

Identifying and Preventing Breaches of Academic Integrity

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1.0 Purpose

This Procedure supports the *Student Academic Integrity Policy* and *Student Breaches of Academic Integrity Procedure* by outlining the ways in which breaches of academic integrity may take place in a range of teaching, student research and assessment environments, including online.

Additionally, students who fall within the scope of this procedure must also conduct all research in accordance with the standards of research conduct set out in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (Australian Code 2018) and supported by the University's *Responsible Conduct of Research Policy*. Students with a professional practice component to their program must adhere to the professional practice standards for their field.

2.0 Scope

This Procedure applies to all students of the University in all career levels, modes of study and locations, physical or digital, undertaking academic work/practice towards the completion of their program or, more generally, under the auspices of the University.

For the purpose of this procedure, the term 'student' includes:

- all enrolled students and Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates at the University
- students with Active Enrolment Status, including those who are not 'carrying load' and students on approved leave, including leave of absence, deferment or between enrolment periods.

3.0 Procedure

1. Academic misconduct involves the misrepresentation of any aspect of academic achievement by act or omission. This includes any behaviour by which a student seeks to gain an unfair or unjustified advantage in their studies.
2. When students breach academic integrity expectations in a way that goes beyond Incomplete Academic Practice, Academic Misconduct occurs. The *Student Breaches of Academic Integrity Procedure* establishes the rules, processes and decision-making authority for considering alleged Academic Misconduct. The *Research Integrity Breach Investigation Procedure* outlines the principles and processes for receiving, managing and investigating potential breaches of research integrity.

3.1 Responding to Academic Misconduct

1. It is important to think about student Academic Misconduct from four angles:

- a. What motivates it?
 - b. How can it be detected?
 - c. What evidence supports the judgement that Academic Misconduct has occurred?
 - d. How can it be minimised or prevented?
2. Key factors in reducing both the impetus and opportunity to commit Academic Misconduct, and therefore reduce its frequency, are:
 - a. appropriate assessment design, which rewards good academic practice and makes Academic Misconduct less useful and viable as an option;
 - b. the provision of early, frequent and easily accessible academic skills support;
 - c. early, clear explanation of academic integrity and Academic Misconduct to students;
 - d. awareness of the overall academic circumstances of students (i.e. having multiple assessments due simultaneously may push students who are not coping towards perceived 'shortcuts');
 - e. clear instructions to students on all assessment tasks and in the preparation of HDR milestones and the thesis, including guidelines for referencing, citing content and responsible use of artificial intelligence;
 - f. clear directions on required ethics, biosafety and data management processes to students undertaking research;
 - g. building a collaborative, not punitive, culture with students wherever possible;
 - h. ensuring that students struggling with courses or work can access time and assistance from academic teaching staff to help them meet their required learning;
 - i. communication between academic colleagues to help build consistency in approach, discuss emerging issues of concern and provide a unified position for students;
 - j. empowering HDR candidates with knowledge to ensure they are operating within defined research and candidature policy and procedure.
3. The table in 3.2 provides guidance on how Academic Misconduct can be detected, handled and proactively addressed. It is **not** a substitute for following the processes prescribed in the *Student Breaches of Academic Integrity Procedure*, which are the only processes that allow for penalties to be applied.

