student</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Provide the alternative assessment for impacted student</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Impact on other group members to be noted during marking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Category</td>
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<td>Assessment description</td>
<td>Form of consideration</td>
<td>Conditions</td>
<td>SAS</td>
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<td>UOS Coordinator</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Written, non-written elements</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Download special consideration report</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide the alternative assessment for impacted student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Impact on other group members to be noted during marking</td>
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Non-Confidential

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Submission To</th>
<th>Academic Standards and Policy Committee</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>14 February 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item No</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Peter McCallum, Director Education Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer/Approver</td>
<td>Professor Pip Pattison, DVC (Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper title</td>
<td>Strategic Review of Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To discuss the paper &quot;Strategic Review of Assessment&quot;, and endorse the convening of an Assessment Working Party by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) and the Chair of the Academic Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee:
1. endorse the convening of an Assessment Working Party by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) and the Chair of the Academic Board;
2. discuss the paper "Strategic Review of Assessment"; and
3. note the process for implementing goals in the University of Sydney Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 relating to assessment.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A joint Academic Board-DVC Education Assessment Working Party is proposed to carry forward the initiatives on assessment in the University of Sydney Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020. The Working Party would collaborate with an expert group from the Sydney School of Education and Social Work to develop discussion papers and an approach to assessing the graduate qualities. It will also develop approaches to using assessment plans at the major, minor, program, stream and degree level with a view to providing improved feedback to staff and students on learning, reducing the volume of summative assessment, developing models for integrative assessment across units, levels and disciplines, and considering University-wide approaches to the assessment of project units, with a particular focus on issues arising from interdisciplinary work. The Working Party will aim to develop a University-wide approach to these issues by December 2017. An Appendix provides background on current policy and the requirements of the Standards Framework.
CONSULTATION

The Assessment Working Party will consult with the UE Education Committee, the Academic Standards and Policy Committee of the Academic Board, Faculties, and the University Community through forums and other communication channels as outlined in the paper.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1. Strategic Review of Assessment
Strategic review of assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nineteenth century professors would see many similarities between their assessments and today's university assessment. Over the next decade we will witness the greatest revolution in the role of assessment in tertiary education – it will move from a device to sum up what we think students need to know, to providing feedback into the teaching and learning cycle; it will involve more than surface and greater emphases on deeper knowledge and understanding; it will involve peer assessment and computerised scoring; it will involve aspects of Second Life and interactivity; it will see more use of computerised adaptive testing; and the quality of these assessments will be set higher, the qualities will be more public, and students will be the major beneficiaries of this revolution. The revolution will encompass “feedback from assessment” and the development of visible learning and visible teaching.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Summary
A joint Academic Board-DVC Education Assessment Working Party is proposed to carry forward the initiatives on assessment in the University of Sydney Strategic Plan 2016 – 20. The Working Party would collaborate with an expert group from the Faculty of Education to develop discussion papers and an approach to assessing the graduate qualities. It will also develop approaches to using assessment plans at the major, minor, program, stream and degree level with a view to providing improved feedback to staff and students on learning, reducing the volume of summative assessment, developing models for integrative assessment across units, levels and disciplines, and considering University-wide approaches to the assessment of project units, with a particular focus on issues arising from interdisciplinary work. The Working Party will aim to develop a University-wide approach to these issues by December 2017. An Appendix provides background on current policy and the requirements of the Standards Framework.

Introduction
The Strategic Plan commits the University to significantly rethinking aspects of its educational approach relating to assessment, including measuring graduate qualities, increasing authentic assessment, problem-based learning and
interactive and collaborative learning, reducing assessment volume, improving feedback to staff and students and aligning and integrating assessment across units, levels and disciplines. In particular the Strategy aims to:

• measure the attainment of graduate qualities by students (*Strategic Plan (SP)* 4.4, p. 37);
• increase authentic and integrative assessment in each major, program and stream (*Building a Culture of Educational Excellence (BCEE)* 23, *SP* 4.1, p. 34);
• reduce the volume of summative assessment (*SP* 5.2, p. 39) and improve feedback to students and staff through increased low-stakes and no-stakes formative assessment;
• Design experiences that promote the alignment of learning and assessment at multiple levels (task, unit, major, degree) and across disciplines (*SP* 5.1 , p. 38);
• consider mechanisms for assessment across multiple units, between disciplines and in interdisciplinary projects;
• assure the integrity of assessment as an integral component of the graduate qualities (*SP*, 5.2, 39, BCEE, p. 4, 16)

Through the Strategic Plan discussion paper, *Building a Culture of Educational Excellence*, the planning process emphasised feedback, both to teachers and to students, as a crucial domain for the educational strategy (*BCEE*, p. 15). As John Hattie demonstrates in the article cited above and elsewhere, using assessment data as feedback to teachers and faculties actually has a greater positive effect on learning than feedback to students, though both are highly beneficial to learning. In a synthesis of studies measuring the effect of strategies, policies, initiatives and innovations on student learning, Hattie ranked feedback to teachers as the second most significant of all influences on learning, and feedback to students as the fifth most significant.[Hattie 2009].

Among the challenges for the University community that flow from the Education Strategic Plan are:

• How can we measure the extent to which the Graduate Qualities are being achieved by students?
• How can we better coordinate assessment at levels higher than the unit of study (for example at minor, major, program and stream level) to monitor achievement of learning outcomes at that level, while simultaneously reducing that aspect of the volume of assessment that impacts negatively on students and inhibits learning effectiveness?
• As we develop assessment plans at the major or program level, can we facilitate assessment across different units, different levels and different disciplines?
• Can we improve the feedback that both staff and students get on student learning without increasing the burden for students and staff, through more sophisticated and technologically assisted use of formative assessment and analytics?
In the development of project-based learning and interdisciplinary units, can we develop agreed models for measuring interdisciplinary learning so that the learning is effectively validated and moderated?

More broadly, can we devise useful models of assessment in project units that will assist staff in incorporating projects into majors and other components and ensure comparability of standards across units and disciplines?

To promote institutional discussion of these issues, an Assessment Working Party jointly convened by the DVC Education and the Chair of the Academic Board with the objectives set out below is proposed. The Assessment Working Party would develop proposals to address the assessment challenges in the Strategic Plan and consult with the Degree Advisory Working Group (DAWG), the UE Education Committee and relevant committees of the Academic Board. The project would also involve consultation with faculties and a forum or forums as appropriate. The Working Party would be assisted by an educational measurement group from the Education and Social University School led by Professor James Tognolini to provide specialist input into the development and validation of a University-wide rubric for the measurement of graduate qualities.

The Assessment Working Party

Suggested Aims:

1. Develop a University-wide approach (e.g. via shared rubrics) for assessment of graduate qualities to be used by staff and students with a focus on capstone and project units;
2. Develop aligned assessment plans at the level of course component to ensure effective placing of authentic assessment experiences, educational integrity and achievement of learning outcomes at the appropriate level;
3. Consider policy and course management options for integrative assessment across units of study and disciplines and in interdisciplinary units embedded in majors, projects and the Sydney Research Seminars;
4. Recommend optimal processes for effective assessment practice in collaborative and project learning settings;
5. Review policy for streamlining and reducing summative assessment at unit of study level, making increased use of low credit value and optional no-value formative assessment, and of learning analytics to provide feedback on learning to students and staff and on the learning process as a whole.

Provisional Timeframe:

1. February: form Assessment Working Group and educational measurement group.
2. Initial consultation with Degree Advisory Working Group (23 February), UE Education (13 February), ASPC (14 February).
3. March- April: Working Group develops responses to terms of reference in consultation with DAWG.
4. Early May: University forum on Assessment.
5. June: Report including proposed approach to development of rubrics for assessing graduate qualities considered and approved as appropriate by Undergraduate Degree Working Parties, UE Ed (5 June), UE (29 June) and ASPC (11 July)

6. July: Policy development

7. July-November: Development of one or more pilot rubrics for the assessment of graduate qualities

8. August: draft policy considered by UE Ed (7 August), Undergraduate degree Working Parties (10 August)

9. To end of August – Policy revision managed by Policy Development Unit

10. Final Policy approval: UE Ed (11 Sep), ASPC (26 Sep), UE 21 Sept, AB 10 October

11. December: Approval of rubrics for trial use in 2018

**Issues**

**Measuring the achievement of Graduate Qualities**

The value of attempting to assess achievement of the University’s graduate qualities is twofold: we create a feedback mechanism for our educational efforts to develop the graduate qualities, and we provide an assessment of value to students (and likely to prospective employers as well) that helps students to direct their further learning. As Gibbs (2010) has recently observed, ‘capstone’ level dissertations or project reports offer an important resource for assessment of the quality of broad, program-level educational outcomes because they typically require application of the higher level, integrative skills reflected in program-level outcomes.

A project sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities\(^1\) has demonstrated the feasibility of developing rubrics to support the assessment of these higher level outcomes. The project has led to the creation of the Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics. The rubrics were developed by academics working across a number of US institutions and are intended to assess broad program-level learning outcomes such as inquiry and analysis, problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, ethical reasoning, information literacy, teamwork and integrative learning. As reported by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (2016), an early finding from use of these rubrics has been that some of the skills, such as communication and use of evidence, actually require much greater development within the curriculum. This finding demonstrates the valuable contribution that the assessment of broader skills can make to curriculum design.

