

Institution	Universal Higher Education (UHE)
Policy name	Academic Integrity Policy
Policy Governance	Academic Board

1. Introduction

Institutional reputation for quality is based on academic rigour and maintenance of high academic standards. High academic standards are based on the integrity of various processes in governance, learning and teaching, and support services.

2. Policy principles

UHE is committed to maintaining high academic standards in all its program and subject offerings and expects students to conduct themselves in a manner which is fair, honest, and consistent with the principles of academic integrity, particularly when undertaking assessment.

Programs at UHE promote ethical behaviour, which includes valuing and promoting truth, accuracy, honesty, accountability, and the code of practice relevant to the discipline or professional area.

The institution is committed to providing clear guidance and assistance to students to ensure that they understand the requirement to maintain academic integrity and are aware of the consequences of a failure to do so.

Any actions or practice by a student which defeat the purpose of assessment are regarded as a failure to maintain academic integrity and will be dealt with as student misconduct.

3. Policy Outcome

This policy is intended to:

- define and articulate the importance of maintaining academic integrity
- assist in identifying failure to maintain academic integrity
- outline the approach to the oversight of academic integrity at Universal Higher Education, including reporting, investigating, monitoring and accountability for academic integrity breaches and how such breaches are managed.
- outline what constitutes major, moderate, or minor cases of failing to maintain academic integrity, and the procedures for dealing with each.

4. Related documents

HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Academic Integrity Toolkit (2020).

TEQSA Guidance Note on Academic Integrity (2019)

TEQSA's Good Practice Note (October 2017)

Education Services for Overseas Students Legislative Framework (ESOS)

Student Assessment Policy

Student Code of Conduct Policy

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure–Students

Privacy Policy

Academic Integrity Breach Procedure Flowcharts

Case Report

Letter Templates for communication / notifying outcomes

Academic Integrity Register

5. Application

This policy applies to students undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate studies at UHE.

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Student Work	includes but not limited to words, data, computer codes, algorithms, calculations, artistic work, presentations, portfolios, templates, film, video, digital or electronic media designs or ideas, computer software, designs, sounds, images, etc.
Academic Misconduct	action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself.
Academic Integrity	honest presentation of academic work through acknowledgment of the work of others while developing new insights, knowledge, and ideas.
Plagiarism	practice of taking and submitting or presenting the thoughts, writings,, programs/coding, algorithms, presentations, artistic work, films, videos, electronic media designs of others with minor changes; misleading use of citations as though it is your own work.
Cheating	acting dishonestly or unfairly to gain an advantage or to assist another student to gain an advantage.
Contract Cheating	Occurs when a student submits work that has been completed for them by a third party, irrespective of the third party's relationship with the student, and whether they are paid or unpaid (Harper & Bretag et al 2018). Contract cheating involves getting someone else to complete part or all the work of a student and then submitting the work as their own.
Collusion	May occur when a student gets assistance from another student or person to cheat, plagiarise or engage in other forms of academic misconduct.
Copying	A form of plagiarism, using the same words or ideas belonging to another person's academic work and passing them off as a student's own.
Falsification	Falsification is the deliberate misrepresentation or forgery of existing information or documentation and representing that to be real.
Misstating	Making wrong or inaccurate statements.
Fabrication	The deliberate creation of purported or non-existent information or documentation, and the representation of that as actual data.
Assessor	The academic staff member responsible for an assessment and the recording, usually in measurable terms such as a grade, of the academic work of a student or students.

Gravity of Breach	Classified into three categories based on the severity of the breach. An important factor in determining the gravity of the breach is assessing whether intentional breaching of academic integrity has occurred, and in determining the proportion of the work submitted which has breached academic integrity.
Minor (Level 1)	<p>involves minor lapses in referencing and/or use of sources, with inexperience a contributing factor. Minor plagiarisms are mostly committed by new and inexperienced students (first year undergraduate students) who are not sufficiently aware of appropriate academic referencing skills.</p> <p>Instances of academic misconduct are deemed MINOR where the misconduct may reasonably be judged to result from careless practices and/or neglect of the specific guidelines relating to assessment requirements by students.</p>
Moderate (Level 2)	<p>means the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. Moderate level of plagiarism occurs when the origin of the material used is not appropriately referenced. It is a form of cheating and is a serious academic offence that may lead to failing the Subject.</p> <p>Level 2 plagiarism may include repeated occurrence of level 1 plagiarism.</p>
Major (Level 3)	<p>Instances of academic integrity breaches are deemed MAJOR where the breach may reasonably be judged to result from an intentional breach of ethical scholarship and/or deliberate disregard of the specific guidelines regarding plagiarism and cheating.</p> <p>Major Academic Misconduct includes but is not limited to collusion of all kinds; the provision of materials to another for the purposes of cheating or plagiarism; the deliberate OR persistent use of unattributed materials; any use of contracted materials.</p>
Turnitin	an online tool / text-matching software designed to assist staff and students to check the uploaded text of an assignment or academic work against a database containing web content, online e-journals and previously uploaded assessments.
Academic Integrity Committee	This is a standing committee established to conduct hearings and award penalties relating to major academic integrity breaches committed by students.