3.2 Identifying and preventing breaches of academic integrity

BREACH TYPE	WHAT IS IT?	HOW CAN YOU DETECT IT?	HOW CAN YOU PREVENT IT?
Typical classification			
Academic Filesharing <i>Incomplete Academic Practice</i> <i>OR</i> <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Academic filesharing is when a student shares any aspect of their assessment materials with other parties, including other students. This includes materials related to past year assessment tasks without the explicit permission of academic staff. This is distinguished from contract cheating in not being a paid transaction. However, students may barter materials. While students should not share assessment items without the explicit permission of academic staff, sharing notes with other students should generally be seen as a collaborative and mutually supportive act.	Academic filesharing may be detected by text-matching software. In the case of suspected filesharing from an external (non-Griffith) source, academics may consult known file-sharing websites (StuDocu, CourseHero, ThinkSwap, Student VIP, and Chegg.com), which crowdsource assessment materials.	Varying the detailed requirements of assessment (i.e. case studies, questions upon which the assessment is based) from one course offering to the next limits the utility of filesharing. Filesharing may be reduced by academic staff communicating to students clearly Griffith's expectations about document sharing, which may include assessment materials and other intellectual property produced by Griffith staff. Where staff identify that course materials, copyrighted materials and/or the Griffith logo have been uploaded to filesharing sites, they can contact the site owners to request that this material be taken down.
Assisting Plagiarism	Assisting Plagiarism occurs when a student assists another student to circumvent assessment aims through cheating,	Assisting plagiarism may be detected by text-matching software in the case of direct plagiarism.	Varying the detailed requirements of assessment (i.e. case studies, questions upon which the assessment is based) from one course offering to the next limits the utility of filesharing.

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Typical classification			
<i>Incomplete Academic Practice</i> OR <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	misrepresentation, plagiarism or solicitation. This includes by willingly sharing, whether directly or indirectly, their own work, giving others access to their own work, uploading to a file-swapping/sharing site or advertising the availability of their own work or someone else's work. It applies to work from current or previous course offerings. Unlike contract cheating, assisting plagiarism is not a paid transaction, although it may occur through bartering.		Academic staff should communicate Griffith's expectations about sharing assessment materials clearly to students, noting explicitly that it constitutes both plagiarism and collusion, even after the conclusion of a course.
Breach of HDR thesis examination procedures <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Breach of HDR thesis examination procedures occurs when a candidate fails to comply with the protocols for the examination process, including unauthorised contact with an examiner, as set out in the <i>Higher Degree by Research Examination Procedure</i>	Such breaches are typically detected by whistleblowers, including supervisors, examiners and peers.	Breach of thesis examination procedures can be prevented by clear expectations delivered by HDR supervisors to students before submission of theses for examination.
Cheating	Cheating, for instance, in examinations, tests and quizzes	Cheating may be detected by an academic employee or invigilator	Cheating may be prevented by vigilant supervision of assessments (exams, tests, vivas,

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<i>Academic Misconduct</i>	occurs when a student fails to comply with the requirements, conditions and instructions specified for their conduct in the assessment task, including: - communicating, or attempting to communicate, with a fellow student or individual who is neither a proctor nor a University employee - copying, or attempting to copy, from a fellow student, website or Artificial Intelligence - automating responses to questions using Artificial Intelligence - attempting to introduce, consult during the examination, or having in their possession, any unauthorised material or device - recording, transmitting or disseminating questions and/or answers to themselves or another person	supervising the examination, or by another student and brought to the course coordinator's attention. Signs that a student may have cheated in an exam, test or quiz may include: - a sudden jump in grades from previous assessments - prompts or AI-generated text within answers that address the student (i.e. would you like me to rephrase?) that are included in answers - uncharacteristic or illogical answers - AI-agent completed tests or quizzes may have unfeasibly short completion times. - a different student undertaking the assessment instead of the enrolled student - students with the same or extremely similar answers or mistakes.	performances) including appropriate checking of identity through student cards, noting that both the name and the photo match. Clear assessment instructions provided via the course site for the assessment sitting. Environmental controls (clear desks with only authorised materials, spacing between students) during in-person assessments. Active proctoring (observation of students during the assessment, walking around the room). Randomising question and/or answer order. Consider security needs and, where secure assessment is required, opt for a lockdown browser, online invigilation or a combination of a timed online exam with a monitored writing tool. A secondary assessment method, such as a viva, can act as a deterrent and/or ensure that the student has genuinely learned the content being assessed.

