

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

### **PART A – Preliminary**

#### **1. Commitment to academic honesty**

Academic honesty is a fundamental principle of the University as an institution devoted to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and service, and to respecting the value and dignity of each person. Conduct which breaches academic honesty attacks the integrity of learning and scholarship, contravenes academic values of respect for knowledge, scholarship and scholars, and represents a form of fraud.

#### **2. Definitions**

The following words have the following meanings in this document:

**Academic dishonesty:** behaviour which has the effect of or is designed or calculated to provide a misleading basis for admission, assessment or academic progression or any academic advantage or advancement to which the person is not entitled, and includes any conduct which constitutes a breach of the Assessment Policy.

**Assessment:** evaluation of a student's performance by written or oral examinations, assignments, presentations, thesis or other means notified in Unit Outlines. It includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) written tests and assignments;
- (b) practical work, including field or clinical work;
- (c) oral or aural examinations and tests;
- (d) any other tasks required to be completed by a student, the results of which are wholly or partly used for assessment; and
- (e) assessment conducted in any format or medium including, without limitation, paper-based, online, digital or electronic medium.

**Collusion:** occurs where a student works with others, without permission, or beyond the scope of permission granted intending to produce work which is then presented by individual students, himself or herself included, as their separate assignments and/or where the work is almost identical or mostly the work of one of them. Collusion can be a form of plagiarism.

**Course:** a program of study leading to an accredited higher education award of the University.

**Examination:** a central or School examination, defined as such in the Unit Outline. A central examination will be conducted within the formal examination period; a School examination will be conducted outside class time, and may be conducted in the formal examination period or at some other time during the relevant study period.

**Groupwork:** a formally established assessment task to be conducted by a number of students in common, resulting in a single piece of work for assessment or a number of associated pieces of work.

**Lecturer-in-Charge:** the person, nominated by the Head of School, and designated as having responsibility for coordinating the preparation of Unit Outlines and for coordinating results in accordance with School guidelines.

**Legitimate co-operation:** any constructive educational practice that aims to facilitate optimal learning outcomes through interaction between students.

**Non-award course:** a program of study leading to an award other than an accredited higher education award.

**Plagiarism:** occurs when a student intentionally presents as his/her own work the thoughts, ideas, findings or work which he/she knows to be the work of another person or persons, without acknowledgement, of the kind commonly required in academic practice, of the source.

**Recycling:** the submission for assessment of one's own work, or of work which is substantially the same, where:

- (a) the work has previously been counted towards the satisfactory completion of another unit of study credited towards another qualification; and
- (b) the Lecturer-in-Charge has not granted prior written consent for the student to reuse the work.

**Student:** includes

- (a) a person who is enrolled in a program or unit of study or research offered by or at the University;
- (b) a student of another university or other education provider who is granted temporary or ongoing rights of access to a campus or site of the University for study or research purposes;
- (c) a person who was a student at the time of any alleged breach of academic honesty.

**Unit:** a particular subject area within a course, which has a specified number of credit points.

### **3. Related documents**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- (a) Academic Regulations
- (b) Assessment Policy
- (c) Statute 10 Student Conduct and Discipline
- (d) Research and Professional Doctorate Degree Regulations.

## **PART B - Elements of Academic Honesty**

### **4. Legitimate co-operation**

- 4.1 In some units students may legitimately co-operate and collaborate on a project, sharing materials or data collected and discussing the interpretation of such material. Examples of legitimate co-operation and collaboration include:
  - (a) informal study/discussion groups;
  - (b) discussion of general themes and concepts;
  - (c) interpretation of assessment criteria; or
  - (d) strengthening and development of academic writing and/or study skills through peer assistance.
- 4.2 In some cases legitimate co-operation and collaboration may extend to researching and writing of joint projects, written works or other assessable works. However, while recognising the educational value of interaction between students, normally production of the assessable work would be the independent responsibility of each student.