The challenge for the University is therefore to assess whether a similar approach might be used for the assessment of Sydney’s graduate qualities, and to assess the validity of any such approach. Although some projects have explored

\(^1\) See [https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics](https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics).
the development of specific assessment of higher level outcomes, these are generally seen to be expensive and difficult to sustain. Examples include: the OECD’s Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) Project, which appears to have foundered; the OECD Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), which, through an international survey, measures cognitive and workplace skills necessary for societal participation and economic prosperity); and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) for measurement of broad skills such as critical thinking and problem solving (e.g. see Arun and Roksa, 2011, 2014). It is possible that some of these latter approaches might be used on an *ad hoc* basis to assess the validity of the more feasible rubrics-based approach.

There is also value in exploring the use of ePortfolios to collate evidence of graduate qualities at the program level and, indeed, in considering whether these might be the subject of assessment through some of the to-be-developed rubrics. An important topic for discussion will be the role that any such assessments play in students’ final grades.

**Assessment Plans**

In order to achieve the best alignment between learning outcomes and assessment at the level of unit of study, curriculum component (minor, major, program, stream) and degree, we need to consider whether the atomization of assessment tasks within individual units of study level adequately achieves the goals of advancing and measuring learning and providing feedback. This is particularly an issue with respect to learning outcomes involving the synthesis of knowledge and skills across units of study, different levels and from different disciplines. To do this, the Working Party is asked to look at creating a framework for assessment plans which would achieve measurement of high level outcomes, facilitate feedback to staff and students on learning at the level of the degree and the curriculum component as well as the unit, reducing the burden of assessment on students and on staff while enhancing feedback. The creation of assessment plans will be integral to the other initiatives of the working party, notably the assessment of graduate qualities, the adoption of integrative assessment across units and disciplines, project learning, and reducing the volume of summative assessment.

Assessment plans will also provide a strategic and coordinated way of ensuring educational integrity and undertaking risk assessment of integrity as specified in the Learning and Teaching Project policy (section 20 (3)).

**Assessment in interactive, collaborative and project learning settings**

*Collaborative and interactive learning*

Since the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan has prioritised interactive and collaborative learning designs, it is appropriate to focus on effective assessment strategies for these designs.
In the case of interactive learning, where a student’s next learning activity might depend on their response to a prior activity such as a diagnostic assessment task, there are opportunities to consider adaptive assessment strategies, even if only for formative use.

In the case of collaborative learning, where students undertake learning activities and interim or final assessments jointly, the well-canvassed problems that can occur with group work, such as free-riding, conflict, or undue competition, can arise. It will therefore be important to develop strategies for assessing collaborative tasks in ways that fairly reflect individual student effort, reward collaborative behavior, deal with conflict should it arise, and avoid problems of free-riding or competition.

*Project-based learning*

Project-based learning and an increasing emphasis on authentic problems and interdisciplinary learning are a significant aspect of the undergraduate curriculum framework developed as part of the Education k. As a result these capstone units provide an excellent opportunity for assessment of the University's graduate qualities.

Project-based learning can be characterized as a student-focused pedagogical approach involving both the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills through the exploration of an authentic task or real-world problem. Its methods include formulating problems, refining questions, group and interdisciplinary discussion, primary and secondary research, data collection and analysis, the formulation and testing of hypotheses and the creation and/or application of solutions. Outcomes may be a paper, presentation or product. Repko identifies four common outcomes of interdisciplinary learning identified by researchers: the ability to develop and apply perspective-taking techniques, the ability to develop structural knowledge of problems appropriate to interdisciplinary inquiry, the ability to integrate conflicting insights, and the ability to produce a cognitive advancement or interdisciplinary understanding of a problems (Repko 2008).

Since project-based learning will often involve groups of students from different disciplines, enrolled in different degrees and different curriculum components, project-based learning outcomes will need to be negotiated between disciplines and these outcomes will often include interdisciplinary effectiveness, critical thinking and other graduate qualities. A separate project within the Education unit is developing a common management model for project units addressing the questions of student selection, a platform for coordinating the enrolment of students from different faculties in faculty-based units in interdisciplinary projects, unit of study coordination, and access to expertise. A crucial element in developing this model will be the development of common approaches to learning outcomes and assessment in order to facilitate the easy development of projects as opportunities arise. Similarly a move towards greater use of authentic assessment will require careful design to avoid problems noted by some in transferring conventional assessment approaches to authentic learning.
(for example, Wilson 2015). An important issue is the validation and moderation of grades across disciplines. Among the issues to be considered might be:

- Whether there is benefit in agreeing a set of shared learning outcomes to be achieved by all students in all project-based learning units, while also retaining additional distinctive learning outcomes?
- Whether there is value in agreeing a common assessment matrix for project-based learning?
- How interdisciplinary learning can be assessed without unduly increasing overall burden on staff time?
- How interdisciplinary assessments can be appropriated moderated and validated against disciplinary standards?
- How projects can be designed to avoid the problems with group-work of identified by students?

In this connection, Hattie draws attention to the need to provide learning intentions as well as learning outcomes. “The use of scoring rubrics, worked examples, mastery learning, reciprocal teaching, and model answers provided to the student PRIOR to submission of work makes a major difference to the students’ learning; if these things do not occur, students must best guess what you want! Why not tell them the levels and degrees of what success looks like and see if they can attain this?” (Hattie 2009:11)

### Reducing the volume of assessment

The negative impact on learning of an overburdened assessment regime is documented in several studies and these findings align with observations made by student groups at the University of Sydney. Arguing for more streamlined assessment to improve learning, Hornby outlined a range of negative consequences of overstretched assessment: slow feedback, little meaningful feedback, little formative feedback for students to learn from mistakes, repeated assessment of the same outcomes without rationale, lack of correlation between credit point weighting and student and staff workload, lack of alignment of assessment between units, and assessment “bunching” (Hornby 2003). Even when assessment is well aligned with learning outcomes, unduly heavy, stress-inducing assessment workloads are associated with surface learning.

More concerning, Chris Rust cites a range of studies over two and a half decades that indicate an increase in surface learning as students progress through university degree programs (Watkins and Hattie 1985, Gow and Kember 1990, Mackay and Kember 1997, Zhang and Watkins 2001, Arum and Roksa 2011 cited in Rust 2013). An excessive burden of assessment also has a negative impact on the ability of staff to manage the time that they devote to education and research in the way they find most productive.

With the development of assessment plans, as described above, there is an opportunity to identify unnecessary duplication and lacunae in outcomes assessment, and ensure that the balance of tasks gives appropriate priority to the learning outcomes most valued by students, staff and employers. Within this
process it will, in many cases, be possible to reduce the volume of summative assessment and increase low-value or no-value formative assessment that provides feedback on learning to staff and students. A well-structured sequence of formative assessment tasks over a major, minor, program or stream, and effective use of learning analytics combined with appropriately spaced milestone and capstone measurements of learning outcomes and authentic assessment tasks has the potential to reduce the assessment burden in a way that created more time for deep and complex learning, while providing better assurance that learning goals had been met.

Appendix

1. Current Policy

The University undertook a review of assessment in 2010 resulting in the development of new Assessment Policy 2011 and Assessment Procedure 2011 (the policy was subsequently incorporated into the Coursework Policy 2014). The Policy articulated four principles for assessment as set out below and committed the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Assessment practices must advance student learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Assessment practices align with goals, context, learning activities and learning outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 A variety of assessment tasks are used while ensuring that student and staff workloads are considered.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3 Assessment tasks reflect increasing levels of complexity across a program and foster enquiry-based learning.</td>
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<td>1.4 Constructive, timely and respectful feedback develops student skills of self and peer evaluation and guides the development of future student work.</td>
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<th>2. Assessment practices must be clearly communicated to students and staff</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.1 Unit of study outlines are available in the first week of any offering of the unit and communicate the purposes, timing, weighting and extent of assessment in sufficient detail to allow students to plan their approach to assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Unit of study outlines explain the rationale for the selection of assessment tasks (e.g. group task) in relation to learning outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3 Procedures exist to ensure that all staff involved in teaching of a unit share a common understanding of assessment practices.</td>
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<td>2.4 The process of marking and of combining individual task marks is explicitly explained in the unit outline.</td>
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<th>3. Assessment practices must be valid and fair</th>
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<tr>
<td>3.1 Assessment tasks are authentic and appropriate to disciplinary and/or professional context.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2 Assessment incorporates rigorous academic standards related to the discipline(s) and is based on pre-determined, clearly articulated criteria that students actively engage with.</td>
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<td>3.2 Assessment will be evaluated solely on the basis of students’</td>
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achievement against criteria and standards specified to align with learning outcomes.

3.4 Assessment practices address issues of equity and inclusiveness to accommodate and build upon the diversity of the student body so as not to disadvantage any student.

4. Assessment practices must be continuously improved and updated

   4.1 Assessment tasks and outcomes are moderated through academic peer review and used to inform subsequent practice.
   4.2 Assessment is regularly updated to ensure alignment with program learning outcomes or graduate attributes.
   4.3 Professional development opportunities that are related to design, implementation and moderation of assessment are provided to staff.

Since adoption, two elements of the policy have received particular attention. Principle 3.2 committed the University to single standards-based assessment regime in place of the previous policy which permitted either standards-based or norm-referenced assessment. Principle 1.2 has been interpreted by some, notably SUPRA, as effectively proscribing, or at least sharply curtailing assessment tasks that constitute 100% of the final mark.

In 2014, the Institute for Teaching and Learning organized a Sydney Teaching Colloquium: Is our assessment up to standard?

