



Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy and Procedure

1 Scope and Purpose

The policy provides a framework for upholding academic integrity and honesty, and detecting and managing academic misconduct at Russo Business School to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and course quality. It has been developed taking account of TEQSA's *Guidance-Note-Academic-Integrity-V1-2* and associated Academic Integrity Toolkit.

This policy applies to all members of Russo Business School's higher education community.

2 Definitions and Abbreviations

Academic integrity refers to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in all academic endeavours, including preparing and presenting work for assessment as part of coursework or research.

Academic literacy refers to the capacity to undertake study and research, and to communicate findings and knowledge in a manner appropriate to the particular disciplinary conventions and scholarly standards expected at a higher education level.

Academic misconduct is any activity or practice including but not limited to cheating in any assessments, plagiarism, unauthorised collusion, fraudulent or unethical research and scholarship practices.

Cheating in general can be defined as acting dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain an advantage

Contract cheating occurs when students employ or use a third party to undertake their assessed work for them.

Ethical and ethics refers to the guiding values, principles and standards that enable people to determine how things should be done and how they should act. Ethics refers to the judgements that people make and the process that determines those judgements. It is the process by which people make value-based decisions which ultimately guides their actions and behaviours.

Plagiarism is using another person's ideas, designs, words or works without appropriate acknowledgement.

3 Policy Objectives

This policy outlines:

- a. Strategies to promote academic honesty
- b. Mechanisms to detect plagiarism and cheating
- c. Processes for academic misconduct

Russo Business School is committed to ensuring that academic honesty is integral to the values of Russo Business School, and that it produces ethical graduates. Russo Business School expects all staff and

students to act with integrity and honesty when developing, creating and using information and ideas, and to conduct themselves with the highest ethical standards in all aspects of academic work. In particular, Russo Business School expects that:

- a. Staff and students ensure that their academic work is their own original work
- b. The ideas of others are acknowledged appropriately
- c. All staff and students are responsible for identifying and reporting academic misconduct.

4 Implementation

The Academic Board will ensure that mechanisms are in place to safeguard the reputation of Russo Business School, its staff and graduates. Russo Business School will be vigilant in maintaining academic integrity and will aim to eliminate plagiarism and cheating. All members of staff are responsible for implementation of this policy and senior members of staff are also responsible for monitoring academic misconduct. Russo Business School will:

- a. Expect all staff and students to be responsible for academic integrity and undertake all academic work honestly
- b. Promote academic honesty by distributing policies and information to the Russo Business School higher education community
- c. Encourage students to engage in ethical learning and scholarship practices
- d. Promote and encourage academic literacy and integrity
- e. Ensure assessment is designed to prevent plagiarism and cheating
- f. Provide information and support to students at orientation and throughout their study
- g. Provide staff training and development on how to identify contract cheating
- h. Monitor academic work and apply fair processes to deal with academic misconduct, including plagiarism and cheating.

5 Procedure

5.1 Academic integrity for students

Russo Business School will use text matching software or employ other means to detect plagiarism, where appropriate. Academic staff will be vigilant in detecting plagiarism, and will use professional judgement and fair and transparent processes to determine where plagiarism has occurred, and if it is intentional or unintentional.

Students will be provided with written advice during enrolment that mechanisms, including software, may be used to detect plagiarism and cheating, and students will be required to acknowledge their awareness of these practices. Students are responsible for:

- a. Understanding academic honesty and misconduct and avoiding unethical practices
- b. Ensuring that their academic work is their own, and for appropriately acknowledging the work and ideas of others
- c. Completing the mandatory Academic Integrity Module at the commencement of their studies.

5.2 Submitting assignments

Students, when submitting assignments or any other piece of work for assessment:

- a. Must declare that the work is their own work, or the work of the group
- b. Acknowledge that student discipline processes may be enacted in cases of academic misconduct, such as plagiarism or cheating.

All student assessment cover sheets, or digital submissions, will contain the following wording:

Academic work submitted may be subjected to plagiarism detection mechanisms. Copies of students' work may be retained for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in the future.

