

STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: MANAGING PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION PROCEDURES

SCOPE

This procedure applies to:

- all students at the former Monash South Africa campus; and
- all teaching periods commencing on or after 3 August 2020. For teaching periods that commenced before 3 August 2020, refer to [version 1.4](#) of these procedures.

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

Monash University is committed to promoting academic integrity practices across its learning community. To this end, the University supports the development of student academic integrity skills through a range of approaches, which include both discipline-specific education, as well as University-wide resources through the Library and providing access to tools that support good academic practice.

1. Plagiarism and collusion

1.1 Plagiarism means to take and use another person's ideas and/or manner of expressing them and to pass them off as one's own by failing to give appropriate acknowledgement, including the use of material from any source, staff, students or the Internet, published and unpublished works. It occurs when:

- other people's work and/or ideas are paraphrased and presented without a reference;
- other people's work is copied either in whole or in part;
- other people's designs, codes or images are presented as the student's own work;
- phrases and passages are used verbatim without quotation marks and/or without a reference to the author or a web page; or
- lecture notes are reproduced without due acknowledgement.

1.1.1 Plagiarism includes:

- contract cheating, which is engaging another student, person or entity to complete some or all of an assessment task on the student's behalf, whether that is by supplying a piece of work or taking the student's place in an assessment task; and
- resubmission of work submitted previously without the permission of the chief examiner or nominee.

1.1.2 Information on using references correctly; paraphrasing; and techniques for appropriately summarising an author's ideas is provided in the Library's [Academic Integrity tutorials](#).

1.2 Collusion means unauthorised collaboration on assessable written, oral or practical work with another person or persons and occurs when a student works with others to produce work, which is then presented as the student's own work, or the work of the other person(s). Collusion includes when, without the authorisation of teaching staff, a student:

- works with one or more people to prepare and produce work;
- allows others to copy their work or shares their answer to an assessment task;
- allows someone else to write (with the exception of instances where the use of a scribe is approved by the Disability Support Services) or edit their work (noting that proofreading is acceptable, provided it is compliant with the University's definition contained in the Academic Integrity Policy);
- shares course material with any person or entity external to Monash;
- writes or edits work for another student; or
- offers to complete work or seek payment for completing academic work for other students.

- 1.2.1 Collusion may be with a Monash student or a person or student external to the University. Collusion may be for Monash work or for work for a student external to the University.

2. Communication

- 2.1 Faculties will provide students with statements that explain the nature of plagiarism as it applies to the faculty's fields and disciplines. Faculties will inform students of assistance in and advice available for developing academic skills, such as essay writing, note-taking and the appropriate use and acknowledgement of sources, including referencing and citation techniques.
- 2.2 Students will be encouraged to complete [online skills development](#) in academic integrity throughout their studies.
- 2.3 Staff involved in assessment will explain the meaning of collusion and will give students clear instructions as to whether they are permitted to work on an assignment jointly and what forms of collaboration are appropriate.
- 2.4 Students are required to submit, with their work to be assessed, an Assessment Cover Sheet for non-examination assessment which includes:
- the approved definition of plagiarism;
 - a statement on collusion;
 - the approved Privacy Statement;
 - a declaration by the student:
 - that plagiarism, collusion or any other breach of requirements in the Student Academic Integrity Policy has not occurred;
 - whether the assessment task is original or has been previously submitted as part of another unit/subject/course;
 - that proper care to safeguard their work and all reasonable efforts to ensure it could not be copied were taken;
 - that the assessor of the assignment may for the purposes of assessment, reproduce the assignment and:
 - provide it to another member of faculty and/or any external marker; and/or
 - submit it to similarity-detection software; and/or
 - submit it to similarity-detection software (which may then retain a copy of the assignment on its database for the purpose of future checking of plagiarism);
 - that the student understands the consequences of engaging in plagiarism as described in Part 7 of the [Monash University \(Council\) Regulations](#).
- 2.5 Cover sheet submission may be in hard copy or electronically via a "click through" window in a password protected University portal where students upload their assignments. Work not accompanied by a cover sheet will not be accepted, with the exception of shorter assignments or tests that are carried out and submitted in class.
- 2.6 For a series of shorter assignments, it may be appropriate to have students submit a cover sheet with the first assignment, explicitly noting that it applies to further assignment submissions in the unit for the study period. These cover sheets should be retained until the end of the teaching period, even if the assignment(s) is returned to the student.
- 2.7 Staff must endeavour to design assessment tasks to minimise the likelihood of breaches of academic integrity. Staff involved in teaching and unit assessment must also implement methods to prevent and detect breaches of the Student Academic Integrity Policy. Options include, but are not limited to:
- random sampling of submitted assessment tasks to check for similarities;
 - comparing a student's performance across a number of tasks; and
 - requiring students to defend submitted assessment tasks (e.g. by oral examination or seminar presentation).
- 2.8 Unless an exception has been approved, assessments must be submitted online through the learning management system and processed using a similarity-detection system at the point of submission. Staff may take other steps to detect breaches of academic integrity, such as comparing work submitted against various databases, including the internet, electronic reference materials and other students' work submitted.
- 2.9 Staff may provide access to similarity-detection software for students prior to submission of an assessment task, which will enable students to conduct their own academic integrity checks. Staff may limit the number of times that a student may use such software with regards to each task.