As summarized in the Strategy Discussion Paper Building a culture of educational excellence the colloquium “highlighted the need to:

• Reduce the volume of summative assessment;
• Increase effective low-stakes formative assessment;
• Increase access to optional no-stakes formative assessment;
• Increase the use of more authentic assessment; and
• Consider mechanisms for enabling integrated assessment across multiple units of study.”

2

2. Higher Education Standards

The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 require that the University be able to demonstrate that methods of assessment are consistent with stated learning outcomes and are able to demonstrate that the outcomes have been demonstrated by students, with grades reflecting level of attainment. Whether assessed at unit or course level, students must demonstrate that course-level learning outcomes have been met. While achievement of the objectives of the Assessment Project and the Strategic Plan will ensure this, more effective alignment and integration of assessment and learning objectives through the use of assessment plans at the unit of study level

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2 Building a culture of educational excellence, Strategic Planning for 2016-20: Discussion Paper no. 3. The University of Sydney. August 2015, p. 23
3 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015, 1.4 ‘Leaning outcomes and assessment’, especially 1.4.1, 1.4.3 and 1.4.4.
will greatly assist faculties and student maintain assessment regimes that are focused on the strategic goals of reducing assessment volume, increasing authentic assessment, and maintaining its formative function of providing feedback.

Bibliography


RECOMMENDATION

That the University Executive note the report of the Vice-Chancellor’s Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce implementation program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Vice-Chancellor’s Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce ran from May to November 2015 and made 51 recommendations in 9 categories for reforms to University policies, systems and processes to address student academic misconduct and plagiarism. These reforms were implemented via a program which commenced in July 2015, after the first Taskforce report, and concluded in November 2016. The final report of the implementation program, documenting the steps taken to address the Taskforce recommendation and the work remaining to be done has now been provided to the Senate Education and Research Committee and will be considered by the Senate at their December meeting (Attachment 1).

The Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce, its two reports and the implementation of the Taskforce’s recommendations represents a significant step-change in the University of Sydney’s approach to student academic misconduct. The most critical reforms are undoubtedly the establishment of the Office of Educational Integrity, which can carry on the University-level coordination, support and momentum established by the Taskforce and its work, and the reporting/recordkeeping workflow, which will continue to produce live and reliable data.

This new reporting and recordkeeping system is unique to the University, purpose-built using enterprise systems through the ingenuity of our staff. This system affords us data that can drive much deeper understanding and long-term change across the University and allow us to continually adjust to a changing landscape. Not only can these data be used to review and adjust the policy settings and structures of the University as needed, but they can also feed into the University’s nascent efforts to establish Learning Analytics tools that can help us identify students at risk, and improve our educational offerings across the board. Importantly, they also enable the monitoring of real-time data during semester by the Office, faculties, schools and individual academics, allowing for changes and educational interventions to be made in a timely fashion.

The Taskforce and its implementation program represent a University-wide effort, with staff from across faculties, PSUs and portfolios working together. This effort resulted from the desire of the University community to address this issue, and from the high-level leadership provided by the Vice-Chancellor, the University Executive, the Academic Board and the Senate. To ensure the continued attention of the highest levels of the University on this matter, a yearly report on academic integrity will now be provided to the Senate by the Office.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Final report of the Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce implementation program
An Approach to Minimising Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism at the University of Sydney

One year on: implementation report

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
Executive Summary

Immediately after the first report of the Vice-Chancellor’s Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce (the Taskforce) in July 2015, an implementation program was established to oversee several cross-University projects to deliver the changes recommended by the Taskforce (for a full list, see appendix 1). Following the second report and conclusion of the Taskforce, the implementation program was moved to the Education Portfolio, commencing in 2016, with executive sponsorship from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education. Other executive sponsors included the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar and the General Counsel, whose portfolios both contributed to the program, along with the Research Portfolio. This report describes the outcomes of the implementation program, now concluded, and outlines the work that will be ongoing within the University as a result of the Taskforce’s two reports.

All recommendations of the Taskforce reports have received systematic and detailed attention in the implementation plan. While some can be regarded as completed, others, particularly those relating to education and culture, require ongoing vigilance, effort and an attitude of continuous improvement.

Several University-wide systems were instantiated, including an Academic Honesty in Education Module for coursework students, which provides initial education in academic honesty practices and expectations at the University of Sydney, and is intended as a supplement to in-class education to be provided by staff. An online reporting and recordkeeping tool was also implemented, which assists staff to report incidents, decision-makers to follow University process, and ensures procedural fairness and timeliness of process for students. In addition, this system provides data on integrity cases across the University, which is an extremely powerful tool for reviewing policy settings, the effectiveness of our educational interventions, detecting trends and supporting faculties.

The Office of Educational Integrity was established, within the Education Portfolio, and a Research Data Steward position created within the Research Portfolio. These two key roles provide coordination and support to staff and students on issues critical to integrity. The Office has overseen the introduction of the new systems, policies and procedures this year, advising and training staff in their use, and coordinating the review and improvement of integrity systems and processes. The Office has also provided regular reports with real-time data to faculties via SEG-Education. The Research Data Steward has worked to ensure that all researchers, including students, are trained in the use of eNotebooks, responsible data handling practices, and that meaningful research data management plans are produced.

The work of the implementation program has in large part changed policies, governance, systems and even legislation, laying the foundations for a shift in culture. This has provided a much-needed step-change in the ways in which the University considers and deals with issues of student academic misconduct. However, the work to ensure that the University’s high standards of academic integrity are maintained will be ongoing, and these systems and settings will require review. The new data provided through the reporting and recordkeeping system will be critical to this iterative process of improvement.

Two key elements to the successful implementation of the Taskforce reports have been the strong desire within the University community general to ensure high standards of academic integrity (particularly in the light of high-profile media stories during 2015), and support at the highest levels of the University. As outlined in section 3.3 of this report, it is recommended that Senate consider requiring that an annual report on Educational Integrity be provided through the Education and Research Committee.
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1. Prevention

In seeking to address student academic misconduct and plagiarism at the University, the Taskforce last year emphasised the importance of measures the University can take to prevent student cheating. A large number of the recommendations focused on these, including those in education, assessment, coordination and support, on student research misconduct, staff support, and culture. This section reviews the implementation of that group of recommendations (appendix 1 provides a compiled list of the Taskforce’s recommendations).

1.1 Education

As articulated in the Taskforce reports, education is a key element in strengthening the culture of integrity among students and staff. In February 2016, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Director, Education Strategy, and the Director of Educational Innovation, along with a team of three academic staff champions, ran a series of roadshows to inform staff of the first group of changes implemented in response to the Taskforce recommendations. There were a total of 23 2-hour sessions run over an eight week period, covering all 16 faculties, and visiting 9 campuses, as well as a session by videoconference for the regional medical schools. The focus of these sessions was on new systems, including the University-wide education module and the online reporting system (section 2.1), as well as relevant policy changes and advice to faculties on recommendations such as those within the education and assessment categories that require faculties to take action on classroom pedagogy and unit design. Throughout the year, SEG-Education also continued to encourage faculties to ensure that classroom and discipline-based education on academic honesty be embedded into the curriculum.

Work to develop an early focus on written communication skills, recommended by the Taskforce, dovetails with the Education Portfolio’s efforts, as part of the University Strategy 2016-2020 to embed the graduate qualities across the curriculum. While this work is ongoing, it is supported by the Educational Innovation and Academic Enrichment teams within the portfolio, which were newly restructured this year as a deliverable of the Strategy. The revision of units of study at the faculty level is supported by the Strategy’s Curriculum Development Fund which requires faculties to undertake curriculum updates and quality improvements, including addressing issues related to integrity and identified by the Taskforce.

This work by faculties has also been underpinned this year by the development of a single, online, University-wide, Academic Honesty Education Module (AHEM). The AHEM was tested over summer and launched in time for semester 1 2016 commencement. This module was compulsory for all commencing coursework students (whether undergraduate or postgraduate) to complete, and was available via the Learning Management System (LMS). There were no penalties for non-completion of the unit in semester 1, although in semester 2, SEG-Education and the Academic Board endorsed the suppression of results for those students who fail to complete the module in their first semester of candidature. As of the end of semester 1 2016, 23,866 students had completed the AHEM, which includes 91% of those required to do so.

A full review of the module led by the Office and a team of academic staff has been conducted during semester 2, taking into account feedback from staff and students and with a view to moving to a more agile delivery platform. The new version of the module is under construction and will be piloted through a limited number of intensive Summer School units ahead of University-wide implementation at the commencement of semester 1 2017. Moving forward, an annual review process of the module is planned, to ensure that this stays up-to-date in its pedagogy, is fit for purpose, and delivers on the University’s vision for online and interactive learning as a flagship module with which all commencing coursework students will interact.

Changes to policy recommended by the Taskforce resulted in a new Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy, promulgated at the end of 2015. Among other significant changes, this allowed for decision-makers within faculties to divert students reported for breaches of academic honesty directly to developmental education, if they felt the issue was clearly a result of the student’s misunderstanding of scholarly conventions. This outcome was supported by additional resources in Academic Enrichment,
particularly the Learning Centre, which ran an increased number of dedicated workshops for students on quoting, summarising and paraphrasing, catering to the needs of almost 500 students, at the same time as staff from the Centre continued to work with both staff and students to assist with training good practice in scholarly attribution. In the latter half of 2016, the focus has been on providing this workshop in an online form in order to allow flexible, on-demand deliver and to cater for students who cannot attend Camperdown campus.