5.3 Types of misconduct

5.3.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of representing the ideas or work of another person(s) as one's own original work, by copying or reproducing that work without acknowledgement of the source and includes:

- a. Direct copying or paraphrasing from someone else's published work (either electronic or hard copy) without acknowledging the source (or authors)
- b. Using facts, information and ideas derived from a source without acknowledgement
- c. Assisting another person to commit an act of plagiarism
- d. Submitting a paper to be graded or reviewed that has been written by another person
- e. Purchasing a paper from someone else or from a commercial entity such as from the internet or other similar commercial service
- f. Copying answers or text from another classmate and submit it as one's own
- g. Citing data without crediting the original source
- h. Reworking data from another source (such as another student's research data) without acknowledgement or to pass it off as one's own work
- i. Proposing another author's idea as if it were one's own
- j. Submitting someone else's presentation, program, spreadsheet, or other file with no alterations or only minor alterations.

5.3.2 Collusion

Collusion is the presentation by a student of work as his or her own which is in fact the result, in whole or in part, of unauthorised collaboration with another person or persons. Both the student presenting the assignment and the student(s) willingly supplying unauthorised material (colluders) are considered participants in the act of collusion.

5.3.3 Cheating

Cheating in general can be defined as acting dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain an advantage in any form of assessment.

Cheating in examinations or tests includes:

- a. Copying or attempting to copy from another student (or external party)
- b. Attempting to use unauthorised material either in written or electronic format
- c. Verbally communicating with another student or attempting to communicate with another student, fabricating information, data, research or other elements.

Contract Cheating: means a form of academic misconduct which occurs when a student employs or uses a third party to undertake all, or part of, an assessment task, and then submits it as their own work for example, using illegal cheating services, to buy an essay, study notes or have someone impersonate them in an exam. Under Australia's anti-cheating laws, the promotion or sale of academic cheating services is illegal and subject to penalties of up to two years' imprisonment or fines. Examples of third parties are:

- a. Essay writing services
- b. Friends, family or other students
- c. Private tutors
- d. Copy editing services
- e. Agency websites.

5.3.4 Falsification

Falsification is manipulating research material, equipment or processes, or changing or omitting/suppressing data or results without scientific or statistical justification, such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record. This would include falsifying information such as:

- a. Fabricating references or using incorrect references
- b. Distorting or inventing data to support an assessment or research argument
- c. Unauthorised omission of data, information or results in documents, reports and presentations
- d. Falsifying lab or experimental data or observations.

5.3.4.1 Intentional and unintentional plagiarism or cheating

The seriousness of the misconduct is determined, in part, by whether the conduct is regarded as intentional or unintentional. Intentional plagiarism or cheating is carried out knowingly with an intent to deceive and is therefore considered as serious misconduct. Unintentional plagiarism may occur due to lack of familiarity with academic writing practices and is therefore considered to be less serious on the first occurrence.

5.4 Levels and penalties for student academic misconduct

There are varying levels of student misconduct. It is acknowledged that students studying higher education for the first time may make small errors as part of their academic learning process. The following factors, levels and penalties are provided to guide the procedures for assessing student academic misconduct.

5.4.1 Factors

Academic staff will consider relevant factors, to determine the level of misconduct and the seriousness of the academic misconduct, such as:

- a. The knowledge and experience of the student
- b. The type of misconduct
- c. Whether the misconduct was intentional or unintentional
- d. Whether the misconduct has occurred before

5.4.2 Level of misconduct

The level of academic misconduct has been divided into three categories to assist with determining the appropriate penalty:

Level 1 – minor

The conduct is assessed as being unintentional and due to lack of knowledge or experience. Examples include plagiarism of less than 10% due to poor referencing and using paraphrasing that is too close to the original; copying of a few sentences without referencing.

Level 2 – moderate

The conduct is assessed as being possibly unintentional or intentional; the student should have sufficient knowledge and experience to understand academic misconduct, but only constitutes a moderate breach rather than a major breach; it may be a repeated offence. Examples include moderate plagiarism of between 10-20%, other than a thesis; fabricating or falsifying data in an assessment other than a thesis; colluding with other students and submitting work as individual work, other than group work that has been stated as acceptable.