3. Suspected breaches of the Student Academic Integrity Policy

- 3.1 When a breach of the Student Academic Integrity Policy, such as plagiarism or collusion, is suspected, an academic staff member involved in unit assessment is required to inform the student(s) of the suspected conduct, identify the passages/work which are alleged to be in breach, as well as its source, and ask the student(s) to respond. The staff member will also report the matter to the chief examiner (or nominee). If it is alleged that an Internet site is the source of the breach, the relevant material must be printed out with a time stamp in case the site is changed. Originality or similarity reports should be printed and retained if automated text (or other) matching software is being used.
- 3.2 Before the chief examiner (or nominee) makes a decision as to whether the breach was likely to have been intentional or reckless, the chief examiner (or nominee) must inform the student of the conduct suspected and give them an opportunity to respond. This may be done by calling the student to a meeting, and giving them particulars of the alleged breach. A support person may attend such meetings with the student at the student's request. The student should be informed of the provisions of the [Monash University \(Council\) Regulations](#) as to what penalties may be applied if a breach is found to have occurred. If the student is unable to attend a meeting, particulars of the breach should be put to the student in writing, and the student should be asked to respond within 10 working days from receipt of the written communication (see [sample letter or notification](#)).
- 3.3 If satisfied that a breach of academic integrity took place, the chief examiner (or nominee) is then required to decide whether or not they believe that the breach was likely to have been intentional or reckless. There are a number of factors that might be taken into consideration when deciding this. For example, in the following scenarios it may be more likely that the breach was not intentional or reckless:
- the student is in the first year of the course and has not received a prior warning that is recorded on the Academic Integrity Warnings Register;
 - the instructions about collaboration were not clear;
 - the student is from an educational background where different norms apply for the acknowledgement of sources;
 - a negligible amount has been plagiarised; or
 - the collusion was trivial in its extent and/or impact on the work.
- 3.4 The breach of academic integrity may be more likely to have been intentional or reckless when:
- the student has made an inadequate attempt at referencing;
 - clear instructions about collaboration were given;
 - the student has demonstrated in other tasks the ability to reference correctly;
 - the students in the cohort were given information on how to acknowledge extracts and quotations. The student was present/received written information and knew that the use of material without acknowledgement was unacceptable; or
 - the student had received a prior warning about plagiarism or collusion, or has been disciplined for plagiarism or collusion.

4. Plagiarism or collusion that is neither intentional nor reckless

- 4.1 Should the chief examiner (or nominee) have reasonable grounds to find that the breach of academic integrity was not intentional or reckless, a decision on the course of action to be taken will be made within 10 working days. If the breach was not intentional or reckless, the only offence the student has committed is an academic error of failing to reference a source correctly. Corrective action may be required to ensure that the student does not gain an unfair advantage in assessment as a result of the breach. Depending on the extent of the breach, the time that has passed and the circumstances, possible actions may include:
- loss of marks allocated for correct referencing;
 - in marking the work, the examiner excises parts that contain plagiarised material; or
 - the student may be required to resubmit the work in whole or in part.
- 4.2 Warnings and outcomes must be communicated in writing (see [standard warning letter](#)) to the student and will be kept on a register (see section 5). Students will be advised that copies of the letters will be retained on the register in accordance with these procedures.