In response to recommendations within the Taskforce’s second report, a first year integrity check was introduced for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students as part of the first year milestone required for progression. Unless very serious, issues found at this stage are dealt with educationally, an early intervention explicitly designed to avoid further issues. In addition, a Research Data Steward has been appointed within the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, whose remit is to lead work on research data University-wide, including through overseeing the rollout of the LabArchives tool, ensuring appropriate and meaningful research data management plans are in place for both students and staff, and assisting with policy development and training for all researchers.

1.2 Assessment
The Academic Board, through the Academic Standards and Policy Committee, took on the work within recommendation 2 to develop a risk matrix to assist faculties with the evaluation of the risk inherent in each assessment type to be used. This matrix was appended to the newly developed Academic Honesty in Coursework Procedures 2016 as a schedule and promoted to academic staff for their use via staff communications channels and the educational integrity intranet site, as well as through the University’s educational leadership committees.

The new Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015 includes obligations on unit of study coordinators to continuously review the academic risk within their unit of study, and this review is now supported by data on breaches, captured through the new online reporting system (section 2.1) and supplied to each faculty by the Office of Educational Integrity. The policy also requires faculties to ensure that academic integrity assurance processes be documented at the point of unit of study approvals, and as part of the ongoing review of units of study, and to eliminate the re-use of assessment tasks except where it can be shown that this can be done without creating unfair academic advantage for any single student.

These measures are initial steps towards realising the Taskforce's recommendations, and the Strategy's ambitions to reform assessment University-wide to take a more holistic view of the timing, volume and authenticity of assessment tasks. Any such change will take time, and requires continued leadership from the Education Portfolio and the academic community, and ongoing support for staff development, which is being refreshed via the Strategy and as provided by the Educational Innovation team within their new, faculty-facing structure.

For HDR students, an integrity check is now carried out on PhD theses at the point of submission, ahead of the thesis being sent to examiners. This is undertaken by the Higher Degree by Research Administration Centre (HDRAC), with decision-makers in each case being the relevant faculty Associate Dean HDR. This check has been operating since the end of June and has so far resulted in one serious case being referred to the Research Integrity Office for investigation. Such cases may be few, but as they occur in the highest qualification the University offers, and in assessment that is externally examined, it is important that these are detected and addressed.

1.3 Coordination and Support
The Office of Educational Integrity was established in January 2016 within the Education Portfolio to act as a clear point of contact and support for staff and students in matters related to coursework academic integrity. During 2016, a large part of the Office’s work has been to provide support for the newly introduced systems, such as the AHEM and the online reporting tool. In addition the Office has assisted the Educational Integrity Coordinators, a new position established by the policy within each faculty, in the decision-making process. As the new systems and policy become embedded, however, the Office’s focus is turning more towards providing resources and leadership in the field.
For example, in semester 2 the Office has been involved in running a trial of Cadmus, a software program developed at the University of Melbourne to assist in the prevention of ghostwriting, or contract cheating. The Office has also recently commenced work on the development of an external risk management strategy in consultation with the Office of General Counsel and a number of academic staff. This strategy aims to develop a systematic approach to managing external risks to the integrity of the University's coursework programs, particularly in relation to contract cheating and the proliferation of document sharing websites used by students, and is slated to include development software capable of watermarking or ‘fingerprinting’ coursework materials and facilitating the coordinated issuing of trademark and copyright take-down notices.

At the same time, the Office has also coordinated the review and rebuild of AHEM that will go live for 2017 and is working closely with the Learning Centre and others in developing the online version of the development courses. The Office reports monthly to SEG-Education on its activities and on the live data on reported student cases that is generated by the reporting system (section 2.1). An in-depth end of semester trend report was also produced by the Office for SEG-Ed, SEG and the Academic Board, and an end-of-year report will be assembled in collaboration with faculties. In 2017, the Office will be involved in hosting the Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity.

1.4 Staff Support

To support implementation of the Taskforce recommendation that similarity-detecting software be used for all written assignments, over 580 staff were trained in workshops held during semester 1 both within faculties and in a general introductory setting on the use of Turnitin and the new University policy requirements (embedded in new Guidelines attached to the Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015). To further ensure this recommendation was taken up, Learning Management System (Blackboard) sites were automatically created for every unit of study across the University, with online submission portals and access to Turnitin embedded within them. Statistics from the end of semester 1 2016 showed that assignment submissions made via Turnitin increased by 184% over Semester 2, 2015 to more than 220,000 submissions. Data from the reporting system also shows that the majority of cases referred have used Turnitin, indicating that this has gone some way to addressing the significant under detection issue identified by the Taskforce.

In late 2015 the Vice Chancellor wrote to all Deans to ensure that provision would be made in the remuneration and work allocation of sessional staff for mandatory induction sessions. This was to support the embedding of professional development modules at the induction and end-of-probation phases that include information on detection, reporting, relevant policies and support services available to students. This has been developed as a single module, and was trialled during the ‘Principles and Practice’ course run during semester 2 2016. The module is currently being revised as a result of that trial and will be rolled out more comprehensively in 2017. Further professional development courses on assessment practice will be part of the revised professional development framework underway as part of the University Strategy 2016-2020. The Academic Enrichment team has also focused staff-facing work this year on designing units to assure educational integrity.

The Office of Educational Integrity has played a key role in supporting both academic and professional staff, both through working with unit coordinators and examiners when they identify an issue, and with the Educational Integrity Coordinators and Nominated Academics in each faculty as they work through the policy process. These identified academic staff are supported in each faculty by educational integrity administration officers, whom the Office also supports through the process. Several forums for Educational Integrity Coordinators and Nominated Academics were held during the year, in support of the Taskforce recommendation to develop a community of practice. These forums led to useful information-sharing across the University as well as feedback on the operation of the new policy and systems. A forum at the end of semester 1 was also held with all academic and professional staff responsible for the management of educational integrity cases, with the result of both gathering further feedback useful for refining the new procedures and systems, and encouraging efficiency and consistency of case handling across the University.
1.5 Culture
The Office of Educational Integrity has sought to promote academic honesty through targeted communications addressed to both students and staff at various points throughout 2016. In consultation with the student and staff communications teams, the Office is now developing an ongoing communications plan that identifies key points in the academic calendar to target specific messages to staff and students regarding academic honesty. This communication work will continue past the life of the implementation program and be managed by the Office.

In addition, the implementation program delivered a project, run by the Director of Student Services that sought to understand whether some of the benefits associated with honour codes elsewhere could be realised at the University. This project recently presented its final report to SEG-Education which made several recommendations, including that the visibility of the existing Student Code of Conduct be raised in preference to introducing a separate pledge or similar, that clear and straightforward communication on academic dishonesty be provided to students, that the University move away from mark-based grading for senior-level students, and that a program to acknowledge and celebrate students’ contribution to the academic life of the University be developed. Implementation of these recommendations will be taken forward by either the Education Portfolio or referred to the University Strategy culture taskforce for further work. Within the portfolio, the Office is working to develop some of the communication material that students suggested, and the suggestions regarding assessment are being incorporated into the broader assessment project.
2. Detection and Reporting

One of the key findings of the Taskforce was that there was clear and clearly significant underreporting and under detection at the University. Considerable inconsistencies in the data provided to the Academic Board by faculties were noted, including that faculties had not always provided reports as required to the Board, and often had be asked to review the data. Vastly different practices in reporting, in recordkeeping, in detection and in findings made it impossible to rely on the Academic Board data as a complete picture of incident rates at the University (appendix 2). At the time of the Taskforce’s investigation the only faculty that held reliable, historical records of cases was the Business School, and this data was relied on in the Taskforce reports.

2.1 Online reporting and recordkeeping

To address this situation, the Taskforce recommended that a best-practice system developed in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FASS) be expanded to the whole of the University, with the assistance of the University’s Archives and Records Management team. This work was completed during 2015, with changes being made to the FASS system to align the new, University-wide system with the new policy developed in response to the Taskforce’s recommendations, and to integrate it with University systems to record and generate demographic data for the purposes of trend analysis. By semester 1 2016, the new system was in place, with Educational Integrity Coordinators, Nominated Academics and educational integrity officers (professional staff) in each faculty trained in its use.

The system uses existing University enterprise systems (HPRM and Outlook) to manage the reporting and recordkeeping workflows. Examiners report a case via an online form and can upload any relevant supporting documentation (such as a Turnitin report). The system then integrates with other University systems to draw on existing demographic data and to determine the correct faculty decision-maker for the case, and presents the case to that decision-maker (usually the faculty’s Education Integrity Coordinator (EIC), though some larger faculties have several Nominated Academics who assist the EIC). At this stage, the EIC may choose to dismiss the case, send the student to a development course, or ask the student to attend an interview. The system enables the educational integrity officer within the faculty to easily manage the communications with the student, and ensures that the subsequent decision of the decision-maker is recorded accurately within the case records. This also provides for any prior cases involving the student, from any faculty of the University, to be reviewed by the decision maker at the appropriate point in the process. If a case is dismissed, no permanent record is made on the student file.