Level 3 – major

The conduct is assessed as being intentional and constitutes a serious and substantial breach, or may be multiple instances of academic misconduct. Examples include contract cheating; cheating in examinations; major plagiarism of more than 20%, particularly in a thesis; fabricating or falsifying data in a thesis.

5.4.3 Penalties

Penalties should consider the level of academic misconduct and the factors. In particular, the experience of the student and whether academic misconduct has occurred before, should be considered.

The decision-makers for academic misconduct are:

- a. Level 1 – Course Coordinator (in conjunction with lecturer)
- a. Level 2 – Dean of Studies
- b. Level 3 – Executive Dean

The available penalties from minor to major may include one or more of the following:

- a. A formal warning to the student.
- b. Requirement to attend compulsory academic skills workshops prior to resubmission of the assessment in which the academic misconduct occurred.
- c. A mark reduction or a mark of zero awarded for the assessment piece in which the academic misconduct occurred.
- d. A Fail grade for the subject in which the academic misconduct occurred.
- e. A Fail grade for the subject in which the academic misconduct occurred and not permitted to enroll in the course for a defined period of time.
- f. The student's enrolment at the institution is cancelled and the student not be permitted to re-enroll for a defined period of time.
- g. The student's enrolment at the institution is cancelled and the student be excluded permanently from enrolment at the institution.
- h. Any other penalty recommended by the Dean of Studies or Executive Dean.

5.4.4 Procedures for student academic misconduct

The following procedure will be undertaken:

- a. Where academic misconduct is suspected or identified, academic staff such as the lecturer or examiner first determines the level of misconduct, together with any evidence, such as the relevant assignment
- b. Academic staff should refer the matter to the Course Coordinator, who should decide to either take remedial action or to further refer this matter to the Dean of Studies within seven (7) working days
- c. The student's record will be checked to determine if there have been any other instances of academic misconduct recorded. Multiple instances may cause the penalty to be escalated to a higher level
- d. The decision-maker conducts an initial investigation of the allegation
- e. The student is invited via email to attend a meeting with the Dean of Studies to discuss the issue, and may bring a support person. The notice will advise the student to respond in writing to the allegation within 14 working days
- f. The Dean of Studies receives a copy of all correspondence regarding the alleged academic misconduct
- g. If the student does not respond within the 14 day timeframe, the decision-maker makes a decision on whether a penalty will be imposed; defines the penalty; and determines if any supports are required
- h. If academic misconduct is determined to have occurred, supported by the evidence collected, the following penalties may be applied:
- i. In the case of Level 1 minor academic misconduct, the student may simply be issued with a warning and/or some marks may be deducted for the assessment in question

- j. In the case of Level 2 moderate academic misconduct, marks may be deducted for the assessment, or a mark of zero may be awarded for the assessment in question
- k. In the case of Level 3 major academic misconduct, a mark of zero may be awarded for the assessment and/or the whole project
- l. In the case where multiple instances of academic misconduct have been committed by a student, the Dean of Studies may refer the matter to the Executive Dean which has the right to expel the student. If a decision for expulsion is made, then all fees paid by the student to date will be forfeited and the student will not be allowed to continue with their course or seek a refund.
- m. A formal notice of the decision is sent to the student together with information outlining their right to appeal the decision
- n. Copies of the notice and subsequent actions are sent to relevant administrative and academic personnel to ensure that the allegation and decision is recorded on the student's file, and assessments are adjusted accordingly, where relevant
- o. All instances of academic misconduct, no matter how minor, are recorded on the student's file and will be entered in an Academic Misconduct Register.

5.4.4.1 Reporting misconduct outcomes

The decision-maker for academic misconduct allegations will notify all staff of the outcomes to ensure that academic integrity actions are visible in Russo Business School's community. Instances of academic misconduct will be reported to the Learning and Teaching Committee and Academic Board by the Dean of Studies.

5.5 Appeals

The grounds for an appeal are:

- a. A belief that an irregularity in the procedures has occurred.
- b. New evidence and facts have emerged that could change the decision.
- c. The penalty imposed or decision reached could be considered unreasonable.