- 4.3 If found to have breached the University's Student Academic Integrity Policy, but not intentionally or recklessly, students are required to participate in additional academic skills development. In the first instance, teaching staff should work with students directly to address identified gaps in the student(s)' understanding of academic integrity that may have led to the breach.

Intentional or reckless plagiarism or collusion

- 4.4 Before the chief examiner (or nominee) determines that an intentional or reckless breach of academic integrity has occurred, they must consider the student's response (if any) to the allegation. If the chief examiner has delegated to a nominee the task of obtaining the student's response, the chief examiner must ensure that they have a detailed and accurate record of the response.
- 4.5 If the student fails to respond to an allegation of intentional plagiarism or collusion, or if their response does not satisfy the chief examiner (or nominee) that the breach of academic integrity was not intentional or reckless, the chief examiner (or nominee) will report the matter to the responsible officer for academic misconduct and provide evidence of the suspected breach of academic integrity.
- 4.6 Once the suspected intentional plagiarism or collusion has been reported, the responsible officer (or nominee) must consider the matter in accordance with Part 7 of the Monash University (Council) Regulations.

5. Academic integrity warnings register

- 5.1 A register will be maintained to record:
- warnings that have been given to students about plagiarism or collusion, even where no formal action has been taken or penalty applied;
 - investigations of misconduct, findings and penalties.
- 5.2 Records within the register will be retained for seven years or 15 years (where a penalty of exclusion was incurred) from the date of the decision. Student records within the register will be treated in accordance with the University's [Privacy of Student Records Policy](#).
- 5.3 The register will be accessible only to staff authorised by deans and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) or delegate. Where requested, students will have access to their details recorded in the register.

6. Academic integrity and technology

- 6.1 In line with the [Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#), students are not permitted to use information and communications technology facilities to sell, purchase or offer to write assignments or other assessable work, or to request help with such work. Furthermore, students are required to take steps to minimise opportunities for others to cheat by, for example, not saving work to a shared network drive that is accessible by others and not sharing work on social media sites. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disciplinary action under Part 7 of the Monash University (Council) Regulations for collusion or general misconduct, as appropriate in the circumstances.
- 6.2 Students should be aware that the University will monitor and act on information received about the use of cheating services that promote dishonest academic conduct. If a student has been found to have used any of these sources to breach the Student Academic Integrity Policy, the University will pursue the matter in accordance with Part 7 of the Monash University (Council) Regulations.

DEFINITIONS

Academic integrity	The moral code of academia that involves using, generating and communicating information in an ethical, honest and responsible manner.
Academic misconduct	Knowing or reckless conduct by which a student seeks to gain for themselves or another person an unfair or unjustified academic advantage in a course or unit. It includes cheating, collusion and plagiarism.
Cheat/Cheating	To seek to obtain an unfair advantage in a course or unit.
Collusion	Unauthorised collaboration with another person or entity on assessable work that is presented as the student's own work, or as the work of the other student. In contrast, students can collaborate on group tasks when authorised or instructed to do so.
Contract cheating	Submitting work for assessment that was partly or wholly produced by a third party, or producing such work,

	or contracting a third party to take the student's place in assessment.
Plagiarism	The act of taking and using another person's ideas and or manner of expressing them and passing them off as one's own.
Proofreading	The process of identifying errors and suggesting corrections to a text.
Similarity-detection software	A system (e.g. Turnitin or MOSS) that compares text, data, code or other elements in a student assessment against various sources including the internet, published works, commercial databases and assessments previously submitted through the system.

GOVERNANCE

Parent policy	Student Academic Integrity Policy
Supporting schedules	N/A
Associated procedures	Information Technology Acceptable Use Procedures Assessment in Coursework Units Procedures Privacy of Student Records Procedures
Legislation mandating compliance	Monash University (Council) Regulations - Part 7 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
Category	Academic
Approval	University Education Committee 27 January 2021 MEETING 1, AGENDA ITEM 11.2
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