Both the Office of Educational Integrity and faculties have access to the system such that they can view the number and status of cases in progress. The Office can also review cases across the University, and produce reports that draw on the metadata recorded about the cases – for example, the enrolment status (domestic/international/full-time/part-time), faculty of enrolment, or unit of study of enrolment, sex, or course block (a proxy for year of study) of the student involved. Recidivism can also be tracked, as well as whether or not Turnitin was used by the examiner who found the case. These statistics, along with others, are reported by the Office on a semesterly basis. An example of some of these data, and a comparison with the data that was available to the Taskforce in 2015, is at appendix 2.

Following the roll-out of the reporting and recordkeeping system for coursework students at the start of semester 1 2016, three more expansions of the system were put in place. The first was for the examinations office. Prior to the end of semester 1 2016, if invigilators detected a problem during a University examination, they reported it via a paper form to the examinations office, who then sent this form to the examining academic. Steps taken after that point varied by faculty and by staff member, and no consistent reporting or approach was in place. Expansion of the online integrity reporting system to the examinations office in time for the exam period of semester 1 2016 meant that these paper forms are now scanned by the examinations office and sent to the same faculty decision-maker as the coursework incidents, which ensures both visibility of these reports at the faculty level and consistency of decision-making with the during-semester incidents.
The second two expansions addressed HDR student integrity management. The first of these responded to the Taskforce’s recommendation 7, which was to introduce an integrity check at the point of thesis submission, to be carried out by the HDR Administration Office (HDRAC). Where issues are found during this check, the HDRAC can now enter the details of this into a similar online form to the coursework system, and the case will be forwarded to the appropriate faculty decision maker (in this case, the Associate Dean HDR). From there, the faculty may either dismiss the case and send to examination; refer to the faculty committee for decision on inappropriate academic practice, or refer to the Research Integrity Office. Of the 305 HDR theses checked since the system was introduced on June 30, 10 cases have been referred by the HDRAC to the appropriate Associate Dean, 8 of these have been sent to examination, 1 to the faculty committee and 1 to the Research Integrity Office for investigation.

The final piece of the system, as recommended by the Taskforce, is due to come online at the end of 2016 and will address any integrity issues that may occur during a HDR students’ candidature. This will provide a reporting mechanism for any issues found during the first year milestone integrity check, also a part of the Taskforce’s recommendation 7.

2.2 Investigation, remediation and penalties
During 2016 the Registrar portfolio worked to develop a new Student Discipline Rule, in response to the Taskforce’s recommendation 8, which removes the duplication of process identified by the Taskforce. This Rule was endorsed by the University Senate on 31 October. The Rule provides for:
- a more straightforward process for referral and investigation;
- extended appeal timeframes that are consistent with legislation;
- procedural fairness, transparency and consistency in relation to penalties.

It also removes the need for the Vice-Chancellor to approve investigations and give permission for the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar to make referrals, allows the Registrar to investigate and impose penalties, requires that the prescription of penalties be escalated to the Vice-Chancellor and/or Student Disciplinary Appeals Committee only in the most serious of cases, and puts an end to the inherent double-handling by various administrative units across the University. Once in effect, this Rule should provide for a swifter and more efficient process.

Work with the Office of Parliamentary Counsel to repeal chapter 8 of the University of Sydney By-Law 1999 (as amended), the student discipline provisions, is now underway, with the Rule due to come into effect on the date of repeal by the Parliament of NSW.

Recommendation 8 also encompassed the expansion of the Learning Centre development courses, addressed in section 1.1, and the expansion of the recordkeeping workflow, discussed in section 2.1 to provide a single point of entry and a tracking process for all student misconduct case management, including non-academic misconduct and misconduct by research students. In consultation during the implementation stage, the Registrar portfolio indicated that they did not feel it would be desirable to use the same system to track non-academic misconduct. This was therefore considered out of scope for the implementation program, though the system was expanded to research students, as indicated in section 2.1. However, as of November 2016, the Registrar portfolio advises that they are now looking to use the workflow within the Student Affairs Unit, which handles student misconduct cases. This expansion should allow seamless end-to-end handling of cases that are referred and handled under the Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015 and the new Student Discipline Rule.
3. Further Work

The work completed by the Taskforce implementation program has involved significant first steps focused on changing legislation, policy, introducing new systems, governance and other structures that can better enable the University to address student academic misconduct and plagiarism. In doing so, the University has made considerable progress towards a modern, streamlined and consistent approach to this issue, but has by no means finished its work. The most critical reforms are undoubtedly the establishment of the Office of Educational Integrity, which can carry on the University-level coordination, support and momentum established by the Taskforce and its work, and the reporting/recordkeeping workflow, which will continue to produce live and reliable data. These data can form the basis for not only reviewing and adjusting the policy settings and structures of the University as needed, but can also feed into the University’s nascent efforts to establish Learning Analytics tools that can help us identify students at risk, and improve our educational offerings across the board. Importantly, they also enable the monitoring of real time data during a semester by the Office, faculties, schools and individual academics, allowing for changes and educational interventions to be made in a timely fashion.

3.1 Consistency of decision-making

A key challenge identified during 2016 has been the widely differing views held across the University as to the severity of various offences, to be determined under the policy, and the application of appropriate sanctions. The Office of Educational Integrity has identified this issue as part of its coordination role, and has begun to hold conversations with Educational Integrity Coordinators to seek views. In 2017, the Office will recommend that the Academic Board establish a working group that seeks to address this issue to ensure students experience parity in decision-making across faculties. After only one year of data and operation at the coursework level, it is already possible to see patterns emerging between faculties in their finding of cases, and this should be addressed swiftly. While the number of cases identified to date at the HDR level are much smaller, the Research Integrity Office has also noted that decision-making in this area should be reviewed periodically to also ensure procedural fairness for students across faculties and consistency with policy. Another advantage of reviewing matters is to identify areas where students are consistently breaching the University’s Research Code and to target education programs to address these areas. This review is more likely to take place after 2 – 3 years of data can be compared, as the numbers here are so minimal. Despite the small numbers, as the Taskforce identified, intervention in this space is critical to maintaining the University’s reputation and ensuring what can be serious issues regarding research grants and ethics are detected and addressed.

3.2 Using the data – ongoing review and recalibration

The data now available to the University is much more comprehensive and reliable than anything held previously. As this dataset grows, it will become possible for the first time to use it to develop models that may be able to predict, for example, where early intervention can address students at risk prior to an incident occurring. Importantly, this dataset will also allow the University to periodically review the effectiveness of its current educational interventions, such as those introduced by the Taskforce, and to adjust those to address any emerging issues. This data can also be used by individual unit coordinators to identify assessments with a high degree of risk, by faculties to inform faculty-level strategies, and by the Academic Board to review and set policy.

Key issues to track over the coming years will include rates of recidivism, especially where students have been diverted to a further development course in place of a penalty, and the trend that has emerged from the semester 1 2016 data which suggests international students are in fact more likely to be found in breach of policy than domestic students. This last is in contrast to the findings of the Taskforce in 2015, where only Business School data could be relied upon, and only a small difference between the two cohorts was seen. In 2017, the Office of Educational Integrity will undertake further analysis on this issue and work with faculties to find ways to address it.
Yearly reporting on overall University trends will be provided by the Office to the Academic Board, with faculties also providing their own annual reports that utilise the data at a local level and discuss the measures taken within the faculty to address the issues encountered, and those planned in future. It is recommended that the University Senate also consider requesting an annual report, through the Senate Education and Research Committee.

3.3 Ongoing culture change

As noted above, the work of the Taskforce and its implementation program have been critical in setting in place the framework and systems to better address the issue of student academic misconduct. As noted by the Taskforce, however, peer and institutional culture are major drivers of student behaviour and as in any large institution, changes to culture are long-term ambitions. Significant steps towards this have been taken during 2016, but the work to address issues such as assessment structure and volume, for example, will require longer-term efforts. The work in implementing the University Strategy 2016-2020 will be key here, as will the communications plan to be maintained and enacted by the Office of Educational Integrity, along with the other work of the Office. It is significant that, like the Taskforce itself, the implementation of the Taskforce’s recommendation was a coordinated, whole-of-University effort, with people from many different parts of the University contributing their expertise, time and passion (appendix 3). This goodwill is indicative of the importance afforded to this issue by the University community and provides a good base from which to work in ensuring the culture of the University remains one which champions academic honesty and integrity as a key value of our institution.

3.4 Integration with University Strategy 2016-2020

The University Strategy 2016-2020 outlines several initiatives for changes to the University’s educational offerings that align well with many of the recommendations made by the Taskforce. The refreshed professional learning environment is a key part of supporting our staff, including to embed educational integrity within their teaching and assessment. The new Graduate Qualities include an integrated professional, ethical and personal identity, and staff are working through the curriculum reform process to ensure that this is embedded across the undergraduate curriculum, such that students can be assessed on their achievement of the Graduate Qualities at the end of their degree. During 2017, the DVC Education will lead University-wide discussion on the development of a rubric to measure the extent to which the graduate qualities have been achieved and this will also incorporate opportunities for students to self-assess. The volume and integrity of assessment will also be reviewed as part of the University Strategy, and the change to the new curriculum framework, particularly in the liberal studies degrees, which emphasises the importance and centrality of a coherent major which develops expertise in a field of study, should see a move away from considering assessment at a unit of study level and towards a holistic view of how to undertake authentic assessment of learning outcomes.