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Collusion <i>Incomplete Academic Practice</i> OR <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Collusion, where a piece of work not yet submitted for assessment is prepared by working closely with one or more individuals or in a group; it is represented as if it were the student's or candidate's own. Examples include: • producing a finalised piece of work meant for individual assessment together • sharing answers or giving access to questions and answers or completed assessment tasks • submitting as one's own work all or part of another student's work with the student's knowledge or consent.	Collusion can be detected through rigorous cross-marking of assessment items across classes. Inconsistencies within the assignment, such as different fonts or sizes or different writing styles within a single student's submission may be signs of collusion. A sudden and unexplained jump in grades may also point to collusion.	Staff should provide students, especially first year students, with clear assessment instructions, especially to distinguish elements of a task that are meant to be completed as a group from those that must be completed individually.

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	Students should not be prevented from legitimate collaboration so long as the submitted task substantially reflects their own work.		
Contract cheating <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Contract cheating is illegal in Australia. It involves acquiring or commissioning a piece of work that is not a student's own work and representing it as if it were by: - purchasing the assessment task from a commercial service, including internet sites, whether pre-written or specially prepared for the student concerned - employing a third party to construct HDR thesis content - submitting an assessment task produced by a third party, including a friend, family member, a fellow student, or a University employee.	Contract cheating may be detected by either a very low text matching or similarity scores (which typically indicates the document has been edited to avoid matching) or a very high text matching or similarity score (which typically indicates the document has been copied or shared). Document metadata or information from a monitored writing tool might show multiple authors, excessive or very little composition/editing time. References may be from inappropriate sources, often from another discipline, be falsified or entirely absent. Irregular formatting can indicate cutting and pasting.	Staff can help prevent contract cheating through the creation of course-specific assessments that vary from year to year, requiring students to show proof of the assessment development process across the course and, for HDR candidates and those writing dissertations, supervisors encouraging and engaging in timely drafting and feedback processes. Where students have been caught in an untenable situation by a contract cheating vendor (i.e. via attempted or threatened blackmail), it is important that students are supported to report and resist this criminal behaviour. Students should be reassured that while they may still incur an academic penalty, the University will offer appropriate forms of support in dealing with contract cheating vendors.

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		Students might be unable to answer simple questions about their submission.	
Fabrication <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Fabrication occurs when a student claims to have carried out research or investigations (tests, experiments, or observations) that have not taken place, makes up results or presents results not supported by evidence. This can also include citing or referencing non-existent sources or citing as evidence information not substantiated by source materials.	Staff should look for discrepancies in the data, data or findings that are very 'clean' without any expected statistical 'noise' or confounding information, difficulty replicating the data, or the use of images that appear to have been modified. Staff can use their knowledge of the field and/or look up suspicious references.	Clear expectations for investigations (tests, experiments and observation) conducted in assessments, HDR milestone and thesis preparation can help prevent fabrication. Education around normal or expected levels of ambiguity, imperfection or 'noise' data in the discipline or at a given stage of study can help students to calibrate their expectations and behaviours.
Falsification <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Falsification occurs when a student manipulates research material, equipment or processes or changes or omits/suppresses data or results without scientific or statistical justification, such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record. This would include:	Falsification can be detected through a close analysis of the assessment or research work by the marker or dissertation/HDR supervisor. As with fabrication, academic staff should look for discrepancies in the data, 'clean' data without any expected statistical 'noise' or confounding information, difficulty replicating the data, or modified images.	Clear expectations of tests, experiments and observation of conduct in assessments, HDR milestone and thesis preparation, online and in class can help prevent falsification.

