

Version	12.0
Short description	A policy on Avondale's commitment to academic integrity and the processes in place to investigate suspected breaches with fairness and consistency.
Relevant to	All students and academic staff
Authority	Academic Board
Policy owner	Provost
Responsible office	Office of the Provost
Date approved	9 October 2018
Date effective	9 October 2018
Review due	October 2023
Related Avondale documents	Assessment Policy for Higher Education Coursework Units Code of Conduct Examinations and Tests Policy
Related legislation	
Key words	Academic integrity, Academic misconduct, Plagiarism, Turnitin

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This document sets out Avondale University's (Avondale) policy on academic integrity and its intention to develop skilled graduates who act according to ethical principles and with integrity in their personal and professional lives. In preparing students to meet this aim, Avondale expects students to act with integrity in the performance of their academic work.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to all students in relation to academic activities associated with their studies at Avondale.

2.2 This policy does not apply to misconduct that is not related to academic activities.

3. REFERENCES

3.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- Assessment Policy for Higher Education Coursework Units
- Code of Conduct
- Examinations and Tests Policy
- Student Grievance and Appeals Policy

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 **Academic Integrity** involves undertaking academic activity in a responsible way so as to ensure that information and ideas are generated and communicated in an honest and ethical way and that use of other's ideas and writing are acknowledged.

4.2 **Academic misconduct** is undertaking academic activity, either deliberately or imprudently, that can result in unmerited advantage. It may take several forms including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating in examinations, falsification of data, and incorrectly ascribing authorship in group projects.

4.3 **Plagiarism** is the use of someone else's ideas or words as if they were your own. Plagiarism is one form of academic misconduct/dishonesty, and students are expected to avoid it by: doing their own work when independent work is required; acknowledging all sources of information and ideas; and acknowledging all group members when group assignments are required. Further, students should refrain from:

- a) **Duplication:** submitting an assignment, for assessment, which has been previously submitted in another unit at Avondale or at another institution; and
- b) **Copying:** copying another student's work or using the same words of the original text without acknowledging the source and placing direct quotes within quotation marks; and
- c) Copying or quoting from another source without acknowledging that source and appropriately identifying all quoted material; and
- d) **Paraphrasing** another person's work closely, with minor changes, but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained, without

acknowledging the source of the paraphrase. (Extensive paraphrasing, even when acknowledged, is not advisable); and

- e) **Collusion:** while in some situations students may be encouraged by the lecturer to critically analyse each other's assignments, sharing or using assignments in any other way is likely to be collusion and therefore a form of plagiarism. This includes lending an assignment to other students, paying another person to perform an academic task, acquiring another person's academic work for plagiarising purposes, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing another person's work and working with others but passing off the work as one's own.
- 4.4 **Minor plagiarism** is defined as uninformed omissions of details which are minor in nature and by themselves are unlikely to alter the student's overall grade (e.g., omission of a limited number of referencing details or incorrect referencing details). It is acknowledged that these minor omissions and errors are more likely to occur in the student's first semester on campus, and therefore, responses should be more educative at that time. Education and rehabilitation are the preferred course of action.
- 4.5 **Major plagiarism** is defined as an attempt to circumvent assessment requirements by drawing on unacknowledged sources in such a way as to improve the grade.
- 4.6 **Turnitin** is web-based tool through which assignments can be submitted to allow a text-matching service.
- 4.7 **Contract Cheating** is a form of collusion where a student outsources or asks someone else to produce academic work on the student's behalf. This can be a service for which a student pays or which a student receives at no cost to the student. There are formal and informal methods of contract cheating. Asking a friend to write your essay is contract cheating. Using services of a company to buy essays or use the services of a professional to write your essay is contract cheating. There are online contract cheating sites that openly advertise services to students. Any use of these services is regarded as 'contract cheating'. Work submitted through contract cheating, even if they cite all sources accurately, but is not written or produced through the student's own efforts is a breach of academic integrity and will receive severe penalties.
- a) Contract cheating may occur when a student submits work which they have not produced themselves, such as using:
- an online company that produces work for a fee for students
 - another student or non-student to produce the assessment task
- b) The assessment may be in the form of essays or reports, but can also include all kinds of other assessments, including those involving tutorial or lab-work or any other technical subject material.
- c) All work submitted for assessment must be your own work. Any outsourced work submitted for assessment, whether paid or unpaid, is considered contract cheating.
- 4.8 **Consequences of Contract Cheating**
- Contract cheating is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. A student found to have outsourced their work may not only receive a fail for the assessment task, but may be suspended from their studies or expelled from Avondale.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Students

