Academic Integrity Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This policy states requirements for staff and students of Charles Sturt University (the University) to practise, promote and defend academic integrity.

(2) This policy is intended to ensure the following:

a. All staff and students understand academic integrity as fundamental to effective learning, teaching and research.
b. The whole University community understands their shared responsibility for practising, promoting and defending academic integrity.
c. All staff and students involved in learning, teaching or research conduct these activities with integrity.
d. All academic decisions are made with integrity.
e. Staff model and promote academic integrity as part of teaching, academic supervision and research.
f. All staff and students understand academic misconduct and research misconduct as behaviour that:
    i. undermines the purposes and value of learning, teaching and research
    ii. impairs students' learning and their ability to achieve the University's graduate attributes, and risks their success in life
    iii. harms the reputation of the person who behaves in this way
    iv. harms the reputation of the University's awards and research, and
    v. if discovered by the University, will be addressed.
g. Instances of suspected academic misconduct or research misconduct are referred for investigation under, as relevant, the Student Misconduct Rule 2020, the Research Misconduct Procedure or the disciplinary process under the Enterprise Agreement.
h. The University is compliant with:
    i. the academic integrity and research integrity requirements of the Australian Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, and
    ii. the research integrity requirements of the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018.

Scope

(3) This policy applies to:

a. all staff and students of the University
b. all students enrolled in, and all staff teaching in, Charles Sturt University courses or subjects delivered in partnership with another institution or organisation
c. all adjunct staff and academic or research visitors to the University
d. anyone external to the University who participates as a researcher or administers research on behalf of the University
e. all courses and subjects offered by the University

    f. all research carried out by staff or students of the University or research by adjunct staff, visiting staff, consultants or contractors that will be identified as Charles Sturt University research, and

    g. all academic decisions about students.

(4) Research integrity is addressed by:

    a. the Research Policy which states detailed definitions of research integrity, and

    b. the Research Misconduct Procedure which states the process for considering any potential breach of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018.

(5) The Student Misconduct Rule 2020 states:

    a. the processes for investigating and deciding allegations of student misconduct including academic misconduct and research misconduct

    b. the positions of the University that are authorised to decide whether student academic misconduct or research misconduct has occurred and to apply penalties for them, and

    c. the penalties that may be applied to students who are found to have committed academic misconduct.

(6) The subject outline tool includes information about academic integrity and provides mandatory text for each subject outline.

(7) The Course and Subject Design (Coursework) Procedure includes requirements for course design to provide opportunities for students to achieve ethical and sustainable practice in their discipline or profession: including helping students to develop an understanding of academic integrity.

Section 2 - Policy

Academic integrity

(8) Academic integrity is a fundamental value of the University as a learning, teaching and research community. Academic integrity means:

    a. acting with honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in learning, teaching and research

    b. honesty in acknowledging others' ideas, text and data presented in one's work, or one's previous work when re-used

    c. fairness and honesty in staff and student dealings with one another, and

    d. striving for objectivity in academic decision-making, which includes:

        i. not accepting inducements, and

        ii. declaring possible conflicts of interest so that these can be recorded, assessed and managed.

(9) Academic integrity is essential to:

    a. a high-quality student learning and teaching experience

    b. effectiveness and credibility of learning, teaching and research

    c. reliability of learning outcomes and research outputs

    d. the reputation of the University and of its awards and research, and

    e. supporting the personal and professional development of students.

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Integrity of academic decisions

(10) Academic integrity includes the integrity of staff academic decisions about students.

(11) Staff must make academic decisions about students fairly and objectively based on all the relevant, available and admissible evidence, and not based on inducements, irrelevant considerations, personal bias or ill-will.

(12) Where staff have an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, in relation to an academic decision, they must declare this by the process stated in the Conflict of Interest Procedure.

(13) Students may appeal an academic decision:

  a. in accordance with the relevant appeal or review process for that type of decision as stated in the relevant academic policy or University Student Appeals Policy, or
  b. where no specific appeal or review process is available, by submitting a complaint in accordance with the Complaints Management Policy and Complaints Management Procedure.