A student who has been assessed as having committed an act of misconduct can appeal the penalty decision in the following ways:

- d. A written appeal to the Dean of Studies (Level 1) or Academic Board (Level 2 or 3), dependent on the level of the academic misconduct
- e. If the first option fails, then an appeal can be made in writing to the Academic Board, and it will make a decision; or to the Board of Directors if the Academic Board made the initial decision
- f. If a student is still unhappy with the decision, they may make an appeal to an external party, such as:
 - g. A nominated academic member of staff based in a local university or in the country in which the student resides, who can mediate or arbitrate
 - h. International students may seek a review by the Overseas Student Ombudsman. The contact details for the Ombudsman are located in the Student Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Students should refer to the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure for details of the appeals process.

5.6 Academic integrity for staff

Staff are responsible for:

- a. Maintaining high ethical standards in conducting research and scholarly activities within the guidelines of the Academic Freedom and Ethical Conduct Policy and Procedure

- b. Promoting academic integrity and honesty amongst students
- c. Monitoring and detecting student academic misconduct
- d. Reporting academic misconduct to a senior member of academic staff.

5.6.1 Staff academic misconduct

Matters of alleged staff academic misconduct should be promptly reported to the Executive Dean. If the Executive Dean determines that there may be a case of academic misconduct, then the matter should be referred to the CEO, together with a report on the alleged misconduct.

5.6.1.1 Process

- a. The CEO will commence an investigation of the matter, and may appoint other persons to assist with the investigation
- b. The staff member shall be notified in writing of the allegations made against them, including any evidence. The staff member will be given 14 days to provide a response to the allegations, including the provision of evidence to counter the allegation
- c. The CEO will arrange for a meeting to be held between the staff member, the CEO, the Executive Dean, and another member from the Academic Board. The staff member may bring a representative who is not a practising lawyer or barrister
- d. The CEO will ensure that any new information is promptly provided to all parties for consideration and response.
- e. On completion of the investigation, the CEO will prepare a report to the Academic Board outlining the findings, evidence, conclusions and recommendations.
- f. The Academic Board will consider the report and decide whether to:
 - i. Take no further action
 - ii. Request further information from any of the parties
 - iii. Take disciplinary action.
- g. The CEO will make the final decision on any actions or penalties, also taking into account of appropriate processes of Russo Business School's staff contract agreements to manage alleged academic misconduct by staff.
- h. Copies of the outcome are sent to relevant human resources personnel by the CEO to ensure that it is recorded on the staff member's personnel file and in the Academic Misconduct Register.

5.7 Appeals

If the staff member is not satisfied with the decision, they may seek an appeal as outlined in the Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure.

5.8 Reporting

Cases of substantiated student and staff academic misconduct will be reported to the Academic Board and Board of Directors, at least annually, whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

6 Related documents

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- a. Academic Misconduct Register
- b. Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy and Procedure
- c. Staff Code of Conduct
- d. Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure
- e. Student Code of Conduct Policy
- f. Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

7 Review

Three years from commencement.

8 Accountabilities

The Board of Directors is responsible for review and approval of this policy with input from the Academic Board.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution to students and Russo Business School's higher education community via the website and other publications.

Acknowledgement is accorded to the University of Western Australia in the development of the levels and penalties of student academic misconduct, and definitions in this policy.

| Delegated Authority | Delegation |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Governance | |
| Board of Directors | Refer to the Terms of Reference |
| Academic Board | Refer to the Terms of Reference |
| Executives | |
| Chief Executive Officer | Relevant to Accountability Statement |
| Executive Dean | Relevant to Accountability Statement |
| Management | |
| Course Co-ordinator | Relevant to Accountability Statement |
| Dean of Studies | Relevant to Accountability Statement |

9 Revision history

| Policy & Procedure Version No | Policy & Procedure Sponsor | Approval Authority | Date of Approval | Date for next review |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1/2022 | Chief Operating Officer | Board of Directors | 14/07/2022 | 14/07/2024 |