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Inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) <i>Incomplete Academic Practice</i> OR <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Involves using AI tools, which can be used to generate content or responses for assessment or research work, in ways that are not permitted in the assessment instructions or, where allowed/required, without appropriate acknowledgement. AI and associated tools (e.g. agentic AI, avatars) being used to complete tasks on a student's behalf or create audio/video representations of the student in lieu of their actual attendance at an assessment task. AI-generated content cannot reliably be detected by plagiarism detection tools. Assessments vary in how they allow, require or prohibit students from using AI. The context of the	AI-generated outputs often contain inaccurate or falsified sources, overly generic or formulaic answers, terminology not taught or used within course content, references that are not contextually relevant / appropriate, distortions or overly 'neat' answers. These might be out of keeping with a student's other work. AI-generated images and videos may contain 'glitches' (repetition, errors, etc.) University-approved authorship validation tools can provide ratings and indications of whether a student has cut and pasted significant amounts of text into an assessment submission, editing time, etc.	• Assessment design appropriate to the context of the course is required. Gateway Courses within each program require secure / high-confidence assessment tasks. The inappropriate use of AI can be curtailed through: • open conversations between academics and students about the appropriate and allowable uses of AI for each assessment or research task and its limitations, including conversations early in candidature between supervisors and candidates about ethical use and acknowledgement of AI in research work and preparation of HDR milestones and the thesis • clear assessment instructions to students regarding the need to explicitly acknowledge the extent of any AI used and how to do this properly, including how to find relevant library support resources

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Typical classification	assessment (i.e. whether it is part of a Gateway Course) must be considered in determining how to respond. Where students are permitted or required to use AI to complete their assessment or in the undertaking and reporting of research work, inappropriate use might take the form of a failure to disclose the extent of use, the tools used, etc. This may be intentional or unintentional.	These tools vary in their accuracy depending on both the student and the assessment task. As such, these tools are a complement to, not a substitute for academic judgement.	• test or quiz questions that favour recent events/content or materials not available beyond the course site or materials • request that students show their Griffith student ID to confirm their identity before the assessment begins (do not commence or record until after the ID has been sighted), as this can cause an avatar to glitch • assessment design and criteria that reward the process over the product.
Misrepresentation <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Misrepresentation occurs when a student: • presents an untrue statement about attendance or participation in any learning activity (including work integrated learning) • does not disclose any information or matter where there is a duty to disclose such information • submits falsified documentation in support of an assessment application (assessment	Misrepresentation can be detected by verification of attendance, participation and assessment documentation by staff. Falsified documentation may show signs of digital or physical alteration, inconsistent fonts, etc. Alteration may also show up in document metadata.	Misrepresentation can be prevented through enforcing only reasonable and justified attendance and performance requirements in learning and research activities. Clear and proactive information about extensions, deferred assessments, late penalties and academic recovery provisions support students to make ethical choices.

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Typical classification	extension, deferred assessment, special consideration).		
Plagiarism <i>Incomplete Academic Practice</i> <i>OR</i> <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Plagiarism occurs when the work of another is represented, intentionally or unintentionally, as the owner's own original work, without appropriate acknowledgement of the author, creator or the source. This category of includes, but is not limited to: • self-plagiarism by duplicating the same or almost identical work for more than one assessment item without permission (often in the context of a student repeating a course) • copying ideas, concepts, research data, images, sounds or text • paraphrasing from a source text, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form without appropriate acknowledgement	Plagiarism can generally be detected using text matching software, which provides a report for word similarity. When interpreting these reports to identify incomplete referencing or plagiarism, staff should consider: • overall similarity score, as very high and very low scores require further investigation • the extent of material incorporated and any attempts at citation (or lack thereof).	Plagiarism can be prevented by providing guidance on how to correctly cite and reference work and how to find relevant library support resources. Staff should provide students, especially first year students, with exemplars of good academic practice that appropriately acknowledge the ideas, or academic works of others. Academics should support students in using and interpreting text matching software reports for assessments, milestone documentation and/or draft thesis chapters. Refer students to appropriate guidelines for professional editing: https://www.iped-editors.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Guidelines-for-Editing-Research-Theses.pdf

