Academic Integrity Breach Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Procedure describes the University's process for managing academic integrity breaches. The Procedure supports the Academic Integrity Policy and should be read alongside that Policy

Scope

(2) This Procedure has the same scope as the Academic Integrity Policy.

(3) It does not apply to graduates of Macquarie University or its past students. For alleged academic integrity breaches by previous Macquarie University students refer to Student Discipline Procedure.

(4) It does not apply to breaches of academic integrity by students engaged in research activities. For allegations of academic integrity breaches by students engaged in research activities refer to the Macquarie University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

Section 2 - Policy

(5) Refer to the Academic Integrity Policy.

Section 3 - Procedures

Reporting Breaches of Academic Integrity

(6) The University expects anyone who reasonably believes that a student has breached the Academic Integrity Policy to notify the University. Reports of breaches should be submitted in writing through the Feedback, Complaints and Misconduct Reporting online form.

Alleged Breach Process

(7) An Academic Integrity Officer will review the evidence and may decide to dismiss the matter if there is not enough cogent evidence.

(8) If the Academic Integrity Officer determines there is cogent evidence, they will send the student a notice that:

a. provides enough information about the alleged academic integrity breach to enable the student to respond,
b. invite the student to attend a meeting with the Academic Integrity Officer,
c. include all evidence of the reported breach, and
d. include an electronic copy of the Academic Integrity Policy and this Procedure or the address of the Academic Integrity Policy and this Procedure on the University website.

(9) The meeting should occur within ten (10) business days of the initial notification.

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(10) The University will provide the student with a reasonable opportunity to attend a face-to-face meeting.

(11) A student may bring a support person to the meeting where the role of a support person is to provide emotional support, rather than to present the student's case.

(12) If the student does not attend the meeting, a decision may be made in their absence. However, the Academic Integrity Officer can adjourn or postpone the meeting date, if they consider it reasonable in the circumstances.

(13) The Academic Integrity Officer will then review the evidence to determine either that:

a. no breach has occurred,
b. poor academic practice has occurred,
c. a breach has occurred and a sanction will be applied, or
d. a more serious sanction is appropriate. The Academic Integrity Officer will then report the matter to the relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member for review and action.

(14) If the Academic Integrity Officer determines that a breach has occurred, they will provide a written notice to the student, via their student email, with a copy to the Unit Convenor and/or the Course Director explaining the proposed sanction within five (5) business days of the meeting with the student.

(15) The student must advise the Academic Integrity Officer in writing that they either accept or reject the determination and proposed sanction within five (5) business days of the date on which the written notice was sent.

(16) If the student does not respond within ten (10) business days, the proposed sanction will be applied.

(17) If the student rejects the proposed sanction, the Academic Integrity Officer will refer the matter to the Faculty Integrity Committee or the Macquarie University College (The College) Integrity Committee.

Deputy Dean Review

(18) On receiving a referral from the Academic Integrity Officer, the relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member will review the matter and determine either that:

a. no breach has occurred,
b. poor academic practice has occurred,
c. a breach has occurred, and a sanction will be applied, or
d. a more serious sanction is appropriate. The relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member will then refer the matter to the Faculty or The College Integrity Committee for review and action.

(19) The Deputy Dean will provide a written notice to the student, via their student email, with a copy to the Unit Convenor and/or the Course Director explaining the determination and if appropriate, proposed sanction and the student's right of appeal within ten (10) business days of the determination being made.

Referral to a Faculty or The College Integrity Committee

(20) If a Faculty or The College Integrity Committee is to be convened, the relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member will establish this Committee consisting of:

a. the relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member as Chair,
b. one member of academic staff with academic integrity responsibilities, and
c. one nominee determined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Registrar.

(21) The reporter of the breach and/or Academic Integrity Officer who initiated the case may be invited to attend and present their concerns to the Faculty or The College Integrity Committee, but they are not permitted to serve as members of that Committee.

(22) The relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member will write to the student at least ten (10) business days before the Faculty or The College Integrity Committee is scheduled. The letter will:

a. provide enough information about the alleged academic integrity breach to enable the student to respond to it,
b. invite the student to attend the Committee meeting,
c. include all evidence of the reported breach, and
d. include an electronic copy of the Academic Integrity Policy and this Procedure or the address of the Academic Integrity Policy and this Procedure on the University website.

(23) Where a student is unable to attend the meeting in person, the meeting may occur via electronic means.

(24) A student may bring a support person at the meeting where the role of a support person is to provide emotional support, rather than to present the student's case.

(25) If the student does not attend the meeting, a decision may be made in their absence. However, the Faculty or The College Integrity Committee can adjourn or postpone the meeting date, if they consider it reasonable in the circumstances.