- 5.1 Students are required to undertake the online Academic Integrity Module during their initial semester (or year-long teaching period where relevant) enrolment in a course.
- 5.2 Students who do not satisfactorily complete the Academic Integrity Module in the first semester/teaching period in which they are enrolled will have an encumbrance applied to their record which will prevent them from enrolling in the next semester/teaching period until AIM is completed. The encumbrance will be lifted only when there is evidence that the AIM has been satisfactorily completed. Late enrolment penalties still apply if the encumbrance has meant a student's unit enrolment occurs after the published deadlines.
- 5.3 Students are required to declare that the work is their own by attaching a cover sheet to all assignments submitted. The cover sheet should include the following declaration:

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STATEMENT

By checking the box below: I certify that this assignment is my own work and is free from plagiarism. I understand that the assignment may be checked for plagiarism by electronic or other means and may be transferred and stored in a database for the purposes of data-matching to help detect plagiarism. The assignment has not previously been submitted for assessment in any other unit or to any other institution. **I have read and understood [Avondale's Academic Integrity Policy](#).**

Agree

- 5.4 Where required by lecturers, students must submit designated assignments through Turnitin.

Staff

- 5.5 Lecturers undertake plagiarism prevention procedures in order to assist students to complete the required assessment tasks without pressure to plagiarise. For this reason all text-based assignments are required to be submitted via Turnitin unless explicitly waived by the School Committee because the nature of the assessment task is not suitable for that form of submission. Additionally, plagiarism prevention procedures include: rotating assessment tasks in subsequent teaching periods to prevent students using the work of previous students in the subject; coordinating the due dates of assignments so that assignment due dates are spread as evenly as possible throughout the semester; providing clear assignment instructions and the conditions under which assignments may be completed (e.g., with/without the use of calculators); refusing to mark assignments that do not have a properly signed cover sheet; and providing adequate feedback on all formative assessment work.
- 5.6 Students should be referred to the Academic Support Services at the first instance of risks [Please see the Referral for Academic Support Form].
- 5.7 Lecturers who suspect plagiarism will consult the Dean L&T in determining the level of the breach and appropriate action.

- 5.8 Where it is determined an Investigative Meeting is required to determine the nature of the alleged misconduct the Course Convenor will be advised to set up the meeting. The procedure for investigating the alleged misconduct is set out in the Procedure in Cases of Suspected Academic Misconduct. In summary, if the case of misconduct is a first offence and reflects poor scholarship, the case is determined as an Academic Assessment, warranting academic support for the student. If the breach of academic misconduct is serious enough to warrant a minimum of a failing grade, it must be referred to the Academic Registrar and processed through the Disciplinary Assessment procedure.

Avondale

- 5.9 Avondale assists students in respect to academic integrity by informing them how to act with integrity and discouraging all forms of academic dishonesty.
- 5.10 In its commitment to building scholarly confidence in students, Avondale makes several Academic Support services available. Tutoring Services are available for students in Academic Writing, and Plagiarism Tutorials and Referencing tutorials are conducted through the Library Support Services. Students should contact the Faculty Office to access these services.
- 5.11 <https://libguides.avondale.edu.au/tutors> Students should be referred to the Academic Support Services at the first instance of risks [Please see the Referral for Academic Support Form]

6. DEALING WITH CASES OF ALLEGED ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

- 6.1 The process for dealing with suspected cases of plagiarism distinguishes between academic and disciplinary aspects of the case:
- Academic Assessment is the responsibility of the School, whereas
 - Disciplinary Assessment comes under the jurisdiction of the Director, Student Administration Services in consultation with the Academic Discipline Committee, a subcommittee of Avondale's Learning and Teaching Committee.
- 6.2 Where cases reflect poor scholarship and are a first instance (except for serious breaches involving plagiarism), such cases must be referred forward to the relevant Academic Support Services through the referral process using the Academic Support Referral Notification form. For such cases, marks proportionate to the level of poor scholarship must be deducted.
- 6.3 Where cases are a second-time offence, compulsive or serious breaches of plagiarism (even if a first instance), such cases must be referred to the Director, Student Administration Services for a Disciplinary Assessment.
- 6.4 The Investigative Meeting by the School
- a) An investigative meeting is required in all cases of suspected academic misconduct within the School.
 - b) The purposes of the meeting are to:
 - determine the extent of the candidate's own work and to identify any unattributed sources;
 - collate all relevant evidence of academic misconduct

- decide whether an Academic Assessment or Disciplinary Assessment is necessary.

