



EDUCATIONAL INTEGRITY DECISION- MAKING AND PENALTY GUIDELINES 2018

Issued by: Office of Educational Integrity on behalf of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Dated: 27 November 2018

Last amended: 30 May 2022

1 Purpose

- (1) These guidelines provide a practical guide for Educational Integrity Coordinators and other academics nominated by the deans of each faculty and University school to determine allegations of academic dishonesty and plagiarism in relation to coursework. They are to be read in conjunction with, and as a complement to, the [Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015](#) and [Academic Honesty Procedures 2016](#) (the “*policy*” and “*procedures*”).
- (2) The guidelines may also be of informational or educational value to unit of study coordinators, teaching staff, examiners and students. However:
 - (a) a staff member must not use the guidelines in a manner inconsistent with the [policy](#) or [procedures](#). This includes but is not limited to:
 - (i) failure to afford a student procedural fairness as specified in clause 14 of the [policy](#).
 - (ii) failure to report a suspicion of academic dishonesty or plagiarism to an Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic as specified in clause 15 of the [policy](#).
 - (b) a student cannot appeal against an academic decision taken by an Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic under the [University of Sydney \(Student Academic Appeals\) Rule 2021](#) on the grounds that the student believes that the academic decision was made in a manner that was inconsistent with the guidelines.

Note: See subclause 2(c) below.

2 Principles

- (1) These guidelines embody the following principles:
- (a) **Procedural fairness.** Students alleged to have engaged in a breach of academic honesty must be made fully aware of the specific nature of the allegation, the available evidence, and be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation in accordance with the [policy](#) and [procedures](#).
 - (b) **Transparency and defensibility.** The determination of an alleged breach of academic honesty should be based on the open consideration of the available evidence, including any submissions made by or on behalf of a student, and a defensible assessment of the balance of probabilities.
 - (c) **Academic judgement and discretion.** These guidelines reaffirm the importance of academic judgement and discretion in determining whether a breach of academic honesty has occurred, and the specification of consequent actions or penalties. They do not prescribe the determination of specific forms of academic dishonesty or plagiarism, or circumscribe actions that may be specified otherwise under the [policy](#) and [procedures](#).
 - (d) **No advantage.** Any corrective actions or penalties specified by Educational Integrity Coordinators and nominated academics under the [policy](#) and [procedures](#) must not enable any student to gain unfair academic advantage over other students.
 - (e) **Mitigation of educational disadvantage.** Any corrective actions or penalties specified by Educational Integrity Coordinators and nominated academics should give due consideration to extenuating circumstances experienced by a student at the time the breach was made.
 - (f) **Harm minimisation.** Any corrective actions or penalties specified by Educational Integrity Coordinators and nominated academics should give due consideration to the minimisation of harm. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - (i) harm to a student's capacity to develop the graduate quality of an integrated personal, professional and ethical identity;
 - (ii) harm to other students, either through unfairness or to their capacity to develop an integrated personal, professional and ethical identity;
 - (iii) harm to the educational or research integrity of the faculty or University school;
 - (iv) harm to the good name and academic standing of the faculty, University school or University;
 - (v) harm to the good order and governance of the University where such harm is realised as impeding the ability of others to pursue their education, research and work and to participate fully in the life of the University.

3 Definitions

Words and phrases used in these guidelines and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings they have in the [policy](#) and [procedures](#).

Note: See part 2 of each of the [policy](#) and [procedures](#).

In this document:

academic dishonesty	has the meaning given in subclauses 7(1) and 7(2) of the policy . In relation to higher degree by research students, it refers to academically dishonest conduct by such a student undertaking a coursework unit of study.
Academic Honesty Education Module	means the mandatory online education module all students commencing a coursework award course after 1 January 2016 must complete prior to the census date in their first semester of enrolment.
alternative work	means work completed by a student in lieu of work for which a student has been alleged or found to have engaged in plagiarism or academic dishonesty by an Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic.
corrected work	means work that has been amended by a student to ensure appropriate acknowledgement of source material, including attribution of the source or sources of this material, at the instruction of an Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic.
coursework	has the meaning given in the policy which at the time of approval of the guidelines was: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a program of learning in which the dominant mode of instruction is through a program of classes, lectures, tutorials, practical sessions, online tasks and other modes of instruction that are not supervised research.</p> <p>Note: Work produced by students for the award of Honours is considered to have arisen as a result of coursework.</p>
dishonest plagiarism	has the meaning given in clause 6 of the policy and, under subclause 7(2)(b), constitutes academically dishonest conduct.
donor (student)	means a student who has provided inappropriate information, including assessment questions or answers, to one or more other students, including via social media or other online platforms, and regardless of whether those students are known directly to the donor student or not.
engagement (of or from another person)	means entering in to a transactional or exchange-based relationship with another person or entity in relation to the completion of assessable work, whether for payment or otherwise.