### **5. Forms of academic dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty may take a number of forms. These include but are not limited to:

- (a) cheating;
- (b) plagiarism;
- (c) collusion;
- (d) recycling;
- (e) impersonating a student;
- (f) claiming credit for groupwork in circumstances when the student has not actively participated in or contributed to such work;
- (g) use of forged, false, falsified, inaccurate or incomplete documentation or data or a document taken from another source and representing it to be the work of the student;
- (h) in research: any of the above behaviour related to proposing, conducting or reporting research.

### **6. Cheating in an examination**

A student must not:

- (a) enter an examination room except as a candidate for an examination conducted in that room and then only in accordance with directions of a Supervisor or Lecturer-in-Charge or notice posted in the examination room;
- (b) cheat or attempt to cheat in any examination;
- (c) directly or indirectly assist any other student to cheat;
- (d) communicate with another student or give assistance to, or receive any communication or assistance from, any other student during an examination;
- (e) read and/or copy or attempt to read and/or copy another student's work or other materials during an examination;
- (f) do anything to assist or enable or attempt to assist or enable another student to read and/or copy work or other materials during an examination;

- (g) bring into an examination room or conceal any textbook, dictionary, calculator, computer, palm pilot, notes, manuscript, bag, mobile phone or other materials or device or means of special assistance, except those items specifically authorised for the examination by the Lecturer-in-Charge of the unit (note: valuable items, such as small purses and wallets, may be brought into the examination room but must be left on the floor adjacent to the student's desk for the duration of the examination; the Supervisor may inspect any such items);
- (h) use any electronic device (whether authorised device or not) to receive data from, or send data to, or to communicate in any way with, any other person or electronic device during the examination;
- (i) consult with another person outside the examination room during the conduct of the examination;
- (j) improperly obtain prior knowledge of an examination paper and use that knowledge in an examination;
- (k) write an examination paper outside the examination room, except with the permission of the Lecturer-in-Charge;
- (l) impersonate another person or procure impersonation in connection with any examination.

#### **6.1 Inappropriate Behaviour in Examinations**

A student must not:

- (a) cause a disturbance, annoyance to or interference with any other student;
- (b) remove any worked script or examination stationery from the examination room;
- (c) smoke in an examination room;
- (d) eat or drink in an examination room, unless specifically approved on medical grounds;
- (e) re-enter the examination room after leaving it, unless under supervision approved by the Supervisor during the full period of absence;
- (f) disobey any reasonable direction issued by a Supervisor, lecturer or other authorised person or set forth on an examination paper, writing book or any notice;
- (g) refuse or fail to answer any reasonable question asked of the student by a Supervisor.

### **7. Plagiarism**

- 7.1 Plagiarism fundamentally breaches the principle of academic honesty. It may take many forms and, whether intentional or unintentional, it is unacceptable in academic work.
- 7.2 Materials plagiarised may include any printed, electronic or audio-visual material (including computer-based material), drawings, designs, experimental results or conclusions, statistical data, computer programs or other creative work.
- 7.3 Examples of plagiarism, whether by individuals or in groupwork, include the following:
  - (a) an assessment task that is copied almost entirely from another source such as a published article, text, internet source or another student's work (or draft work);
  - (b) an assessment task that is constructed of segments drawn from one or a number of sources without attribution of the source, linked by comments produced by the student;
  - (c) summarising another person's work without acknowledgement of the source;
  - (d) failure to acknowledge indebtedness to books, articles and other sources such as the internet. Students should make it clear when they are using a direct quotation from another work. They should also indicate, by the appropriate method of footnoting or referencing, if they have used an idea or an argument which is heavily dependent on the work of another person;
  - (e) citing sources (eg texts) which the student has not read, without acknowledging the 'secondary' source from which knowledge of them has been obtained;
  - (f) in an assessment task where there was legitimate co-operation and collaborative preparatory work, submitting substantially the same final version of any material as another student; or
  - (g) in groupwork, where the group plagiarises from another group or from other sources, or
  - (h) in group work, where a student claims credit for the work of the group but has not actively participated in or contributed to such work.