3.5 Leadership in the field

The Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce, its two reports and the implementation of the Taskforce’s recommendations represents a significant step-change in the University of Sydney’s approach to student academic misconduct. In particular, the new reporting and recordkeeping system is unique to the University, purpose-built using enterprise systems through the ingenuity of our staff. This system affords us data that can drive much deeper understanding and long-term change across the University and allow us to continually adjust to a changing landscape. Starting in late 2015, the University has been participating in sector-wide efforts to address issues of student academic misconduct, and sharing the knowledge it has gained through the Taskforce process. In recognition of the University’s leadership in this field, in 2017 the University will host the Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity, where we plan to showcase the Taskforce and the new governance, systems and processes that have been established as a result.
Appendix 1 - Recommendations of the two Taskforce reports

1. Education
Approaches to delivering academic honesty and information about the University’s relevant policies vary widely among faculties. There is a need for more consistency across the University, and to ensure students engage with the material and understand their responsibilities early in their studies.

- Academic honesty education oriented towards rigorous tertiary study should be embedded in the first year curriculum with at least one tutorial or lecture session in a first year unit of every course (undergraduate and postgraduate) given over to training in academic honesty matters specific to that discipline, such that each student receives this training. These should ideally be integrated with an online component.
- The University should introduce a small number of endorsed university-wide academic honesty education modules and require students to complete these. Online best-practice modules managed through the learning management system are currently in use in Science and Business and these should be adapted, endorsed and promoted for use in other faculties.
- There should be early focus in every curriculum on written communication skills. Students should complete an early assignment that is scaffolded and teaches referencing, proper paraphrasing, and other appropriate techniques for their discipline, with appropriate feedback.
- Consistent information on University policy should be quickly and easily available to staff and students.

2. Assessment
Assessment and curriculum design form a key part of prevention strategies. A global review of our assessment strategy is an implicit part of the Education Strategy paper. The recommendations here are intended to complement that review and should be implemented so as to align with the University’s strategic direction in education. Ensuring the academic integrity of a unit of study can best be done through using assessment techniques that are authentic and difficult to cheat. Section 2.3 explores this issue in more detail and outlines some best-practice assessment types.

- Each unit of study should specifically and formally address how academic integrity will be assured and this should be documented at each point of approval by the Faculty. Assurance of academic integrity for existing units of study should be done through ongoing review or through a School or Faculty stocktake. Such assurance may take the form of a formal plan for each unit, a faculty assessment matrix, or statements integrated into the unit-approval template. Assurance of academic integrity must canvas the range of possible breaches, including plagiarism, ghost-writing, receiving or passing on inappropriate knowledge of examinations, inappropriate collusion and other forms of academic dishonesty. Unit of study coordinators should have responsibility for continuously reviewing the academic integrity risk within the unit as part of the ongoing review of the unit. Faculties should ensure that processes exist at the faculty level for review of academic integrity as part of the ongoing review and approval of new and amended units of study.
- The Academic Board should be asked to consider policy requiring each faculty to develop assessment guidelines that give consideration to the degree of risk inherent in each assessment type used within that faculty. Guidelines on best-practice assessment to assure academic integrity should be developed, and these should be maintained by the Office of Educational Integrity within the Education Portfolio (see recommendation 4).
- Review of assessment practices and policy undertaken by faculties and as part of the Education Strategy should include formal consideration of assurance of academic integrity (including top-down approaches working across the curriculum such as capstone assessments of learning outcomes and graduate qualities) along with broader issues such as the number of assessments across the curriculum.
3. Recordkeeping

Essential to the ability to deal appropriately with cases of academic dishonesty and misconduct is more consistent recordkeeping and a searchable recordkeeping system. The records kept should be for notifications, investigations, findings, and, if appropriate, appeals and appeal outcomes that can assist in detecting cases of repeated dishonesty and misconduct. Improved and automated reporting capability will also assist in detecting and addressing trends while further reducing faculty workloads.

- Use a simple recordkeeping technology that reduces workload for academics but ensures all records are kept centrally. An example of a best practice system already used in the University is in section 2.5.
- Provide an accessible, searchable database to allow staff to check quickly and easily for previous offences. Ideas for how to develop such a system are in section 2.5.

4. Coordination and Support

There is a clear need for the University to provide a clear point of contact and support for staff and students in matters related to coursework academic integrity (including Honours theses and other theses completed as part of coursework programs). It is recommended that a liaison point and responsibility centre in the form of an Office of Educational Integrity be established and managed within the Education Portfolio. This would liaise with and complement the Office of Research Integrity, though would be lighter in terms of resources and budgetary implications. Through this office or liaison point, the Education Portfolio would:

- Champion and promote academic integrity for coursework students in the University.
- Serve as a point of contact and coordination for matters concerning academic integrity.
- Lead the development and implementation across the University of practices promoting academic integrity.
- Provide academic and relevant professional staff with professional learning and support relevant to academic integrity.
- Support the development and use of learning resources and learning experiences for students that promote academic integrity, including the University-endorsed online education modules mentioned in Recommendation 1.
- Monitor trends within the University and the higher education sector relevant to academic integrity and use these to inform the development of educational materials, policies, and so forth.

5. Policy Changes

A number of changes to University policies will be necessary to address the current situation and to enact the recommendations made above. Among those to be considered are:

- Allow Nominated Academics to send students they believe committed only minor negligent plagiarism to further education courses and require appropriate follow-up (such as assignment resubmission) without a meeting if the student so chooses (such cases would still be reported through the online record system).
- Consider whether the distinction between negligent and dishonest plagiarism is useful in all cases when education is provided and mandatory; student ignorance is no defence under other policies, and the code of conduct requires them to be aware of all policies pertaining to them.
- Consider whether Recycling should remain part of the current academic dishonesty policy, for coursework students.
- Consider whether students should have a duty to report dishonesty behavior.
- Change the Coursework policy to require Turnitin to be used for all appropriate written assignments.
- Change the Teaching and Learning Policy to require integrity assurance measures to be part of assessments for each unit of study.
- Develop a set of guidelines on proofreading and editing for coursework, comparable to those for Higher Degrees by Research.
- Provide improved guidelines on educationally beneficial cooperation vs. collusion.
- Ensure the intention of the policy around the appointment and identification of Nominated Academics within each faculty is clear.
• Review examinations policy and procedures.

6. Staff Support
Under-reporting and under-detection occur across the University, partly as a result of a lack of training and support for staff in dealing with issues of academic dishonesty. To address this, the University should develop a suite of resources, carefully designed to provide support to academics rather than burdensome compliance and additional administration, and overseen by the Office of Educational Integrity, that achieves the following.

• An online searchable, and easily accessible handbook that provides, in one place, information on academic dishonesty and plagiarism policies and procedures, guidelines, examples, and where appropriate, case studies.
• Modules in the induction and end-of-probation program for all categories of new academic staff that include information on detection, reporting, relevant policies and support services available to students. Such modules should be part of mandatory induction for sessional staff and provision should be made in the remuneration and work allocation of sessional staff for such induction. Reporting of suspected academic dishonesty cases should be factored into assessment time for all staff.
• Developmental programs including, where appropriate, mentoring for Nominated Academics to foster a supportive community of practice.
• Workshops and resources to support unit of study coordinators on good assessment design, review and continuous improvement that ensures academic integrity.
• Developmental opportunities and training for professional support staff within faculties who may assist with processing student academic dishonesty cases. Such opportunities should allow for the pooling of staff time and resources by smaller faculties, including locating some functions in divisions or pan-faculty groups.
• Appropriate modules within the Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching that focus on assessment methodologies to ensure academic integrity and effective teaching.

7. Student Research Misconduct
Reported incidence of research misconduct in theses for research higher degrees is low, but any incidence at all is unacceptable. Steps to address student research misconduct are outlined below.

• Introduce an integrity check (eg. with similarity detection software) as part of a centralised submission process to be carried out by the Higher Degree by Research administration office (a more detailed outline on how this would work is in section 2.5).
• Set clear and high standards for attribution for higher degree by research students, disallowing any revision of work found to be plagiarised once the thesis has been submitted for examination.
• Require the first milestone during a higher degree by research candidacy to include an integrity check as part of the progress review process.
• Introduce a clear policy obligation for supervisors to refer to the faculty cases of gross or repeated failure to attribute work in thesis drafts or other written products created during the degree candidature. This would be in addition to the obligation to refer any other type of misconduct, including data fabrication and mismanagement or any other potential research misconduct.
• Simplify, draw together into a single set of procedures and make easily available to students and supervisors all policy requirements related to academic dishonesty by higher degree by research students.
• Ensure all student researchers are fully trained in responsible recordkeeping practices in line with the Research Data Management Policy and introduce systematic and regular checking of research data at the point of submission, to assess both content and storage methods and location.
• Include a check on research data and compliance with the project’s Data Management Plan as part of the review of the student project plan. A conflicts of interest check should also be done at this stage.
• Ensure that the rollout of the LabArchives tool is appropriately overseen and that use of the platform is restricted to University email addresses so that data stored can be linked to University IDs.
• Require Associate Deans (Research) to urgently develop the local provisions required by clause 8(3) of the Research Data Management Policy to give effect to that policy for disciplines within their faculty. At the latest this should be completed by mid-2016.

8. Investigation, Remediation and Penalties
Reform the process for dealing with academic misconduct to avoid unnecessary delays and review the remediation steps available to Nominated Academic once a finding of academic dishonesty or plagiarism has been made. The following is recommended to improve consistency, fairness and efficiency of process.