(26) The Faculty or The College Integrity Committee may determine that:

a. no breach has occurred,
b. poor academic practice has occurred
c. a breach has occurred, and a sanction will be applied, or
d. the student's actions constitute fraud or serious misconduct then the matter will be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Registrar for consideration under the Student Discipline Procedure.

(27) The relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member will inform the student in writing of the sanction within ten (10) business days of the Committee decision.

(28) The letter will be sent to the student via their student email and include:

a. the reasons for the decision and findings of fact,
b. a summary of evidence which the facts are based off,
c. any finding of misconduct,
d. any sanctions that have been applied,
e. the student's right of appeal,
f. an electronic copy of the Academic Integrity Policy and this Procedure or the address of the Academic Integrity Policy and this Procedure on the University website, and
g. a link to feedback portal.

(29) For international students who are suspended by the Faculty or The College Integrity Committee, the letter will also include advice that:

a. the suspension will be reported to the Australian Government which may result in the cancellation of their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) and affect their student visa status,
b. if they submit an appeal, their CoE will be maintained until the appeal is finalised, unless extenuating

circumstances apply.

(30) In addition to notifying the student of the Faculty or The College Integrity Committee decision, the relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member will communicate the sanction in writing and within ten (10) business days to:

a. the relevant Academic Integrity Officer, and
b. the Unit Convenor and/or Course Director.

Poor Academic Practice

(31) An Academic Integrity Officer, relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member, or Faculty or The College Integrity Committee may determine that a student has engaged in poor academic practice rather than having breached the Academic Integrity Policy.

(32) Where this occurs, the Unit Convenor and/or Academic Integrity Officer will warn the student that repetition of the same behaviour may constitute a breach and provide educative academic counselling to the student.

Sanctions

(33) Two levels of sanctions can be applied when a student has been found to have breached the Academic Integrity Policy:

a. level one sanctions may be applied by an Academic Integrity Officer, relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member, or Faculty or The College Integrity Committee, and
b. level two sanctions may be applied by a Faculty or The College Integrity Committee.

(34) Level one sanctions are:

a. a warning,
b. allow a corrected version of the assessment to be submitted,
c. allow a corrected version of the assessment to be submitted, with a maximum grade for the assessment being a Pass, and
d. zero marks in the assessment item.

(35) Level two sanctions are:

a. A direction to complete or recomplete the Academic and Workplace Ethics module,
b. failure in the Unit,
c. suspension from the course, for a period not exceeding one year.

(36) One or more sanctions may be applied by an Academic Integrity Officer, relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member, or Faculty or The College Integrity Committee.

(37) A poor academic practice or sanction decision must be proportionate to the type and circumstance of the breach. In deciding this, an Academic Integrity Officer, relevant Deputy Dean or equivalent staff member, or Faculty or The College Integrity Committee must take into account:

a. the nature, severity and impact of the breach,
b. the effect that the sanction will have,
c. any previous breaches the student has engaged in, and

d. the student's personal circumstances and level of experience.

(38) The Academic Integrity Breach Sanctions Matrix provides advice to those responsible for determining breaches and in doing so achieve a greater level of consistency in providing sanctions.

Appeals

(39) To appeal a decision made under this Procedure, see Academic Appeals Policy and Academic Appeals Procedure.

Record Keeping

(40) The University will store information about a reported breach and any actions taken including any sanctions in a central database. The information will be stored in accordance with the Records and Information Management Policy.

(41) The student's academic transcript will record a suspension from studies as a result of the sanction but will not record any further details about the sanction.

Academic Integrity Reporting

(42) Responsibilities for reporting are prescribed in the Academic Integrity Policy.

(43) An annual Academic Integrity Breach Report will be prepared by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Registrar.

(44) The annual report will include:

a. analysis of trends, instances and causes of academic integrity breaches,
b. commentary on the effective management and mitigation of identified academic integrity breaches,
c. trends in academic integrity breaches (covering at least three years),
d. actions taken with reference to:
    i. curriculum and curriculum design including unit offerings, course of study and faculties, and
    ii. student cohorts including entry pathway, location of study (including any third-party delivery sites), mode of study (internal or online), country of origin, status of actions, sanctions and time taken.

Resources

(45) Additional resources for staff and students are listed under the associated information section of this Procedure, including the Academic Integrity Breach Procedure Flowchart.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(46) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(47) Commonly defined terms are located in the University Glossary. Definitions specific to this Procedure are contained in the Academic Integrity Policy.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	21st February 2022
Review Date	21st February 2025
Approval Authority	Academic Senate
Approval Date	30th November 2021
Expiry Date	31st August 2022
Responsible Executive	Rorden Wilkinson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Officer	Pearl Rozenberg Director, Student Integrity and Compliance
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