fail item of assessment	<p>means the application of a numerical mark between 0% and 49% and a Fail (FA) grade to work submitted by a student for a separately weighted item of assessment within a unit of study.</p> <p>Note: See Schedule 1 of the Coursework Policy 2021.</p>
fail unit of study	<p>means the application of a numerical mark between 0% and 49% and a Fail (FA) grade to the overall result for a student within a unit of study.</p>
formal development requirement/s (on record)	<p>means a central, confidential record is held for a student who has previously completed an approved development activity at the instruction of an Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic. The communication of such requirements to students also carries a formal caution against engaging in future breaches of the policy, whether through negligence or dishonesty.</p>
formative task	<p>means an item of assessment, typically of lower weighting, that has been designed to evaluate a student's progress toward achieving learning outcomes for a unit that would be measured in a more substantial summative task.</p>
further development	<p>means the further development activity a student is required to undertake after an Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic has formed the preliminary view that the student has engaged in academic impropriety as a result of prior educational failure.</p>
further development activity	<p>means a workshop or online module designed to assist students to develop their understanding of, and proficiency with, academic writing conventions and standards.</p>
illegitimate cooperation (i.e., collusion)	<p>means collaboration that is inconsistent with subclause 8A of the policy. It is characterised by a lack of transparency and openness, providing unfair advantage to a student or group of students over others, undermining the advancement of student learning, and preventing the accurate assessment of the knowledge and skills a student or group of students has developed through the learning process.</p>
indicative outcome	<p>means a statement on the combination of corrective actions and penalties ordinarily specified by an Educational Integrity Coordinator or a nominated academic to remediate a breach of academic honesty as determined under the policy and procedures.</p> <p>Note: Throughout these guidelines, indicative outcomes refer to outcomes indicated prior to consideration being given to the impact of extenuating circumstances experienced by a student at the time a breach was made with reference to clause 2(1)(e) of these guidelines.</p>



plagiarism	has the meaning given in clause 8 of the policy .
policy	means the Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015 .
prior finding or findings	means a prior finding or findings of academic dishonesty, plagiarism or misconduct in an academic matter, which may also include formal development requirements, as determined by either an Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic under the policy and procedures , or the Registrar under the University of Sydney (Student Discipline) Rule 2016 , and as held on a central, confidential record. The communication of any such findings to students also carries a formal caution against engaging in future breaches of the policy , whether through negligence or dishonesty.
procedures	means the Academic Honesty Procedures 2016 .
recipient (student)	means a student who has received inappropriate information, including assessment questions or answers, from one or more donor students, including via social media or other online platforms, and regardless of whether the donor student or students are known directly to the recipient.
recycling	has the meaning given in subclause 7(2)(a) of the policy which, at the time of approval of the guidelines was: the resubmission for assessment of work that is the same, or substantially the same, as work previously submitted for assessment in the same or in a different unit of study (except in the case of legitimate resubmission with the approval of the examiner).
referencing requirements	means the requirement to give proper attribution to another person's or source's ideas, findings or words in accordance with an established referencing and citation style as determined by the relevant discipline. Note: For examples, see the University Library's Referencing and Citation Styles: Home .
specified mark penalty	means the reduction of a numerical mark by an amount expressed as a proportion of the total marks available for an item of assessment or unit of study. Note: A specified mark penalty should be applied in its absolute form, rather than as a multiplier. For example, where a mark penalty of 10% (i.e., 10 marks out of 100) of the total available marks is specified for work assessed at 70% (i.e., 70 marks out of 100), the final mark after the penalty is applied is 60% (70 – 10 = 60).



specified maximum mark

means the uppermost mark for which a student's work is eligible, expressed as a proportion of the total marks available, for an item of assessment after it has first been assessed on its academic merit relative to the advertised criteria.

Note: A specified maximum mark does not immediately constitute the mark to be applied to a student's corrected or alternative work. Rather, a specified maximum mark should only be recorded if the merit-based mark exceeds the specified maximum. Where the merit-based mark falls below the specified maximum, the lower mark should be recorded.

stage of candidature

means the academic level to which a student has progressed as measured by the duration of the candidature and credit points gained relative to the requirements of the award course.

summative task

means an item of assessment, typically of moderate to higher weighting, that has been designed to evaluate the extent to which a student has achieved one or more learning outcomes.