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Typical classification	- word-for-word copying, cutting or pasting statements from a single source or multiple sources or piecing together work of another and representing them as original work - submitting as one's own work all or part of another student's work.		
Over-editing <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Over-editing occurs when an individual other than the student takes responsibility for the work by editing language, structure and/or content such that there are significant changes to the content, meaning and/or presentation of the work. It may involve the inappropriate use of a professional editor in preparing a thesis or piece of assessment. Over-editing can also be carried out electronically using content creation tools, generative AI, spinning software and/or text rewriting.	Over-editing is typically an issue with long-form assessment items such as essays or dissertations. It may be evident through significant language changes between drafts or sections, significant variations between how students write in non-assessment contexts and their formal assessments or through reports from whistleblowers.	Clear assessment instructions, including noting the intent or context of the assessment will help students to differentiate between legitimate assistance (from individuals or tools) and over-editing. Requiring students to complete their work in an online, monitored environment may be appropriate for Gateway Courses. In the preparation of a thesis, HDR candidates must abide by the Guidelines for Editing Research Theses, published by the Institute of Professional Editors (IPED) and approved by the Australian Council of Graduate Research (ACGR).

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Typical classification			
Solicitation <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Solicitation occurs when a student requests, offers, encourages, induces or advertises for another person to write or develop assessments or other work on their behalf. This includes: • examination papers • model examination answers • examination questions • examination scripts • online quizzes • draft thesis chapters • published reports or papers • HDR milestone documents.	Solicitation is typically detected through reports from whistleblowers, which should, if possible, include documentation and descriptions (including screenshots) of what is being alleged to have occurred. Whistleblowers may be from external sources such as journal editors for externally published outputs.	Making students aware of the severity of this behaviour is essential, and it should be done early in a student's academic journey with the University. Refer students to appropriate guidelines for professional editing: https://www.iped-editors.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Guidelines-for-Editing-Research-Theses.pdf
Washing <i>Academic Misconduct</i>	Washing occurs when material written in another language is put through translation software such as Google Translate.	Washing may be detected by unusual or obscure word choice, punctuation and grammatical anomalies, and phrases or sentences that appear unrelated to the topic at hand or that do not flow.	A secondary assessment method, such as a viva, can act as a deterrent and/or ensure that the student has genuinely learned the content being assessed. For HDR candidates, use of milestones by supervisors as points at which the candidate is asked to defend their research work can ensure

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Typical classification		Washed texts are typically not picked up by software checks. If using a secondary assessment method, such as a viva, to confirm authorship, the student may not be able to rephrase or speak to the ideas in their submission. For assessments in additional language learning contexts, responses might be far more advanced and/or precise than is typical for the student.	that candidate has drafted the milestone documentation.

4.0 Information

Title	Identifying and Responding to Breaches of Academic Integrity Procedure
Document number	2026/0000528
Purpose	This Procedure supports the <i>Student Academic Integrity Policy</i> and <i>Student Breaches of Academic Integrity Procedure</i> by outlining the ways in which breaches of academic integrity may take place in a range of teaching, student research and assessment environments, including online. Additionally, students who fall within the scope of these guidelines must conduct their research in accordance with the standards of research conduct set out in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (Australian Code 2018) and supported by the University's <i>Responsible Conduct of Research Policy</i>. Students with a professional practice component to their program must adhere to the professional practice standards for their field.
Audience	Staff
Category	Academic
Subcategory	Learning & Teaching
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	This document aligns with Sustainable Development Goal/s: 4: Quality Education
Approval date	April 2026
Effective date	Trimester 2, 2026
Review date	2028
Policy advisor	Registrar
Approving authority	Provost

5.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation	Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
Policy	Admission Policy Assessment Policy Higher Degree by Research Policy Responsible Conduct of Research Policy Student Charter Framework Student Conduct, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Student Critical Incident Management Student Review and Appeals Policy
Procedure	Academic Progress Procedure Higher Degree by Research Academic Decisions Schedule Higher Degree by Research Academic Progress Procedure Research Integrity Breach Investigation Procedure Student Breaches of Academic Integrity Procedure Student General Conduct Procedure Student Review and Appeals Procedure
Local Protocol	Student Academic Integrity Management System