(14) Where staff are found to have breached academic integrity in an academic decision about students, they may be subject to disciplinary processes under the Enterprise Agreement.

Educative approach to academic integrity

(15) The University takes an educative approach to academic integrity.

(16) Academic integrity training will be provided to students:

  a. when they begin at the University regardless of their stage of study
  b. when they first undertake a research project, or have not yet received a thorough introduction to the responsible conduct of research, and
  c. when they need support to develop academic skills that will enable them to avoid breaching academic integrity.

(17) All students will be trained in research integrity before they begin a research project, whether for a higher degree by research course, a research component of a coursework course or in a coursework subject that involves research with human subjects.

(18) All academic staff and professional/general staff who support academic governance, assessment, learning and teaching or research will be trained in academic integrity and in research integrity.

(19) The Academic Integrity Procedure states detailed requirements for training students and staff in academic integrity and research integrity.

Academic integrity monitoring

(20) The University will use a range of methods to ensure academic integrity is maintained, including specialist academic integrity monitoring software to check student assessments and textual theses submitted by higher degree research candidates. The Academic Integrity Procedure provides further detail.

(21) To submit an assessment, students must agree to have their work checked by academic integrity monitoring software as outlined in the Academic Integrity Procedure.

Academic integrity of third-party deliveries

(22) Where a course or subject of the University is delivered in partnership with a third-party institution or

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organisation, the University teaching faculty will collaborate with partner staff to monitor and ensure the academic integrity of the delivery, with oversight by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

(23) The [Academic Integrity Procedure](#) states detailed requirements for academic integrity monitoring and reporting.

Breaches of academic integrity

Types of academic integrity breaches

(24) The descriptions in this section supplement the definitions of the same terms in the [Student Misconduct Rule 2020](#) and [Research Misconduct Procedure](#). These descriptions are intended to explain the University's approach to breaches of academic integrity:

a. Where there is any inconsistency between these descriptions and the definitions in the [Student Misconduct Rule 2020](#), the [Student Misconduct Rule 2020](#) definition is the University's authoritative definition of the term.
b. Where there is any inconsistency between these descriptions and the definitions in the [Research Misconduct Procedure](#), the [Research Misconduct Procedure](#) definition is the University's authoritative definition of the term.

(25) Academic misconduct and research misconduct are breaches of academic integrity.

(26) Academic misconduct is dishonest behaviour that misrepresents a person's level of academic achievement in assessment, or their scholarly achievement in a work of scholarship. Behaviours that constitute academic misconduct include:

a. cheating
b. collusion
c. contract cheating
d. falsifying assessment tasks
e. plagiarism
f. self-plagiarism, and
g. submitting an assessment task generated by an algorithm, computer generator or other artificial intelligence or other means, without specific permission to do so.

(27) Research misconduct includes a serious breach of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#). The different types and levels of breach are defined in the [Research Policy](#) and [Research Misconduct Procedure](#).

(28) Students with an approved study access plan may be granted permission to use certain tools in their assessment that are not listed in the subject outline. When such permissions are granted, the Accessibility and Inclusion Support team will provide information on how students are to use these tools while maintaining academic integrity.

Reporting breaches of academic integrity

(29) Anyone who reports cases of suspected academic or research misconduct must not be victimised or discriminated against.

(30) A suspected case of academic misconduct should be reported as per the [Academic Integrity Procedure](#).

a. Staff or students who feel unsafe in reporting academic or research misconduct within their subject, course, school or faculty may report an allegation of misconduct by a student directly to the central Student Conduct team.
b. Alternatively, they may report academic or research misconduct by staff to senior staff responsible for maintaining academic integrity outside of the subject, course, school or faculty: for example to the relevant

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Head of School, Deputy Dean, Executive Dean, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) as relevant.

Consequences of breaching academic integrity

(31) If a student is found to have committed academic misconduct or research misconduct, they will be subject to penalties under the Student Misconduct Rule 2020.