NOT CURRENT

4 Guidelines

Note: Where an Educational Integrity Coordinator or nominated academic detects a potential breach of rules, codes or policies other than the [Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015](#), the potential breach should be referred to the Registrar for investigation under the [University of Sydney \(Student Discipline\) Rule 2016](#) on grounds of personal, rather than academic, misconduct. While such breaches may be associated with an allegation of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct, their investigation and determination is beyond the scope of the [policy](#) and [procedures](#).

	No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
Plagiarism – arising from failure to understand referencing requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarised material is minimal and limited to a very small number of instances. Genuine attempt to acknowledge sources, possibly with imprecision in use of referencing conventions. Any stage of candidature. No prior findings or formal development requirements on record. Corrective feedback sufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarised material is of low to moderate volume. Genuine attempt to acknowledge sources, possibly with imprecision in use of referencing conventions. Early- to mid-stage of candidature. No prior findings or formal development requirements on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarised material is of low to moderate volume. Genuine attempt to acknowledge sources, possibly with imprecision in use of referencing conventions. Mid- to late stage of candidature. No prior findings on record, although may have formal development requirements on record. 		
Indicative outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corrective feedback provided No penalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development activity Specified maximum mark of 64% or appropriate mark penalty; or Submission of corrected work with specified maximum mark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development activity Specified maximum mark of 50% or appropriate mark penalty; or Submission of corrected work with specified maximum mark 		

	No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
Plagiarism – arising from negligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarised material is minimal and limited to a small number of instances. Genuine attempt to acknowledge sources, possibly with imprecision in use of referencing conventions. Any stage of candidature. No prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. Corrective feedback sufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarised material is of low volume. Genuine attempt to acknowledge sources, possibly with imprecision in use of referencing conventions. Early- to mid-stage of candidature. Prior formal development requirements on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarised material is of low to moderate volume. Genuine attempt to acknowledge sources, possibly with imprecision in use of referencing conventions. Mid- to late-stage of candidature. Prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarised material is of moderate to high volume. Limited attempt to paraphrase or acknowledge source material appropriately, demonstrating reckless disregard for academic standards. Mid- to late-stage of candidature. Prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	
Indicative outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corrective feedback provided No penalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development activity Specified maximum mark of 64% or appropriate mark penalty; or Submission of corrected work with specified maximum mark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development activity Specified maximum mark of 50% or appropriate mark penalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) Specified maximum mark of 50% or appropriate mark penalty 	

No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
<p>Plagiarism – arising from dishonesty</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low volume of plagiarised material, with insufficient attempt to paraphrase and/or acknowledge all sources. • Early- to mid-stage of candidature. • May or may not have formal development requirements on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate to high volume of plagiarised material. • No attempt to acknowledge source material appropriately or accurately, demonstrating willful disregard for academic standards. • Any stage of candidature. • May or may not have prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple findings of academic dishonesty on record.
<p>Indicative outcome</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) • Specified maximum mark of 50% or appropriate mark penalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No prior finding of plagiarism or academic dishonesty: Fail item of assessment (0% - 49%) • Prior finding: Fail unit of study (0% - 49%) • Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Registrar

	No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycled material is relevant to task, minimal and limited to a small number of instances. Genuine, but insufficient attempt to paraphrase from, or no acknowledgement of, the previously submitted work. Any stage of candidature. No prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. Cautionary feedback sufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycled material is relevant and of low or moderate volume without acknowledgement of prior use. Any stage of candidature. No prior findings on record. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycled material is unacknowledged and of sufficiently high volume to demonstrate limited or no engagement with disciplinary content and/or learning outcomes specific to the unit of study. Any stage of candidature. May or may not have prior findings on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple findings of academic dishonesty on record.
Indicative outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cautionary feedback provided No penalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) Specified maximum mark of 50% or appropriate mark penalty 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No prior finding of academic dishonesty: Specified maximum mark of 50% or appropriate mark penalty. Prior finding: Fail item of assessment (0% - 49%) Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Registrar

No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
<p>Fabricating data, information or sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitted work is relevant, contains no plagiarised content, and includes only single instance of inaccurate attribution to an unverifiable or non-existent source. Any stage of candidature. No prior findings on record 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of systematic or deliberate attempt to mislead the examiner, either by concealing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the extent and/or quality of the empirical or scholarly research or (b) the actual sources of paraphrased or plagiarised material. Any stage of candidature. May or may not have prior findings on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple findings of academic dishonesty on record.
<p>Indicative outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specified mark penalty of 5% or 10% Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No prior finding of academic dishonesty: Fail item of assessment (0% - 49%) Prior finding: Fail unit of study (0% - 49%) Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Registrar