**8. Collusion**

- 8.1 If individually assessable work is required to be submitted, any legitimate co-operation and collaboration should be acknowledged and the formulation of ideas and conclusions in the paper must be the independent work of each student. Any other circumstances in which a student allows another student to copy their work for the purposes of assessment, or where students work together to submit identical work or work with large components of commonality, amounts to collusion.
- 8.2 Encouraging or assisting another person to commit plagiarism is a form of collusion and may attract the same penalties which apply to plagiarism.
- 8.3 Collusion does not apply to assessment tasks submitted in accordance with groupwork guidelines provided in the Unit Outline.

**9. Recycling**

A student may not, without the prior written approval of the Lecturer-in-Charge of the unit, submit for assessment work which is the same or substantially the same as work being submitted, or which has previously been counted towards the completion of another unit undertaken towards credit towards any qualification, whether at this University or elsewhere. Where the Lecturer-in-charge of the unit approves the resubmitting of work, the source of the work must be acknowledged. The same principles and procedures apply to recycling as apply to plagiarism.

**10. Impersonation**

A student must personally undertake all work and assessment and other requirements for a unit and course. A student must not allow or procure impersonation of himself/herself in relation to any assessment task, unit or course requirement.

**11. Use of forged, false, falsified or incomplete documents**

A student must not create or use, in connection with any activity within or connected with their application for, enrolment or re-enrolment in or progression in a unit or course, or for any other purpose, forged, false or falsified documentation or data, or documentation or data which the student knows to be inaccurate or incomplete.

**12. Academic dishonesty in research**

Academic dishonesty in research includes any behaviour described in sections 6 to 11 above in relation to proposing, conducting or reporting research, and further includes –

- (a) fabricating data;
- (b) intentionally omitting reference to relevant published works of others for the purpose of implying personal discovery of new information or original analysis of data;
- (c) attributing work to others who have not in fact contributed to the research;
- (d) intentionally or negligently stating or presenting a relevant or significant falsehood or omitting information or data so as to distort what is presented;
- (e) making use of any information in breach of any duty of confidentiality associated therewith; or
- (f) intentionally and without authorisation taking or damaging any research-related property of another person or body.

*This may include, but is not limited to, apparatus, reagents, biological materials, writings, manuscripts, data, hardware, software or any other substance or device used or produced in the conduct of research.*

**PART C – Dealing with Alleged Breaches of Academic Honesty**

**13. Principles for dealing with an alleged breach of academic honesty**

Any case of alleged breach of academic honesty will be dealt with by procedures which ensure:

- (a) equity;
- (b) consistency;
- (c) procedural fairness;
- (d) timely resolution of the case; and
- (e) achievement of appropriate and effective outcomes.

In any case in which a Lecturer-in-Charge, Course Co-ordinator, Head of School, Dean or other University officer has an oral communication with a student regarding a matter under this Policy, that officer will make a written note of such communication and retain it within the appropriate file(s).

**14. Academic assessment of work which includes evidence of academic dishonesty**

- 14.1 In determining the result which a student should receive in a unit, the Head of School or Lecturer-in-Charge may consider not only the results of all work submitted for assessment but also the student's compliance with University requirements for academic honesty.

**15. Responsibility for dealing with matters of academic dishonesty**

- 15.1 Any breach of University standards of academic honesty will be dealt with in accordance with the Academic Regulations and this policy.
- 15.2 Failure to comply with the University's standards for academic honesty may lead to failure in the assessment task or failure overall in the unit or in imposition of a penalty in accordance with this policy or with Statute 10 Student Conduct and Discipline.

**16. Identification of academic dishonesty**

- 16.1 Where a Lecturer-in-Charge detects or is made aware of the possible occurrence of academic dishonesty, the Lecturer-in-Charge will arrange a consultation with the student and may then refer the matter to the Head of School for further action.
- 16.2 If the Lecturer-in-Charge believes that the student acted without the intention to deceive, or was otherwise not acting dishonestly, the Lecturer-in-Charge may:
- counsel the student by explaining referencing guidelines, providing a copy of this policy and referring the student to services available for assistance; and
  - if appropriate, issue a written warning about the consequences of breaching University policy on academic honesty.

A copy of any warning should be:

- signed and dated by both the student and the Lecturer-in-Charge;
- retained by both the student and the Lecturer-in-Charge; and
- forwarded by the Lecturer-in-Charge to the Head of School for filing.