(32) Schedule 1 of the Student Misconduct Rule 2020 collates authorities that the Rule grants to appointed officers.

Reporting of academic misconduct and research misconduct

(33) Oversight of academic integrity, including monitoring of potential risks, is in accordance with the University Governance Framework, Risk Management Policy and Academic Quality Policy. For courses and subjects delivered through educational partnerships, the monitoring and reporting requirements of the University Partnerships Policy and Procedure also apply.

(34) All allegations of academic misconduct and research misconduct by students, including outcomes and penalties, will be recorded on a university database and managed in accordance with the Records Management Policy and Procedure.

(35) The Office of Academic Quality and Standards will coordinate and prepare the Annual Academic Integrity and Misconduct Report to the Academic Senate and the relevant sub-committee(s).

(36) The Research Integrity Unit will report de-identified details of staff research misconduct allegations, findings of research misconduct and disciplinary outcomes, to the University Research Committee.

(37) Where an academic staff member is found to have engaged in academic misconduct, the Executive Director, People and Culture will provide a de-identified report of the finding and any disciplinary penalty to the Academic Senate and the relevant sub-committee(s).

Responsibilities

(38) The University expects all members of the University community (that is, all those included in the scope of this policy) to contribute to:

a. practising, promoting and defending academic integrity, and
b. identifying and reporting suspected cases of academic misconduct or research misconduct.

Officer or body	Responsibility
Students	Undertake academic activities with honesty and integrity
Undertake training in academic integrity and, where relevant, research integrity as required
Help defend academic integrity by:
a. practising and modelling academic integrity
b. encouraging other students to maintain academic integrity
c. discouraging other students from engaging in academic misconduct
d. taking reasonable steps to ensure that other students cannot copy their work or use it to engage in academic misconduct, and
e. reporting suspected instances of academic misconduct.

Officer or body	Responsibility
Academic leaders (including Executive Deans and other academic leaders in faculties and schools)	Ensure that the course design provides students with opportunities to develop and demonstrate academic integrity skills as they progress through the course Ensure that suspected instances of academic misconduct or research misconduct are identified, reported and managed in accordance with the relevant Student Misconduct Rule 2020, Research Misconduct Procedure or Enterprise Agreement Collaborate with partner staff to ensure a shared understanding of academic integrity in teaching, assessment, and exams
Academic staff	Undertake training in academic integrity and research integrity as required Model academic integrity to students including via the integrity of academic decisions Design assessment tasks to minimise the opportunity for academic misconduct Ensure students understand: a. academic integrity and correct referencing practices in the discipline b. that assessments will be checked for originality and correct attribution using academic integrity monitoring software, and students must agree to this condition to have their assessment work accepted and marked c. University policies and procedures in regards to academic integrity d. the extent to which collaboration is permitted in each assessment task and warn against collusion beyond this limit e. how group assessment work will be managed and marked to assess each group member's contribution f. where a coursework subject involves research, the requirements for responsible conduct of research stated in the Research Policy, and any specific arrangements to meet these requirements for the research task g. in core subjects for students who are about to undertake a research component of a coursework course, the requirements for responsible conduct of research stated in the Research Policy, and any specific arrangements to meet these requirements for research in the course Where they supervise a coursework student's or higher degree by research candidate's research project, ensure that the student and project comply with the requirements for responsible conduct of research stated in the Research Policy Be vigilant for breaches of academic and research integrity, including using academic integrity monitoring software to identify plagiarism and comparing students' performance across assessments Where they suspect academic misconduct, report it to an appointed officer for investigation under the Student Misconduct Rule 2020
Supervisors of students' research (including research in coursework courses)	Model research integrity, educate students and higher degree by research (HDR) candidates about research integrity, and report suspected breaches of research integrity for investigation
All staff who support academic work or who have dealings with students (including supervisors of academic staff, professional/general staff etc.)	Undertake training in academic integrity and, where relevant, research integrity as required Support academic staff to promote and monitor academic integrity Report suspected cases of academic misconduct for investigation
Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Provide training in research integrity for staff and students, and induction for HDR candidates in the responsible conduct of research.
Division of Information Technology Division of Student Experience	Ensure integrity and security of marking, grade approval and student records systems and access to these Ensure integrity and security of exams
Office of Academic Quality and Standards	Coordinate a whole of institution approach to promoting, monitoring, and assuring student academic integrity Provide advice to divisions, offices and faculties on academic integrity and academic misconduct
Division of Learning and Teaching	Provide academic integrity training for staff and students Provide a web page for staff on academic integrity Provide support for faculties for course, subject and assessment design to support academic integrity and minimise academic misconduct Provide online resources to help students and staff understand how to use similarity-checking software to check assessment work for similarity, and how to understand the implications of similarity reports