Appeal	The students have the right to appeal a decision made for alleged academic integrity breach in accordance with UHE's complaints and appeals policy and procedure.
Appeals Committee	Responsible for conducting an appeal hearing in the manner that it considers appropriate in accordance with the requirements of procedural fairness. The student is given a reasonable opportunity to appear before the appeals committee to respond to the allegation.

7. Failure to maintain academic integrity

Failure to maintain academic integrity includes, but is not limited to, the following.

(a) Cheating in examinations

Cheating in examinations includes any action or attempted action on the part of a student which might gain that student an unfair advantage in the examination. Common methods of cheating include:

- bringing into the examination unauthorised material
- having access to unauthorised written notes either on paper or another object, or on the student's body, during the examination
- unauthorised communication with others during the examination through speaking to others or via electronic means
- copying or reading another student's work during the examination.

(b) Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves representing another person's (or persons') ideas or work as one's own. It may also include resubmitting one's own work for another assessment item.

Common forms of plagiarism include

- direct copying, summarising, or paraphrasing another person's (or persons') work without appropriate acknowledgement of the sources (such acknowledgment must take the form required by the particular discipline)
- using or developing an idea or hypothesis from another person's (or persons') work without appropriate acknowledgement
- representing the work of another person (or persons') as the student's own work
- copying non-word-based material such as diagrams, musical score, audio-visual materials, artwork, plans etc. and presenting them as one's own work

(c) Other forms

Other forms of failing to maintain academic integrity include, but are not limited to

- giving, or providing for sale one's own work to another person, for copying or use by another person.
- misrepresenting, falsifying, misstating, or fabricating data, for the purpose of assessment.
- purchasing or otherwise obtaining assessment material through individuals, companies or web-based tools/services (contract cheating).
- collusion or collaborating with others where it is not authorised in the assessment requirements.

8. Determining the level of academic integrity breaches

Identifying a failure to maintain academic integrity

To avoid academic integrity breaches, students are required to submit their assessments online through Turnitin.

Teaching staff will normally identify potential breaches of academic integrity. If a teaching staff member suspects that a student may have breached the academic integrity policy, the program coordinator should be notified (teaching staff required to fill in an academic integrity breach report).

To assist in identification of potential breaches, subject lecturers may require students to authenticate their learning on the assessment item (for example, by showing notes/drafts/resource materials used in the preparation of the item, or practical based exercise).

For dealing with cases of failure to maintain academic integrity, it must be determined whether the case represents a minor, moderate or major breach.

The Subject lecturer (in relation to cheating in central examinations) is responsible for determining if a case is minor or major.

The following considerations can be used to assist in assessing whether the breach is minor, moderate or major:

- **Intention** - An important factor in determining the gravity of the breach is assessing whether intentional plagiarism has occurred, and in determining the proportion of the work submitted which has been breached academic integrity. e.g., was the breach intentionally done, with awareness that it was a breach.
- **Extent** – how much of the assessment item is in question (for example, a few sentences or several paragraphs); and what proportion of the marks for the entire subject this assessment item represents (for example, 10% or 50-60%) (impact of the academic integrity breach).
- **Level** – the level of the student in their program and how long has the student been at UHE (the experience of the student - e.g., first year undergraduate, postgraduate student, experienced scholar)
- **Knowledge** – the student's exposure to the accepted practices, and cultural norms (for both domestic and international students)
- **Discipline** –the accepted practices in the student's discipline and the extent to which these practices have been made clear to the student
- **History** – whether the student has been found to have breached the principles of academic integrity in the past (first, repeat or serial offence by the student).

When an academic integrity breach is confirmed by the Program Coordinator, the level of plagiarism should be determined under the following criteria:

(a) Minor cases (Level 1)

Instances of academic integrity breaches are deemed MINOR where the breach may reasonably be judged to have resulted from careless practices and/or neglect of the specific guidelines relating to assessment requirements by students.

Minor cases of failing to maintain academic integrity include, but are not limited to:

- incidental plagiarism (inadequate, incorrect or inconsistent citation and/or referencing of sources, paraphrasing too close to the original) including minor copying of material, such as copying up to a few sentences (note that this may sometimes be inadvertent, for example, if a student mistakes a verbatim transcript in their notes as their own words)

Level 1 academic integrity breaches may include minor lapses in referencing and/or the use of sources and the student's inexperience may contribute as mitigating factors.