Process

- 6.5 The Course Convenor should establish in consultation with the Unit Convenor which form of plagiarism or collusion is suspected and start to assemble relevant information and evidence.
- 6.6 The Course Convenor should summon the student to an investigative meeting with the Unit Convenor present. In cases of collusion students should be brought in separately. The student should be allowed to bring a support person to the meeting.
- 6.7 The Faculty Officer/Campus Manager could be present for note-taking purposes.
- 6.8 The Course Convenor should conduct the meeting as follows:
- Explain the purpose of the meeting and provide the evidence.
 - Allow the student to offer an explanation.
 - Cite the context of the plagiarism policy as referenced in the Unit Outline.
 - Cite the student's declaration of original work.
 - Ensure that a formal record of the meeting is kept.
- 6.9 The investigative meeting should not be held at a time which might interfere with a student's revision or examination performance. In the case of submitted work it should be possible to organise the meeting ahead of the main examination period but otherwise the meeting should not be held until after the student's last examination.
- 6.10 Irrespective of whether the case is deemed to require Academic or Disciplinary Assessment, the outcome of the meeting and the documentary evidence of plagiarism together with the assessment task with clearly identified areas of plagiarism should be filed with the Faculty Office and with the Student Administration Services office.
- 6.11 At the end of the Investigative process, the proforma 'Alleged Academic Misconduct Process Documentation' must be completed and lodged with the Director, Student Administration Services.
- 6.12 In cases of Academic Assessment, the Course Convenor will convey the outcome to the student in writing.
- 6.13 In cases of Disciplinary Assessment, the Director, Student Administration Services will convey the outcome to the student in writing.

Possible Outcomes

- 6.14 No case to answer: the suspicions of plagiarism or collusion are unfounded.
- 6.15 No intention to gain unfair advantage but evidence of poor scholarship:
- a) advise the student that the final marks reflect the evidence of poor scholarship;
 - b) ensure that the student is provided with guidance on correct referencing and how to avoid plagiarism. Refer the student to the Academic Support Services in the Library. Use the Referral for Academic Support Form.
- 6.16 Suspicion of intention to gain unfair advantage. **Refer the case for Disciplinary Assessment to the Director, Student Administration Services.** Where it is evident that there was a deliberate attempt to gain an unfair advantage [unfair means suspected] or

that the facts are unclear or disputed, or the offence is extensive, the Course Convenor will refer the case and all supporting evidence to the Director, Student Administration Services for a Disciplinary Assessment with the following supporting evidence:

- the minutes of the investigative meeting; and
- the submitted work with the relevant sections highlighted as well as any other evidence compiled; and
- [in cases of plagiarism] a copy of the original material from which the work was allegedly plagiarised; and
- [in cases of collusion] all relevant material which gave rise to the allegation of collusion; and
- any declaration form submitted with the assignment regarding the originality of the work; and
- any additional information or mitigating evidence provided by or on behalf of the student.

Disciplinary Assessment

- 6.17 Disciplinary Assessment will be managed by the Director, Student Administration Services.
- 6.18 The Registrar will call for a meeting of the Academic Discipline Committee and present all the documentary evidence.
- 6.19 The Committee will recommend an appropriate penalty if the case of academic misconduct is proven.
- 6.20 An appropriate penalty may include:
- Failure in the Assessment item or a mark of zero
 - Failure of the Unit
 - Discontinuance from the Course
 - Disqualification from further admission to Avondale
- 6.21 The Director, Student Administration Services will provide a written statement of the outcome of the Disciplinary Assessment to the student within 7 days of the Disciplinary Assessment meeting.

Academic Misconduct Identified After Graduation

- 6.22 Avondale may revoke a graduate's degree where there is subsequent evidence that the graduate committed academic misconduct in an assessment task associated with requirements for that course

7. INCORRECTLY ASCRIBING AUTHORSHIP IN GROUP PROJECTS

- 7.1 Students may be required to work cooperatively with other students in exploring the issues underpinning concepts later required to be developed for submission as assessment items. In such cases, it is acknowledged that the ideas may be similar, but from these initial ideas students must develop their own assignment which should be their own independent work.
- 7.2 Students who have worked collaboratively in a group must acknowledge the other members of the group and indicate on the front cover of the assignment that conceptual

work was done in a group. The cover should then include an acknowledgement of the names of the other members of the group.