• Remove the student discipline provisions from the University of Sydney By-law 1999 (as amended) and introduce a student discipline Rule of Senate to give the University greater control and allow greater flexibility to change the process in the future as the need arises. The new Rule should provide a simpler process whereby the Vice-Chancellor is only involved as the decision-maker (if at all) in the most serious cases involving possible long-term suspension or exclusion from the University and only after an investigation has been completed. Some other points for consideration in the proposed new process are outlined in section 3.3.
• Amend the Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism in Coursework Policy to permit cases of academic dishonesty and plagiarism to be referred to the Registrar as academic dishonesty rather than academic misconduct, removing the obligation for the Registrar to start time-consuming and onerous misconduct proceedings under the By-law when these are not warranted, and giving him or her the ability to apply prescribed academic penalties for academic dishonesty without invoking the student discipline provisions (see section 3.3 for more detail).
• Clarify that cases of fraudulent medical practitioner certificates should be sent directly to the Registrar, while cases involving plagiarism, collusion, recycling, exam cheating etc. should be dealt with by a Nominated Academic first. Require the examinations unit to send any concerns about exam cheating to the relevant faculty’s Nominated Academic, not the unit of study coordinator.
• Consider giving the Registrar authority to impose a ‘fail due to dishonesty’ grade that would be recorded on the student transcript, following the outcome of proceedings described in the new student discipline Rule.
• Expand the recordkeeping workflow to provide a single point of entry and a tracking process for all student misconduct case management including non-academic misconduct and misconduct by research students.
• Offer a centrally-run development course through the Learning Centre that Nominated Academics and research supervisors can send students to for further education on academic dishonesty matters.

9. Culture
Peer and institutional culture are major drivers of student behaviour, with peer culture exerting a dominant influence. Communication is key to ensuring that the policy and process changes described in this and the first report of the Taskforce effect broader cultural change at the University. A principle of openness, while respecting appropriate privacy considerations, should be adopted. The following steps are recommended.

• The results of student academic misconduct cases referred by faculties should be routinely reported by the Student Affairs Unit back to faculties, including the time taken to progress these, and an explanation of the outcome and decision-making process. Such reporting should be built into the process flow of the new recordkeeping system.
• The annual Academic Board reports of de-identified student academic misconduct statistics should be publicised to the University community as a whole.
• An ongoing communication plan, that identifies and targets optimal moments in the academic year for communication on academic dishonesty issues to staff and students should be maintained by the Office of Educational Integrity. For example, the Office of Educational
Integrity, could hold regular University-wide conversations on values and integrity, including through the University’s culture conversations around the University Strategy 2016-2020. This is discussed further in section 4.

- Consider, through consultation with students and staff, reviewing education and awareness around the Student Code of Conduct in order to gain some of the documented advantages experienced in honour-code universities. These are discussed further in Chapter 4.
- The University should continue to revise and clarify policy and procedures and review resourcing of critical areas so as to ensure consistent, standardised and efficient processes.
Appendix 2 – Sample data from the online reporting / recordkeeping workflow and the data available to the Taskforce

1. Example of incident reporting data as presented to the Academic Board prior to the introduction of the new, University-wide reporting system.

### IN 2013, THE FACULTY RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING NUMBER OF ALLEGATIONS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course level</th>
<th>#allegations</th>
<th>#allegations upheld</th>
<th># referred to the Registrar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERGRADUATE</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTGRADUATE</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>

*P=plagiarism  *AD=academic dishonesty  *NP=negligent plagiarism  *DP=dishonest plagiarism

The above figures represent:

1.4% of enrolled **undergraduate** students having had allegations of plagiarism or academic dishonesty made against them;
1.4% of enrolled **undergraduate** students having allegations upheld;

1.2% of enrolled **postgraduate** students having had allegations of plagiarism or academic dishonesty made against them,
1.2% of enrolled **postgraduate** students having allegations upheld.

### IN 2015, THE FACULTY RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING NUMBER OF ALLEGATIONS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course level</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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*P=plagiarism  *AD=academic dishonesty  *NP=negligent plagiarism  *DP=dishonest plagiarism

The above figures represent:

2.25% of enrolled **undergraduate** students having had allegations of plagiarism or academic dishonesty made against them,
2.25% of enrolled **undergraduate** students having allegations upheld;

0.8% of enrolled **postgraduate** students having had allegations of plagiarism or academic dishonesty made against them,
0.8% of enrolled **postgraduate** students having allegations upheld.
2. Example of incident reporting data enabled by the new system
The following figures and tables have been extracted from the *Educational Integrity Trend Report Semester 1, 2016*, the full version of which is available for download from the Educational Integrity intranet site.

**Semester 1, 2016: Incidents reported by week vs cumulative Incidents reported**

**Semester 1, 2016: Incidents reported by outcome**

- No Impropriety (495)
- Plagiarism (289)
- Potential Misconduct (Academic) (15)
- Outcome Pending (142)
- Development Completed (414)
- Academic Dishonesty (525)
- Potential Misconduct (Other) (2)
**Semester 1, 2016: Incidents reported by level of coursework qualification**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Total Incidents</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Postgraduate</th>
<th>Total Incidents</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
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<td>125</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARTS</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
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<td>BUSI</td>
<td>447</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>DENT</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGI</td>
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<td>72.2%</td>
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<td>79.8%</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>48.7%</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS</td>
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<td>37.0%</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHAR</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCIE</td>
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<td>93.1%</td>
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<td>SCVA</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1882</strong></td>
<td><strong>1132</strong></td>
<td><strong>60.1%</strong></td>
<td><strong>750</strong></td>
<td><strong>39.9%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Semester 1, 2016: Incidents reported by year of candidature (course block)**

- Year 1: 25%
- Year 2: 11%
- Year 3: 1%
- Year 4: 2%
- Year 5: 61%
- Year 6: 0%
Semester 1, 2016: Ratio of domestic versus international course enrolments

- 29% Domestic
- 71% International

Semester 1, 2016: Ratio of reported incidents involving domestic and international students

- 52% Domestic
- 49% International
### Appendix 3 – Contributors to the Taskforce Implementation Program

**Executive Sponsors:**
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Professor Pip Pattison
Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar Professor Tyrone Carlin
General Counsel, Mr Richard Fisher

**Academic Lead** – Associate Professor Peter McCallum

**Program Manager** – Dr Leah Schwartz

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<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Academic Lead</th>
<th>Project Manager</th>
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<td>Academic Honesty Education Module</td>
<td>Dr Caleb Owens; Faculty of Science</td>
<td>Helen Drury, Mary-Helen Ward; Educational Innovation</td>
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<td>Turnitin LMS rollout</td>
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<td>Colin Lowe, Ricky Connor; Educational Innovation Simon French; Office of the DVCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of Educational Integrity</td>
<td>Professor Pip Pattison; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)</td>
<td>Simon French; Office of the DVCE</td>
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<td>A/Prof Peter McCallum; Chair of the Academic Board</td>
<td>Dr Leah Schwartz; Office of the VC and Principal</td>
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<td>Online reporting system for coursework</td>
<td>A/Prof Jennifer Barrett; Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences</td>
<td>May Robertson; Office of the General Counsel</td>
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<td>Student Code of Conduct Survey and Recommendations</td>
<td>Professor Tyrone Carlin; Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar</td>
<td>Jordi Austin; Director Student Services</td>
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<td>Mandy Baric, Registrar Portfolio Sarah Heesom; Consultant Solicitor</td>
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<td>Staff support module</td>
<td>Professor Adam Bridgeman; Office of the DVCE</td>
<td>Dr Amani Bell; Educational Innovation</td>
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<td>Research Data Management</td>
<td>A/Prof Gareth Denyer; Faculty of Science and Office of the DVC Research</td>
<td>Grant Cruchley; Office of the DVC Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations Policies</td>
<td>Professor Tyrone Carlin; Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar</td>
<td>Brendon Nelson; Deputy Registrar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff Roadshow Presenters (Feb – March 2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Department/Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor Pip Pattison</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor Peter McCallum</td>
<td>Director, Education Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Adam Bridgeman</td>
<td>Director, Educational Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Caleb Owens</td>
<td>Faculty of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor Wendy Davis</td>
<td>Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor Jennifer Barrett</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts and Social Science</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Non-Confidential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Author</strong></th>
<th>Tristan Enright, Manager, Educational Integrity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reviewer/Approver</strong></td>
<td>A/Prof Peter McCallum, Director, Education Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paper title</strong></td>
<td>Educational Integrity Annual Reporting Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To seek approval for an enhanced procedure for annual educational integrity reporting and faculty report templates for the 2016 reporting cycle and future reporting cycles.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee approve:
1. the enhanced annual educational integrity reporting procedure described in this submission
2. the faculty report template for the 2016 reporting cycle (see Attachment 1)
3. the faculty report template for the 2017 and subsequent reporting cycles (see Attachment 2).

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The *Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015* (the Policy) requires faculties to submit a report in March each year to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee (ASPC) of the Academic Board summarising the number of allegations of academic dishonesty or plagiarism made in the previous year relative to a number of variables (e.g., enrolment type, international or domestic status, and gender). Faculties are also required to report on the steps being taken to address issues of concern emerging from the relevant data and to ensure compliance with the Policy. Much of the data faculties will need to produce these reports is captured within the new reporting and recordkeeping system introduced in Semester 1, 2016. However, requiring faculties to report on this data independently of one another potentially endangers the development of an institution-wide perspective on the incidence of plagiarism and academic dishonesty within the University’s coursework programs.