Where it is determined that a minor breach of academic integrity has occurred, the Subject Coordinator should grade the student as appropriate to the criteria for the assessment item and provide an explanation if low marks have been given against specific criteria relating to appropriate referencing or acknowledgment of source material. No penalty is applied.

Process table for Minor (Level 1)

Process / Task	Responsible Officer(s)	Timeline for task completion
Report the suspected Academic Integrity Breach to the Program Coordinator (complete the Academic Integrity Breach Report)	Subject Assessor	Within 5 (five) working days of detection
Program Coordinator notifies Student of allegation (Use template -1 for MINOR breaches)	Program Coordinator	Within 5 (five) working days of receiving the breach report
Investigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the UHE's Academic Integrity Register for previous offences. • Notify the student of the penalty imposed (Use template -2) 	Program Coordinator	Within 5 (five) working days after receiving the breach report.
Internal Appeal (This step takes place only if the student decides to make use of the avenue to appeal the decision for academic	Academic Registrar	Within 10 (ten) working days after receiving the appeal letter from the student.

integrity breach) Appeal Hearing Notify the appeal outcome to the student.	Appeals Committee Chair of the Appeals Committee / Nominee	Within 5 (five) working days after conducting the appeal process. Within 5 (five) working days after conducting the appeal process.
External Appeal	Academic Registrar to follow up and provide evidence when requested by OSO	In the event of student lodging an appeal with the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) – 20 days after receiving the internal appeal outcome
Record Keeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record the information on the UHE's Academic Integrity Register. Save all evidence relating to the breach. 	Registrar / Nominee	Within five (five) working days after finalising the penalty outcome.

(b) Moderate cases (level 2)

MODERATE level of plagiarism occurs when the origin of the material used is not appropriately referenced. It is a form of cheating and is a serious academic offence that may lead to failing the Subject.

Moderate cases of failing to maintain academic integrity include, but not limited to: where the student makes use of someone else's work other than their own work and submit without the sources being appropriately referenced. Level 2 plagiarism may include a repeated occurrence of level 1 plagiarism.

Process table for Moderate (Level 2)

Process / Task	Responsible Officer(s)	Timeline for task completion
Report the suspected Academic Integrity Breach to the Program Coordinator (complete Academic Integrity breach report)	Subject Assessor	Within 5 (five) working days of detection
Program Coordinator notifies Student of allegation (Use	Program Coordinator	Within 5 (five) working days of receiving the

template -1)		breach report
Investigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the UHE's Academic Integrity Register for previous offences. • Notify the student of the penalty imposed (Use template -3 for MODERATE breaches) 		Within 5 (five) working days after receiving the breach report.
Internal Appeal (This step takes place only if the student decides to make use of the avenue to appeal the decision for academic integrity breach) Appeal Hearing Notify the appeal outcome to the student.	Academic Registrar Appeals Committee Chair of the Appeals Committee / Nominee	Within 10 (ten) working days after receiving the appeal letter from the student. Within 5 (five) working days after conducting the appeal process. Within 5 (five) working days after conducting the appeal process.
External Appeal	Academic Registrar to follow up and provide evidence when requested by OSO	In the event of student lodging an appeal with the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) – 20 days after receiving the internal appeal outcome
Record Keeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the information on the UHE's Academic Integrity Register. • Save all evidence relating to the breach. 	Academic Registrar / Nominee	Within five (five) working days after finalising the penalty outcome.

(c) Major cases (Level 3)

Instances of academic misconduct are deemed MAJOR where the misconduct may reasonably be judged to result from an intentional breach of ethical scholarship and/or deliberate disregard of the specific guidelines regarding plagiarism and cheating.

Major Academic Misconduct cases of failing to maintain academic integrity include, but not limited to:

collusion of all kinds; the provision of materials to another for the purposes of cheating or plagiarism; the deliberate OR persistent use of unattributed materials; any use of contracted materials.

Major academic misconduct is where significant collusion including contract cheating has occurred and could include impersonating another student during an examination, submission of the completed work of another person or purchasing the assignments and include repeated instances of academic misconduct.

Process table for Major (Level 3)

Process / Task	Responsible Officer(s)	Timeline for task completion
Report the suspected Academic Integrity Breach to the Program Coordinator (complete Academic Integrity breach report)	Subject Assessor	Within 5 (five) working days of detection
The Program Coordinator notifies Student of allegation (Use template -1)	Program Coordinator	Within 5 (five) working days of detection
Investigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the UHE's Academic Integrity Register for previous offences. • Notify the findings re: Level 3 Academic Integrity Breach to the CAO • The CAO informs the AIC 	Program Coordinator	Within 5 (five) working days after receiving the breach report
The AIC invites the student for AI breach hearing.	The AIC	Within ten (10) working days after receiving the breach report