- 16.3 If the Lecturer-in-Charge believes that the student acted with the intention to deceive, or was otherwise acting dishonestly, the Lecturer-in-Charge will immediately refer the matter to the Head of School. In doing so the Lecturer-in-Charge will provide a report on investigations undertaken and all relevant materials, viz:
- the examination paper or work submitted by the student for assessment; and
  - evidence of the basis on which the allegation is based, for example:
    - the Supervisor's report and any associated evidence;
    - reference to and preferably copies of other resources which are considered to have been plagiarised; (a printout from any internet site is appropriate, in case that site is subsequently changed); or
    - evidence of collusion or recycling.

**17. Hold on results while any allegation of academic dishonesty is investigated**

In any case in which an allegation of academic dishonesty is referred to the Head of School or Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), the student cannot withdraw from the unit and no result can be finalised for the unit until the investigations under this Policy are completed, the decision is communicated to the student, and the time for appeal has elapsed.

**18. Consideration of any allegation of academic dishonesty**

- 18.1 The Head of School will, within 10 working days of receipt of any allegation of academic dishonesty, initiate such investigations as considered appropriate.
- 18.2 If the Head of School considers that the evidence does not support the allegation, the student and the Lecturer-in-Charge or other complainant will be advised accordingly and no further action will be taken.
- 18.3 If the Head of School considers that the allegation has substance, he/she will notify the student in writing of the nature of the allegation/s and provide the student with a copy of this policy and with the opportunity to prepare and submit a written response to the Head.

Unless otherwise specified in the particular case, the student's response should be lodged within five working days of notification by the Head.

- 18.4 The Head of School may also request the student to attend for interview or provide the student with the opportunity to request an interview to discuss the allegation. At any such interview, the student may, with prior written notice to the Head of School, be accompanied by another person, other than a legal representative, who will act in the role of a neutral observer; such other person will not act in the role of advocate or spokesperson on behalf of the student, except with the specific prior permission of the Head.
- 18.5 The Head of School will make a decision on the matter within 20 working days of the date of notification of the allegation to the student.

**19. Action which may be taken by the Head of School**

- 19.1 Taking into account the outcome of the investigation, the student's level of experience, reasons for or circumstances relating to the breach of standards of academic honesty and/or other instance of such breach by the student, the Head of School may:
  - (a) dismiss the case with no further action, other than counselling the student;
  - (b) issue a written warning to the student;
  - (c) require the student to resubmit the work for assessment or to undertake additional and/or remedial work in substitution for the work submitted;
  - (d) require the student to undertake another form of assessment in lieu of the assessment work in question;
  - (e) apply a fail grade to the work, or part thereof, submitted for assessment;
  - (f) impose a maximum grade for the unit (eg a maximum grade of Pass) and/or downgrade the final grade overall in the unit;
  - (g) apply a fail grade overall in the unit; or
  - (h) refuse, cancel or annul credit for any unit;
  - (i) refer the matter to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) if the Head of School considers that awarding a fail grade in the unit is insufficient to deal with the matter.

(Note: The Head of School will access the confidential Breaches of Academic Honesty file and any information it contains regarding the student's previous history of academic dishonesty only after determining that the student is guilty of a breach in the current investigation.)

- 19.2 If a student has been found guilty of academic dishonesty on more than one occasion, the Head of School will refer the matter to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) who may
  - 
  - (a) terminate the student's enrolment in the course and exclude the student from the University for a period of up to three semesters from the date of termination; or
  - (b) impose some lesser academic penalty.

**20. Notification and recording of decision**

- 20.1 The Head of School will advise the student in writing of:
  - (a) the process undertaken during the investigation;
  - (b) the decision reached;
  - (c) the reasons for the decision; and
  - (d) available avenues of appeal.

A copy of the advice to the student will be provided to the Dean, any other relevant Head of School (eg Head of School responsible for the course in which the student is enrolled, if different), Course Co-ordinator, Lecturer-in-Charge and Student Administration.