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Officer or body	Responsibility
Division of Student Success	Provide services, communication, and resources to support students in understanding and practising academic integrity
Facilities Management	Reasonably ensure that contract cheating services are not promoted on campuses (through fliers, posters or other advertising)
Course Directors	Provide course communications to students to explain academic integrity and correct referencing practice Ensure students who join the course at a later point will receive communication explaining academic integrity and correct referencing practice
Academic Integrity Officers	Conduct and record investigations into allegations of student academic misconduct and prepare reports with recommendations for outcomes where appropriate Provide guidance to academic staff on their obligations under this policy, Academic Integrity Procedure and Student Misconduct Rule 2020 Support staff development in areas related to academic integrity and collaborate with academic leadership to improve academic integrity across the University.
Appointed officers and student misconduct committees	Hear and decide misconduct matters and impose penalties in accordance with the Student Misconduct Rule 2020

Section 3 - Procedure

(39) The Academic Integrity Procedure states detailed requirements in relation to:

a. requirements of information on academic integrity to be provided to applicants for admission

b. training in academic integrity and research integrity for staff and students

c. design of assessment tasks, subjects and courses to maintain academic integrity and minimise academic misconduct

d. conditions on which professional editors may help a student prepare an assessment or thesis

e. ensuring academic integrity in third party deliveries of the University's courses and subjects, and

f. aspects of the University's response to breaches of academic integrity.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(40) Nil.

Section 5 - Glossary

(41) This policy uses the following terms:

a. Academic integrity – as defined in the academic integrity section of this policy.

b. Academic misconduct – as defined in the Student Misconduct Rule 2020.

c. Cheating – as defined in the Student Misconduct Rule 2020.

d. Collusion – as defined in the Student Misconduct Rule 2020.

e. Contract cheating – as defined in the Student Misconduct Rule 2020.

f. Coursework course – as defined in the policy library glossary.

g. Coursework subject – as defined in the policy library glossary.

h. Higher degree by research (HDR) course – as defined in the policy library glossary.

i. Plagiarism – as defined in the Student Misconduct Rule 2020.

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j. Referencing – means the practice of appropriately acknowledging the works of others by citing the original author or creator.

k. Research component – as defined in the policy library glossary.

l. Research misconduct – as defined in the [Student Misconduct Rule 2020](#) and the [Research Misconduct Procedure](#).

m. Self-plagiarism – as defined in the [Student Misconduct Rule 2020](#).

n. Teaching faculty – means the faculty that manages the course in question, or to which the teaching school belongs.

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Status and Details

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Unit Head	Mark Bassett Director, Academic Quality and Standards
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Coursework course" - a course leading to an award/qualification recognised by the Australian Qualifications Framework that is not classified as a higher degree by research.

"Higher degree by research (HDR) course" - means a course leading to a qualification at Australian Qualifications Framework level 9 or level 10 in which a research component makes up 66% or more of the course volume of learning. Higher degree by research courses lead to the award of a master by research, professional doctorate or doctor of philosophy.

"Coursework subject" - a subject on a specified topic for which students engage with text, learning materials and/or resources, and complete assessment tasks, not a research component.

"Research component" - one or more subjects for a higher degree by research course, a master by coursework and dissertation, or a bachelor (honours) course, in which students undertake a substantial piece of research involving a thesis, dissertation, portfolio or project.

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