- 7.3 Alternatively students may be required to work together and submit an assignment that represents the work of the group. In these cases, the assignment is submitted as a joint assignment. Only one copy of the assignment should be submitted, and the assignment should include the names of both/all contributors. In such cases a single mark will be awarded and an identical mark will be recorded for all contributors.
- 7.4 Students who work on group projects and incorrectly ascribe authorship, other than in the ways indicated above, will be treated under the guidelines for resolving major plagiarism or minor plagiarism depending on the judgment of the relevant Head of School.

8. CHEATING IN EXAMINATIONS

- 8.1 Cheating in examinations is another form of intellectual dishonesty and students' attempts to circumvent assessment requirements by cheating in examinations will be taken seriously. Avondale is committed to conducting examinations in a manner to ensure academic integrity is maintained.
- 8.2 In supervising examinations invigilators and/or other persons in authority will:
 - a) refer suspected instances of cheating in examinations to the Director, Student Administration Services and these reports will be referred to the relevant Head of School; and
 - b) take action where candidates have unauthorized materials in their possession.
- 8.3 The School Examination Board will:
 - a) Investigate seriously all allegations of suspected cheating in examinations;
 - b) Take action to protect the reputation of Avondale and other students in cases where attempts to circumvent assessment requirements by cheating in examinations has been established.
 - c) Notify the Chair of the Academic Board and the Director, Student Administration Services of the circumstances and substance in relation to all cases of cheating in examinations;
 - d) The Chair of the Academic Board will ensure that appropriate records are included in the student's file in the Academic Office, appropriate persons are notified and appropriate penalties are implemented.
- 8.4 Penalties For Cheating In Examinations
 - a) Where there is clear evidence a student is using unauthorised material in the examination venue the Director, Student Administration Services, or nominee, has the right to remove the student from the venue.
 - b) Cheating in any form during an examination will normally result in a failing grade being recorded for the unit in question and may result in exclusion from the course of study.
 - c) Further instances of cheating in examinations will result in a fail grade for the unit and the student shall be asked to show cause why they should not be excluded from their course of study for a period of 2 years. Any student excluded from one course

of study will not be permitted to transfer any internal advanced standing to another course of study.

9. OTHER ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

9.1 Other academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a) Falsifying or fabricating data, including attendance records, or reports/records of laboratory, clinical or professional experience;
- b) Fraudulently changing academic records;
- c) Submitting false documentation with the intention of gaining academic advantage by completing assessment tasks later than scheduled;
- d) Submitting fabricated or fraudulent academic records to external organisations or bodies;
- e) Impersonating another student, or arranging for another person to impersonate a student, in an assessment task;
- f) Acquiring or distributing examination materials outside of the official examination processes and protocols;
- g) Using cross-credit between Avondale and a second institution to take out two separate awards, based on the same units, from each institution;
- h) Other academic activities or behaviour which bring, or are likely to bring, Avondale into disrepute.

9.2 Where a person has reason to believe a student has engaged in academic misconduct, he or she should submit a written report of the allegation to the Director, Student Administration Services who will investigate the matter. If the allegation is not substantiated it will be dismissed and there will be no penalty imposed. If it is established that misconduct has occurred, the matter will be recorded as 'Academic Misconduct' in the student's record in the SMS and appropriate penalties will be applied. The record will include the date, the nature and extent of the misconduct, and the action taken. Penalties may include a failing grade being recorded for any relevant unit/s, exclusion from the course of study, or exclusion from Avondale for a determined period of time.

10. PROCESS OF APPEAL

10.1 If a student found to have engaged in academic misconduct believes the decision has been made in error, he or she may appeal the decision under the Appeal Procedure (Academic).

11. ATTACHMENTS

- Referral for academic support
- Alleged academic misconduct process documentation
- Procedure in cases of academic misconduct FLOWCHART

Table of amendments

Version Number	12.0	Replaces Version	11.0, 4 December 2017
Implementation Date	9 October 2018	Scheduled Review Date	October 2023
Approving Body	Academic Board	Approval Date	9 October 2018
Policy Owner	Provost	Date first introduced	Unknown
Short description of amendment	<i>July 2022: updated branding, nomenclature and position titles, as relevant.</i> V12.0 Addition of contract cheating as a form of collusion		