<p>AIC Hearing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AIC invites the student for hearing (use template 3). The AIC notifies the UHE Academic Registrar of the Panel's decision. 	<p>The AIC</p> <p>The Chair of the AIC</p>	<p>Within five (5) working days after the hearing</p>
<p>The Chair of the AIC /Nominee inform the student the outcome (use template – 4)</p>		<p>Within five (5) working days after findings are communicated by the AIC</p>
<p>Internal Appeal (This step takes place only if the student decides to make use of the avenue to appeal the decision for academic integrity breach)</p> <p>Appeal Hearing</p> <p>Notify the appeal outcome to the student.</p>	<p>Academic Registrar</p> <p>Appeals Committee</p> <p>Chair of the Appeals Committee / Nominee</p>	<p>Within 10 (ten) working days after receiving the appeal letter from the student.</p> <p>Within 5 (five) working days after conducting the appeal process.</p> <p>Within 5 (five) working days after conducting the appeal process.</p>
<p>External Appeal</p>	<p>Academic Registrar to follow up and provide evidence when requested by OSO</p>	<p>In the event of student lodging an appeal with the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) – 20 days after receiving the internal appeal outcome</p>
<p>Record Keeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record the information on the UHE's Academic Integrity Register. Save all evidence relating to the breach. 	<p>Academic Registrar / Nominee</p>	<p>Within five (five) working days after finalising the penalty outcome</p>

9. Determination of Penalties

Imposition of an appropriate penalty is by an Authorised Officer (Subject lecturer, Program coordinator or Academic Integrity Committee) as outlined in the process tables and within the scope of penalties for each academic integrity breach level.

Penalty examples for each level is provided below and, in some cases, multiple penalties may be applied.

Penalties for Level 1:

- A verbal warning (informal) with no penalty applied
- Student given a written warning with no penalty applied
- Student's mark for the assessment is reduced to [MARK OUT OF MAXIMUM].
- Student asked to redo and resubmit the assessment by [DATE] without mark deduction.
- Student is asked to redo and resubmit the assessment by [DATE] with the maximum grade set to a 'PASS'
- Student is referred study skills support, for the Program Coordinator to assist with referencing.

Penalties for Level 2:

- The student's mark for the assessment is reduced to [MARK OUT OF MAXIMUM].
- Student is asked to redo and resubmit the assessment by [DATE] with the maximum grade set to a 'PASS' (for a maximum of 50%).
- Student is asked to undertake another form of assessment in line of the assessment work with a maximum grade of 'PASS' for the Subject.
- Zero marks for a specific component of the assessment task
- Zero marks for the assessment task

Penalties for Level 3:

- Referral to Student Support services / Counselling.
- Student is asked to redo and resubmit the assessment by [DATE] with the maximum grade set to a 'PASS'.
- Student is asked to undertake another form of assessment in line of the assessment work with a maximum grade of 'PASS' for the Subject.
- Student's assessment grade has been downgraded from a <enter current grade> to a <enter grade after penalty>.
- Student is awarded a 'FAIL' grade for the Subject.
- Student is suspended from the course enrolled in (if the breach is considered serious by the AIC).
- Student's mark for the assessment is reduced to [MARK OUT OF MAXIMUM].
- Student asked to redo and resubmit the assessment by [DATE] without mark deduction.
- Student is asked to redo and resubmit the assessment by [DATE] with the maximum grade set to a 'PASS'
- Student's qualification revoked (if the breach is considered serious by the AIC).

10. Appeals

Students are provided with the avenue to appeal the decision for academic integrity breach penalties awarded for levels 1 -3 through the internal appeals process (to be completed within twenty (20) working days).

The Academic Registrar will decide whether the application satisfies the grounds for appeal defined in this and other relevant policies or procedures to determine whether the appeal can proceed to hearing. Where eligibility criteria are deemed to have been met, the Academic Registrar will approve the request, advise the student accordingly and arrange for a hearing of the Academic Appeals Committee.

The Appeals Committee considers appeals on disciplinary matters.

If a student is not satisfied with the decision of the appeals committee, the student has provided with the avenue to appeal externally to the overseas student ombudsman.

11. Recordkeeping and reporting

Records must be maintained for minor, moderate and major cases of failure to maintain academic integrity.

Information about academic integrity breach is entered into the Academic Integrity Register, which is maintained by the Academic Registrar.

The Academic Registrar / Nominee and the Program Coordinators have access to information recorded in the Academic Integrity Register and the Academic Registrar / Nominee maintains the currency of records.

The Registrar must report annually to the Academic Board and to the UHE Board through the Acting Chief Executive Officer on how UHE has monitored, reviewed, and reported on strategies to promote academic integrity and minimise breaches of academic integrity.

12. Confidentiality

All investigations relating to the alleged academic integrity breaches and reported allegations will remain confidential as per UHE's Privacy Policy.

13. Review

The Academic Integrity Policy will be reviewed every three years, or more frequently as appropriate.