- 20.2 The report will be filed on a confidential file on Breaches of Academic Honesty maintained in the Student Administration office on the relevant campus, with limited access. A cross reference will also be included on the personal student file.

**21. Action by Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)**

- 21.1 In the event of an allegation of academic dishonesty being referred by a Head of School to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), the Pro-Vice-Chancellor will undertake such further investigation of the case as is considered appropriate.

- 21.2 Following consideration of the case the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) may:
- (a) dismiss the case;
  - (b) refer the matter to a Discipline Committee under the Student Code of Conduct;
  - (c) terminate the student's enrolment in the course and exclude the student from the University for a period of up to three semesters from the date of termination; or
  - (d) impose some lesser academic penalty.
- 21.3 Following determination of the case, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor will advise the student in writing of:
- (a) the process undertaken during the investigation;
  - (b) the decision reached;
  - (c) the reasons for the decision; and
  - (d) available avenues of appeal.

A copy of the advice to the student will be provided to the Dean, the Head of School, Course Co-ordinator, Lecturer-in-Charge and Student Administration.

- 21.4 The report will be filed on a confidential file on Breaches of Academic Honesty maintained in the Student Administration office on the relevant campus, with limited access. A cross reference will also be included on the personal student file.

## **22. Avenues of appeal<sup>1</sup>**

### **22.1 Appeal against decision by a Head by School**

22.1.1 A student may appeal to the Dean against the decision of a Head of School, other than a decision to refer the matter to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) under Section 15(h) above.

22.1.2 An appeal must be lodged in writing within 10 working days of advice of the decision to the student. An appeal may be requested only on the grounds that published University policy or procedures have not been observed.

22.1.3 The Dean will undertake such further investigation of the case and make such determination as is considered appropriate. The Dean will advise the student in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal; such advice will outline:

- (a) the process undertaken during the investigation;
- (b) the decision reached; and
- (c) the reasons for the decision.

### **22.2 Appeal against decision by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)**

A student may appeal against the decision of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) to an Appeals Committee established under the Statute 10 Student Conduct and Discipline.

## **PART D – Code of Practice for Academic Honesty**

### **23. Introduction**

This Code of Practice sets out the general responsibilities of the University, Faculties, Schools, individual academic staff and students to ensure that academic honesty is fostered as a core value of the University.

### **24. Responsibility of University**

The University will:

- (a) ensure that its policies and procedures on academic honesty are publicised and accessible to academic staff and students;
- (b) ensure that its policies and procedures on academic honesty are implemented, applied consistently across all Faculties, and their implementation monitored;
- (c) promote best practice in the detection of academic dishonesty; and
- (d) ensure equity of all processes pertaining to academic honesty.

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<sup>1</sup> See Statement on External Avenues of Appeal or Complaint.

**25. Responsibilities of Faculties**

- 25.1 Each Faculty will:
- (a) develop strategies to ensure the implementation of the Academic Honesty Policy;
  - (b) establish and maintain appropriate procedures to oversee and monitor School and Faculty implementation of University policy, and Faculty and School procedures on academic honesty.
- 25.2 Once per year, each Faculty will prepare a report to the Faculty Board on:
- (a) School strategies for promoting academic honesty;
  - (b) the number of cases of academic dishonesty which have been handled in the relevant reporting period; and
  - (c) the manner in which breaches of academic honesty have been dealt with by Schools within the Faculty.
- 25.3 A report from each Faculty Board will be submitted to Academic Board annually.

**26. Responsibilities of Schools**

Each School will:

- (a) inform students of their requirements by providing style guides for the presentation of assignments and other assessment tasks. These must specify the styles of writing appropriate for different tasks and the form/s of referencing required for each task;
- (b) ensure that all academic staff are aware of the need to introduce and reinforce student understanding of the professional and academic skills required at all course levels;
- (c) ensure that all academic staff are aware of, and provide advice to students regarding, the available sources of assistance for students seeking to develop their skills in academic writing and, in particular, preparation and presentation of assignments and other assessment tasks;
- (d) incorporate material into first year courses that will assist students to understand the meaning and practical application of academic honesty;
- (e) ensure that relevant School publications (printed and electronic) include statements which:
  - (i) make it clear that plagiarism, collusion, recycling and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable;
  - (ii) provide clear guidelines outlining what constitutes legitimate co-operation and collaboration, where it is encouraged and where it is prohibited;
  - (iii) provide clear guidelines on groupwork, especially concerning assessment and division of tasks among group members and monitoring of groupwork by academic staff, to ensure fair assessment;
- (f) implement appropriate security practices for submission and return of assessment tasks; and
- (g) maintain a register of warnings issued regarding academic dishonesty.