To assist, it is proposed that the Office of Educational Integrity (the Office) prepare an institution-level report for concurrent submission with faculty annual reports. Faculties will then be in a position to focus their efforts on considering the available data and developing initiatives to address faculty-specific issues, which will provide the basis of their reports to the ASPC for the 2016 reporting cycle (see Attachment 1). Once considered by the ASPC, the Office will then seek to combine its annual report and those of the faculties to produce an integrated, institution-wide educational integrity annual report for 2016 to be submitted to the University Senate Education and Research Committee as per their request in November 2016. As faculties will need reasonable time within which to conduct analysis and consider their plans, it is also proposed that the reporting deadline for the 2016 cycle be extended by one month to April 2017. A more streamlined faculty report format can then be instantiated for the 2017 and subsequent reporting cycles (see Attachment 2).

**BACKGROUND / CONTEXT**

Following the investigations conducted by the Vice-Chancellor’s Taskforce on Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism (the Taskforce) in 2015, a new system for reporting potential instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty was implemented in Semester 1, 2016. This system was introduced as a means of overcoming the inconsistent and irregular recordkeeping practices identified by the Taskforce and which had formerly prevented the University from ascertaining with confidence the incidence of academic dishonesty and plagiarism in its coursework programs. At the same time, a number of significant reforms were made to the relevant policy and procedures to more clearly articulate the responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved in maintaining the University’s culture of academic integrity and reputation for academic excellence.
As a result of this suite of reforms, each faculty is now required to more proactively and openly manage the integrity of its coursework programs. This includes providing students with discipline-specific education on academic honesty, particularly in the first year of candidature. It also involves monitoring and overseeing the development and review of unit of study assessment to ensure consistent academic integrity standards throughout the faculty and to ensure that due consideration is given to mitigating risks to these standards, including the mandatory use of similarity detection software for the submission of all text-based written assignments. Faculties are also required to submit a report to the ASPC in March each year on the number of allegations made in the previous year, the outcome of cases, and the steps being taken to promote the academic integrity of their programs, including on the basis of the information generated through the new centralised reporting and recordkeeping system.

ISSUES

The annual faculty reporting requirements outlined in the the Policy extend those of previous iterations, principally by requiring faculties to report on the number of allegations raised according to a number of variables:

- enrolment type (part-time/full-time);
- international or domestic status;
- gender;
- award course; and
- year of award course.

While data on these variables has been captured in the central reporting system, the system was not initially set up to capture information on the award course in which a student alleged to have engaged in impropriety is enrolled. A series of system enhancements were sought in late 2016, so data on the award course of enrolment is now being captured. However, it is proposed that this variable be excluded for the 2016 reporting cycle as this data is not currently available for allegations raised in 2016 and the effort required to backfill the relevant records exceeds the time and resources available to do so.

A second issue arises from the continuation of the practice of having faculties report on allegations independently of one another. In short, this practice potentially undermines the development of the kind of institution-wide perspective envisaged by the Taskforce and evidenced in the Educational Integrity Trend Report, Semester 1 2016 (the Trend Report) submitted for noting to the ASPC at its meeting of 12 October 2016. It may also obscure University-wide trends that may require a coordinated, whole-of-institution response, which was a hallmark of the work undertaken by the Taskforce and throughout 2016.

To ensure the gains of the past year are built upon, it is proposed that the Office prepare an institution-level annual report akin to the Trend Report. This annual report would then be submitted to the ASPC concurrently with faculty reports for noting and discussion. As requested by the University Senate Education and Research Committee (SERC) at its meeting of 24 November 2016, this would then enable the Office to produce a complete, institution-wide report on educational integrity for the Senate on an annual basis by way of combining its own report with those of the faculties.

Should this procedure be approved, the burden of reporting would then be distributed between the Office and faculties, with the latter being freed up to focus on identifying and responding to specific issues encountered at the faculty-level. Consequently, it is proposed that faculties prepare a more substantial report describing in reasonable detail local initiatives to be pursued following the 2016 reporting cycle and to demonstrate compliance with the new Policy and the requirements described above (see Attachment 1). Given the nature of the associated work, it is also proposed that faculties be granted an extension of one month to the current March reporting requirement and permitted to submit their reports to the ASPC in April 2017. Once the 2016 reporting cycle has concluded, faculty reports would then return to a more streamlined format for subsequent reporting cycles in time to meet the March deadline established by the Policy (see Attachment 2).
CONSULTATION

The proposed procedure and attached faculty report templates were developed in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Director, Education Strategy, and Program Manager, Education Strategy. The procedure enhances that which is established in the Policy at the same time as giving effect to the annual reporting requirement instantiated by SERC in November 2016.

IMPLEMENTATION

To implement this procedure, the Office will prepare high-level summary tables for distribution to faculty educational integrity coordinators by the end of January 2017. The underlying data specific to each faculty will also be provided, along with data from:

- Sydney Student regarding the advertised assessment in the relevant units of study; and
- the Learning Management System (LMS) regarding the use of similarity detection software for relevant units of study with an active LMS presence.

Each faculty has discretion in developing their own internal procedures for the production of the annual report, albeit within the framework of the Policy, the reporting procedure described above, and the submission deadline established by the ASPC.

The Secretariat will be responsible for managing the submission of faculty reports by this deadline on behalf of the ASPC, with the Office assuming responsibility for the compilation of the final integrated report to be submitted subsequently to the SERC.

COMMUNICATION

The relevant reporting requirements and proposed reporting procedure will be communicated to faculty educational integrity coordinators and the University’s Associate Deans of Teaching and Learning immediately after a determination has been made by the ASPC.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Educational Integrity Faculty Report Template (2016 cycle)
Attachment 2 – Educational Integrity Faculty Report Template (2017 and subsequent cycles)
ATTACHMENT 1 – EDUCATIONAL INTEGRITY FACULTY REPORT TEMPLATE (2016)

Faculty Name Here

Educational Integrity Report 2016

Incidence of plagiarism and academic dishonesty

In 2016, the <<Faculty Name>> received <<Total S1 and S2>> unique reports of suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty. Of these:

− <<Total S1>> incidents were reported in Semester 1 and <<Total S2>> were reported in Semester 2.
− <<Total EI>> incidents were reported by the faculty’s teaching staff and <<Total EX>> were reported by the Examinations Office in relation to formal examinations.

The below table presents the final outcomes recorded as a result of the faculty’s investigation of these incidents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Impropriety</th>
<th>Development Workshop Completed</th>
<th>Plagiarism</th>
<th>Academic Dishonesty</th>
<th>Potential Misconduct (Academic)</th>
<th>Potential Misconduct (Other)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sem 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sem 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>%</td>
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<td>%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. The Office will provide the data required to complete the above.

Faculty analysis to go here. Suggested considerations:

− Reasons for proportionality of outcomes. E.g., if there were a high number of ‘no impropriety’ outcomes, what is/are the reasons for this? Were there significant differences in volume between Semester 1 and 2?
− What was the general approach taken regarding penalties applied in relation to each outcome? What considerations informed this approach?
− What impact did pursuing a specific outcome relative to others have on the timeliness of case resolution? What might the reasons be for this?

Fostering academic integrity

Education in academic honesty and writing standards

Please describe the steps being taken by the faculty over and above completion of the Academic Honesty Education Module (AHEM) to communicate the University’s academic honesty standards to its students and to provide them with discipline-specific education in academic writing and referencing conventions, particularly in the first year or semester of candidature.

Assessment design, risk evaluation and staff support

Please describe the steps being taken by the faculty to:

− Provide staff with opportunities to develop their understanding of University policies and procedures on academic honesty, dishonesty and plagiarism;
− Inform them of the support available to them at the faculty level; and
− Monitor the review of unit of study assessment relative to previous breaches of academic integrity and the potential risks associated with the specific assessment mix.
Detection and reporting
Please describe the steps being taken by the faculty to promote:
− The use of similarity detection software (Turnitin) for the submission of all text-based written assignments, or other prevention and detection strategies for other types of assignments; and
− Consistent and timely incident reporting practices via the University’s centralised academic dishonesty and plagiarism reporting system.

Case studies (optional)
Please describe here any novel initiatives employed in units of study, departments, disciplines, Schools, etc. related to assuring the integrity of the faculty’s courses.

Report completed on behalf of the <<Faculty Name>> by:
− Name, Role
− Name, Role
− Name, Role
Faculty Name Here

Educational Integrity Report 2017

Incidence of plagiarism and academic dishonesty

In 2016, the <<Faculty Name>> received <<Total S1 and S2>> unique reports of suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty. Of these:

− <<Total S1>> were reported in Semester 1 and <<Total S2>> were reported in Semester 2.
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Ratio % % % % % % 100.0%

N.B. The Office will provide the data required to complete the above. Faculty analysis to go here. Suggested considerations:

− Reasons for proportionality of outcomes. E.g., if there were a high number of ‘no impropriety’ outcomes, what is/are the reasons for this? Were there significant differences in volume between Semester 1 and 2?
− What was the general approach taken regarding penalties applied in relation to each outcome? What considerations informed this approach?
− What impact did pursuing a specific outcome relative to others have on the timeliness of case resolution? What might the reasons be for this?
− What steps are being taken to address any particular challenges identified by the faculty?

Case studies (optional)

Please describe here any novel initiatives employed in units of study, departments, disciplines, Schools, etc. related to assuring the integrity of the faculty’s courses.

Report completed on behalf of the <<Faculty Name>> by:

− Name, Role
− Name, Role
− Name, Role