No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
<p>Illegitimate cooperation (i.e., collusion) with another student or group of students in completing assessment task (incl. examination)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The task is a formative task or of low weighting relative to the overall assessment. • Provision of work was inappropriate but done in good faith. • Early stage of candidature. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of illegitimate cooperation is obvious. • Any stage of candidature. • May or may not have prior findings and/or formal development requirements on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic and/or sophisticated attempt to conceal extent of cooperation, which may span multiple units of study. • Multiple findings of academic dishonesty on record.
<p>Indicative outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specified mark penalty for affected component • Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No prior finding of academic dishonesty: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Fail item of low weighted assessment (0%) (b) Appropriate mark penalty or submission of alternative work for moderate to highly weighted assessment with specified maximum mark of 50% • Prior finding: Fail unit of study (0% - 49%) • Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Registrar

No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
<p>Submitting work for assessment that has been completed by, or with contribution from, a third party</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work contains a low to moderate amount of material plagiarised or paraphrased from the work of another student, but which is counterbalanced by sufficient evidence of substantial contribution of original content by the student submitting the work. Any stage of candidature. No prior findings on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitting work for assessment that has been completed by, or with contribution from, a third party (incl. from essay mills, sharing sites, or other third-party sources).
<p>Indicative outcome</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fail for item of low weighted assessment (0%) Submit alternative work for moderate to highly weighted assessment with specified maximum mark of 50% Prior finding: Fail for unit of study (0 - 49%) <p>Further development activity (can incl. Academic Honesty Education Module)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Registrar

No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
Engaging a third party to complete or contribute to an assessment				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging a third party to complete or contribute to an assessment (includes impersonation at an examination or attending a learning activity).
Indicative outcome				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Registrar
Accepting an engagement from another student to complete or contribute to an assessment				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepting an engagement from another student to complete or contribute to an assessment.
Indicative outcome				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Registrar
Forbidden material in examinations (incl. accessing electronic devices, notes, calculators, computers or online resources)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possession of materials is inadvertent and/or the result of examination conditions), with insufficient evidence to suggest any advantage gained Any stage of candidature. No prior examination incidents on record. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unapproved access to non-permitted resources during a closed book assessment (incl. examination, quiz and test). Any stage of candidature. No prior examination incidents on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sophisticated attempt to conceal materials, (incl hiding notes outside of venue, external device/monitor). Multiple findings of academic dishonesty
Indicative outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No penalty Warning as appropriate 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Honesty Education Module Fail item of assessment (0% - 49%) or appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Registrar

No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
			mark penalty	
Communicating or consulting (or an attempt to) with another student or unauthorised person during an examination, quiz or test (online or on-campus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication non-verbal and incidental (e.g., dropped pen, resolving technical issues). 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of attempted communication is obvious (e.g., verbal, written communication related to content). Any stage of candidature. No prior examination incidents on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple instances of academic dishonesty Sophisticated or coordinated attempt to consult with another person or third party via online platforms (e.g., social media, sharing websites or other third-party services)
Indicative outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No penalty. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Honesty Education Module Fail item of assessment (0% - 49%) or appropriate mark penalty Prior finding: Fail unit of study (0% - 49%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Registrar Fail item of assessment or unit of study (0% - 49%)

	No impropriety	Further Development	Plagiarism	Academic Dishonesty	Potential Misconduct
Publication of an assessment, University teaching or course material to a file-sharing or online platform	A single instance of upload of own assessment to a document sharing platform.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing confidential questions from an exam, quiz or assessment to an online platform. • Evidence that material was uploaded to obtain solutions for low weighted assessment. • Any stage of candidature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence of systematic or calculated provision of an assignment or answers, or related to a highly weighted assessment. • Multiple uploads of University teaching or course materials.
Indicative outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No penalty • Warning as appropriate 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Honesty Education Module • Appropriate mark penalty (e.g., zero mark for affected questions) • Fail item of assessment or unit of study (0% - 49%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Registrar; and • Fail item of assessment or unit of study (0% - 49%)
Breach of rules, codes or policies other than the Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015 (see note below)					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breach of other rules, codes or policies, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) misuse of University's ICT resources and intellectual property (b) promoting or advertising commercial cheating service (c) facilitating misuse of University resources or property by a third party (incl. ICT resources, IP or venues).
Indicative outcome					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Registrar



NOTES

Educational Integrity Decision-Making and Penalty Guidelines 2018

Date adopted:	27 November 2018
Date commenced:	1 January 2019
	30 May 2022
Administrator:	Office of Educational Integrity on behalf of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
Review date:	30 May 2024
Related documents:	Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015
	Academic Honesty Procedures 2016
	University of Sydney (Student Appeals against Academic Decisions) Rule 2006 (as amended)
	University of Sydney (Student Discipline) Rule 2016

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
4	Amendment of indicative outcomes to match provisions in <i>Academic Honesty Procedures 2016</i>	30 May 2022