**27. Responsibilities of academic staff**

Academic staff will:

- (a) ensure that they are familiar with current University policies and Faculty and School procedures with respect to academic honesty, and apply them consistently;
- (b) design a realistic assessment regime, preferably one which is coordinated across the course to prevent undue workload pressure on students at key times of the academic year;
- (c) clearly explain in Unit Outlines academic expectations, writing protocols and referencing styles appropriate to the particular academic discipline and to required assessment tasks;
- (d) provide feedback to and be available for consultation with students, identifying gaps in knowledge and learning skills, and referring students to appropriate sources of assistance to improve these skills;
- (e) provide appropriate conditions for groupwork and make clear to students the distinction between groupwork, levels of legitimate co-operation and collaboration, and requirements for individual work;
- (f) be aware of and responsive to different cultural backgrounds of students, especially in relation to the use of the work of others and to writing skills; and
- (g) provide students with early notification and fair warning if they believe any individual or group may be at risk of breaching academic honesty standards.

**28. Rights of students**

Students have a right to:

- (a) have access to University policies and Faculty and School procedures with regard to academic honesty;
- (b) be provided with clear guidelines on academic writing and referencing styles required in each School/discipline;
- (c) be provided with clear information on assessment requirements in each Unit Outline, especially concerning aspects involving individual and/or collective assessment;
- (d) be provided with clear guidelines relating to all aspects of groupwork, its operation, monitoring and assessment;
- (e) be provided with clear guidelines on the level of co-operation and collaboration permitted within each assessment component;
- (f) expect consistent application of academic honesty policies and practices at University, Faculty and School levels;
- (g) receive feedback which assists them to review their work;
- (h) receive early notification or fair warning in any case in which an academic believes a student or group of students may be at risk of breaching the University's standards of academic honesty; and
- (i) participate in appropriate learning experiences which are offered in order to improve their competency in writing and study skills, understanding of the requirements of group work, and development of personal attributes, in particular, ethical behaviour.

**29. Responsibilities of students**

Students have a responsibility to:

- (a) become familiar with University policies and procedures which govern the conduct of students within the University and to conduct themselves in a manner which is consistent with those policies and procedures;
- (b) understand and act in accordance with the University's published principles of academic honesty in the preparation, conduct and submission of assessment tasks;
- (c) seek clarification, if necessary, to ensure they clearly understand assessment conditions and requirements, and appropriate writing, referencing and assessment practice in their units and course(s);
- (d) submit only work which is their own, or which properly acknowledges the thoughts, ideas, findings and/or work of others; for example:
  - (i) state clearly in the appropriate form where they found any material on which they have based their work, using the referencing system described in the Unit Outline;
  - (ii) acknowledge the people whose thoughts, ideas, experimental works, conclusions, drawings, designs, data, computer programs or other creative work they have extracted, developed, or summarised, even if they put these into their own words, data or designs;
  - (iii) avoid excessive copying of passages or works of another author, even where the source is acknowledged. The student should use another form of words to show that the student has thought about the material and understood it, but state clearly where they found the ideas;
- (e) seek assistance from appropriate sources to remedy any identified deficiencies in their academic skills;
- (f) avoid lending or sharing original work to or with others for any reason; and
- (g) retain materials which would demonstrate evidence of their authorship of assessable work, eg record of library borrowings, addresses of internet sites accessed, notes compiled, drafts of an assessment task.

Australian Catholic University acknowledges its adaptation of elements of the policies and procedures of other universities, including in particular the University of Sydney, Macquarie University and the University of Newcastle, in formulating its Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures.