
La Trobe College
Australia

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

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1.0 Academic Integrity

Throughout the duration of their studies at La Trobe College Australia, students are expected to conduct themselves in an honest and ethical manner, and in accordance with accepted standards of academic conduct. Forms of behaviour contrary to these standards are understood to be academic misconduct. Where a student is found to have breached standards of academic conduct they may be subject to penalties.

1.1 Principles and Objectives

La Trobe College Australia is committed to promoting and maintaining the highest standards of integrity in the conduct of teaching, learning and research (i.e. academic integrity). As a result, all members of the teaching and learning environment are responsible for the promotion and protection of academic integrity.

The approach taken by La Trobe College Australia to academic integrity is one that is appropriate to a learning organisation; as such its primary aim is to educate students about the expected conventions for academic writing and the appropriate use and acknowledgement of all forms of intellectual material, including authorship. Honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility are the core values that underpin the learning aims concerning academic integrity at La Trobe College Australia.

La Trobe College Australia expects students to conduct their studies honestly, ethically and in accordance with the standards of academic conduct outlined in this document, and by academic staff in the course of a student's study program. Specifically it is academic misconduct for a student to plagiarise, collude, cheat, make up or falsify research or data.

1.2 Definitions

- *Academic misconduct*: covers, but is not limited to, acts of plagiarism, cheating, fabrication of data or research, unauthorised collaboration [e.g. collusion], misrepresentation of student status, and academic qualifications falsification. Breaching any of the standards outlined in the Conduct During Examinations policy is also considered to be academic misconduct. In addition, where a person knowingly makes false allegations of academic misconduct against any student it will be considered that they have breached the standards of academic conduct.
- *Plagiarism*: is the act of representing the ideas or work of another person(s) as one's own original work, by copying or reproducing that work without acknowledgement of the source, and can include:
 - Word for word copying of sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources which are the work or data of other persons (including material from books, journal articles, thesis, unpublished works, working papers, seminar and conference papers, internal reports, Internet articles and publications, lecture notes or tapes, computer code, artwork, graphics or other material) without clearly identifying their origin by appropriate referencing;
 - Closely paraphrasing sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources without appropriate acknowledgement in the form of a reference to the original work or works;
 - Very closely paraphrasing (e.g. only changing a few words intermittently) sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources with appropriate acknowledgement: a teacher may decide this is plagiarism, even if a reference is given as the wording is too similar and no quotation marks are used;

- Self-plagiarising or reusing previously written work or data in a 'new' written product without letting the reader know that this material has been used elsewhere. Self-plagiarism occurs when a student submits a whole paper or a substantial portion of a paper to fulfil a course requirement, even though it has earlier been submitted to satisfy the requirements for another course taught by a different teacher;
 - Copying computer files in whole or in part without indicating their origin.
- *Collusion*: is the presentation by a student of work as his or her own which is in fact the result, in whole or in part, of unauthorised collaboration with another person or persons. Both the student presenting the assignment and the student(s) willingly supplying unauthorised material (colluders) are considered participants in the act of collusion. Examples of collusion may include:
 - Submitting work that includes material obtained as a result of significant assistance from another person(s), if that assistance does not comply with the instructions or guidelines set out by a lecturer or tutor or La Trobe College Australia;
 - Assisting or provoking another student to present/submit work that is not their own and which does not meet the instructions or guidelines set out by a lecturer or tutor or La Trobe College Australia;
 - Copying and submitting another student's work, wholly or partially, by a process of mechanical transformation, for example changing variable names in computer programs;
 - Copying and submitting another person's work as if it were the student's. If a student lends an assignment to another student and their assignment is copied and handed in by that student, both students will be penalised.
- *Cheating*: is any dishonest conduct in assessment. Examples of cheating may include, but are not limited to:
 - Taking unauthorised written notes into an examination whether on some object (e.g. dictionary) or on part of the body;
 - Communicating with others during examinations (whether by speaking, electronic or other means);
 - Having notes written in dictionaries;
 - Leaving notes outside the classroom to access later during the exam;
 - Looking at another student's paper during an examination;
 - Contributing little or nothing to a group task and claiming an equal contribution and share of the marks.
- *Fabrication of research or data*: is presenting copied, fabricated or improperly obtained data as if it were the result of laboratory work, field trips or other investigatory work. Examples may include:
 - Using previously published data;
 - Using falsified survey data;
 - Adjusting previously published data so it matches the argument for the assignment.
- *Misrepresentation*: is the act of presenting an untrue statement or not disclosing information where there is a duty to disclose in order to create a false appearance or identity. Examples includes:
 - Falsifying a testamur for the purpose of admission or an academic transcript for the purpose of obtaining more credit;
 - Falsifying a doctor's certificate for the purpose of gaining extensions, special consideration or deferred assessment.

1.3 Penalties

The Academic Review Committee, or a member thereof (usually the relevant Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager) is responsible for deciding on action to be taken on an allegation of academic misconduct and, where a student has been found to have engaged in a form of academic misconduct, may apply one or more of the following penalties:

1. An informal warning to the student with an emphasis on educational corrective action;
2. A formal warning to the student;
3. Requirement to attend compulsory academic skills workshop prior to resubmission of the assessment in which the academic misconduct occurred;
4. A mark reduction or a mark of zero [0] awarded for the assessment item in which the academic misconduct occurred;
5. A Fail [N] grade for the course within which the academic misconduct occurred;
6. Exclusion from enrolling in the program of study for a specified period of time;
7. Expulsion from La Trobe College Australia (readmission to La Trobe College Australia is at the discretion of the Academic Director on consideration of the student's case for readmission);
8. Any other academic penalty as decided by the Academic Director.

The functions of the Academic Review Committee may be carried out executively by the relevant Director/Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager, who may decide on an action to be taken on an allegation of academic misconduct, or refer the matter to a meeting of the Academic Review Committee for a decision.

Where a student is awarded one of the above penalties, a note will be placed on the student's file and a letter will be sent to the student. Where a student is found to have breached the standards of academic misconduct on more than one occasion and has previously been penalised as outlined in penalties 1 - 4, the penalty shall normally be exclusion from the program as set out in penalties 6 & 7, unless in the opinion of the Academic Director/relevant Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager there are mitigating circumstances.

1.4 Promoting Academic Integrity

In fulfilling its commitment to promoting and maintaining the highest standards of integrity, La Trobe College Australia, with cooperation of all members of the teaching & learning environment, will ensure:

- A collaborative effort is made to recognise and deal with plagiarism at every level from policy, through La Trobe College Australia procedures, to individual staff practices;
- Students are thoroughly educated about the expected conventions for authorship and the appropriate use and acknowledgment of all forms of intellectual material;
- Resources are available to assist students with appropriate approaches to referencing and citation;
- Approaches to assessment minimise the possibility for students to submit plagiarised material, while not reducing the quality and rigour of assessment requirements;
- Resources are available to support academic staff in teaching students the generic skills of critical thinking, analysis, interpretation and thesis development;
- Resources are available to support academic staff in teaching students expected conventions for authorship and the appropriate use and acknowledgment of all forms of intellectual material;
- The installation of highly visible procedures for monitoring and detecting cheating, including appropriate punishment and re-education measures;
- Plagiarism/collusion detection software is used primarily for developmental purposes, however also for detection purposes [Turnitin Software];

- Ethical and professional behaviour is modelled by La Trobe College Australia staff. Authority or position must not be improperly used and any conflict that may arise between personal interest and official duty is declared, in accordance with The Staff Code of Conduct.

1.5 Responsibility

Academic Coordinators/Academic Manager are responsible for ensuring that best practice in academic integrity issues are circulated amongst staff and students and for administering the Academic Integrity Policy.

1.6 Resources

La Trobe College Australia has a central repository of web-based resources with a single point of access for both students and staff related to academic integrity including the academic integrity policy, guidelines, practices and learning resources.

Resources are available to support academic staff in the following areas:

- Teaching students the skills of summarising and paraphrasing, critical thinking, analysis and the development of an argument, data collection, analysis and interpretation, referencing and citation;
- Planning assessment methods that discourage students from engaging in the activities of plagiarism, collusion, cheating and falsification of research or data.
- La Trobe College Australia also provides resources to support the decision-making processes of those with whom the responsibility of administering the Academic Integrity Policy has been vested.

The Academic Coordinators/Academic Manager of La Trobe College Australia are available to assist students with identifying the appropriate strategies to remediate conduct that falls outside of these standards. The Student Counsellor, is also available to support students who have allegations of academic misconduct made against them.

1.7 Strategies

La Trobe College Australia shall develop and implement a program of information dissemination about its position on academic integrity for staff and students, as follows:

- Students shall be advised of the Academic Integrity Policy at the commencement of their studies and reminded of this Policy at the start of each course they undertake as a continuing student;
- Students shall be advised via their Subject Outlines that the Academic Skills Advisor or Student Counsellor are available to support students to engage in ethical academic practices and to support them if an allegation of academic misconduct is made against them;
- La Trobe College Australia will provide all enrolled students with detailed guidance on academic integrity which includes the La Trobe College Australia requirements for referencing and acknowledging the work of others in presentation of a student work students (via the courses: Academic Communication 1 & 2, Foundations of Management and academic skill workshops);

- Students will be provided with access to plagiarism/collusion detection software for self-assessment and development purposes [see Turnitin Policy];
- La Trobe College Australia shall promote assessment practices that minimise the opportunity for plagiarism, and are consistent with best practice.
- La Trobe College Australia will enrol all students undertaking a diploma course at the college in a mandatory online subject, the Academic Integrity Module, designed, to educate students in matters of academic integrity. This includes informing students of staff and student responsibilities in this area, of the kinds of behaviours that can be considered academic misconduct, and of the college's policies and procedures relating to academic integrity.

1.8 Protecting Academic Integrity

Both staff and students have a responsibility for protecting the reputation and integrity of La Trobe College Australia by reporting any suspected breaches of academic integrity to the relevant Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager (being a member of the La Trobe College Australia Academic Review Committee). Observations of academic misconduct are to be reported in a timely fashion, preferably at the time of the occurrence, using the **Academic Misconduct Report Form**. La Trobe College Australia shall deal with a suspected breach of academic integrity or an allegation of academic misconduct quickly and with due regard for the principles of natural justice. Additionally, in order to avoid the possibility of improper use of student work, both staff and students have a responsibility to store work where it cannot be accessed by other students

1.9 Free Intellectual Inquiry

Academic staff must not at any time attempt to place any constraints on the research, analysis or critical thinking of students. Students must also not attempt to place any constraints on the research, analysis or critical thinking of fellow students. Examples of this include:

- Attempting to influence a students' choice of topic for an assignment within the scope of the objectives of the assignment and the subject
- Attempting to influence the conclusions drawn from an analysis which has reasonably applied the research and analysis techniques covered in the subject

If a student believes that they have been subject to an attempt to constrain free intellectual inquiry, they should lodge an Academic Grievance using the process specified in Section 5 of the Student Grievance Policy.

2.0 Academic Misconduct

Except where otherwise specified in a Subject Outline, the assessment task to be undertaken must be completed by students working individually.

While undertaking their studies at La Trobe College Australia, students must conduct their studies honestly, ethically, and in accordance with La Trobe College Australia's accepted guidelines of academic behaviour. Any form of academic behaviour that is in breach of these guidelines will be considered academic misconduct, and an academic penalty will be imposed.

2.1 Detection

Instances of academic misconduct may be detected through a variety of mechanisms such as the invigilation of examinations, or the comparison of assessment to either the work of another student or to that of a published author.

La Trobe College Australia will also use plagiarism/collusion detection software to assist with the identification of instances where assessment submitted by a student has been copied inappropriately from another source.

2.2 Allegations of Academic Misconduct

Step 1

An academic staff member of La Trobe College Australia who suspects that a student has been involved in some form of academic misconduct will investigate to verify the nature and characteristics of academic misconduct. Once this has been determined, the staff member will discuss the issue with the student concerned and outline the suspected occurrence of academic misconduct. On the basis of the discussion, the staff member may decide to:

- Take no further action if clearly no misconduct has occurred;
- Provide the student with a warning together with advice about what is acceptable academic conduct; or
- Make a formal complaint of academic misconduct to the relevant Academic Coordinator by setting out in writing the nature of the alleged misconduct and including any evidence in support of the allegation (refer to Step 2 below).
- Where a student is suspected of being involved in academic misconduct during a final examination, the Chief Examination Invigilator will notify the relevant Academic Coordinator.

Step 2

Where there is reason to believe that a student has been involved in some form of academic misconduct, the staff member must report the incident in a timely fashion to the relevant Academic Coordinator/Academic manager for investigation by completing the **Academic Misconduct Form**. All relevant information/reasons for the allegation of academic misconduct and any supporting evidence must be provided to the Academic Coordinator to ensure that allegations of academic misconduct are appropriately managed and thoroughly investigated.

A student who has reason to believe that another student has committed a form of academic misconduct shall report the matter to the relevant Academic Coordinator for investigation, providing reasons for the referral and any supporting evidence.

On receiving a complaint of academic misconduct against a student, the Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager may seek further evidence concerning the matter from other sources. The Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager shall advise the student in writing (via the student's email using a "login message") of the complaint, including a description of the grounds for the complaint of academic misconduct and any evidence related to the matter.

Before determining the action to be taken concerning a complaint of academic misconduct the Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager must contact the student advising them of the proposed action and provide them with an opportunity to respond to the complaint of academic misconduct. The response must be in writing and must be received within 7 days of the receipt of the notification of the complaint. In the course of providing a response to the allegation of academic misconduct, the student may request an interview with the Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager.

Having considered the complaint of academic misconduct in light of the evidence and the student's response, the Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager may take one of the following actions:

- Dismiss the complaint of academic misconduct. In this case no documentation concerning the complaint shall be placed on file;
- Provide the student with a warning together with advice about what is acceptable academic conduct;
- Where satisfied that academic misconduct has occurred, the Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager may impose a penalty as set out in the Penalties section above;
- Where further investigation is needed to establish the facts of the case, the Academic Coordinator/Academic manager may refer the matter to a meeting of the Academic Review Committee for a formal hearing.

In all cases the student shall be informed in writing of the decision of the Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager, including the reasons for the decision.

2.3 Dealing with Additional Complaints of Academic Misconduct

During the course of consideration of a complaint of academic misconduct, if an additional complaint of academic misconduct is received, that complaint shall be dealt with fully as outlined in Step 1 and 2 above.

2.4 Formal Hearing Concerning Alleged Academic Misconduct

La Trobe College Australia Academic Review Committee (hereafter referred to as the committee) may conduct a formal hearing into an allegation of academic misconduct. The student may attend the hearing or, if the student requests, participate in the hearing through telephone conferencing or similar facility.

- If the student declines to attend the hearing (or participate by other means) the hearing shall proceed in the absence of the student.
- The student may make a written submission to the hearing.
- The student may be accompanied at the hearing by a companion who is a member of La Trobe College Australia [e.g fellow student or Student Support Officer]. The companion is present as a support to the student and is not an advocate or spokesperson for the student. In exceptional cases, for example a student with a disability which affects communication, the Chair of the committee may give permission for the companion to speak on behalf of the student.
- Neither the student nor any other person participating in the hearing is entitled to be legally represented.

Prior to the hearing the committee shall provide the student with a copy of (or access to) all written materials and other evidence available to the committee.

The Academic Review Committee may call witnesses to give evidence at a hearing or may receive written statements of evidence. If the committee thinks it appropriate or if the student requests it, the committee may require persons to attend the hearing and answer questions. The student may ask questions of any witnesses in attendance at the hearing. The student may make submissions to the committee after the evidence of all witnesses has been given. The student's submissions may be presented orally or in writing.

As an outcome of the hearing, the committee may take one of the following actions:

- Dismiss the complaint of academic misconduct;
- Provide the student with a warning together with advice about what is acceptable academic conduct;
- Decide that the student is guilty of academic misconduct and impose a penalty as set out in the Penalties section above.

In all cases, the student shall be informed in writing of the decision of the committee, including the reasons for the decision.

2.5 Recording of Penalty

Where a penalty of exclusion, as provided for in points 6 and 7 of the Penalties section is applied, the Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager shall advise the Academic Director for the purpose of suspending the student's enrolment at La Trobe College Australia.

2.6 Appeal

Any student who has been penalised for academic misconduct has the right to appeal the penalty imposed. Appeals must outline the grounds on which the appeal is based and must be accompanied by supporting documentation where relevant.

An appeal must be submitted in writing to Appeals and Grievance Committee within seven (7) days of the notification of the penalty that has been imposed.

The Appeals and Grievance Committee will consider the appeal and notify the student, in writing, of the outcome of their appeal.

For further detail on the appeal process, please refer to Stage 3 of the Student Grievance Policy.

3.0 Turnitin Software

For the purposes of assisting students undertake their studies effectively and with integrity, La Trobe College Australia engages the facilities of plagiarism and collusion detection software. The software being used at La Trobe College Australia is Turnitin.

3.1 Rationale

The software is used primarily to assist in educating students in the protocols associated with academic writing. For that reason, students have access to the software for self-assessment purposes prior to the final submission of assignments. The software is also used in selected courses by La Trobe College Australia to detect plagiarism and collusion in final version submissions of students' assignments.

3.2 Implementation

Turnitin is used at La Trobe College Australia only in courses that are suited to its use. Essentially the software is used for assessment items that are undertaken by students independent of direct supervision. Examples of such assessment include: individual and group academic essays and reports completed largely outside of class time.

Where Turnitin is used within a course its use must be clearly specified within the Course Outline and students must be notified at the commencement of the semester that they are expected to

submit their work via the software and that their work will be stored by Turnitin and used in scans of future student submissions. Students names will not be used in the storage process. Institutional identification only, is used to store and record students work.

Training in the use of the software will be provided to all students and staff expected to use the software. In addition, support resources in the form of step-by-step training guides, will be available to students and staff via the student portal.

3.3 Responsibilities

The Subject Coordinators/Subject Lecturers are responsible for setting up the software each semester for use with a particular assessment item. It is expected that set-up and activation occur at least 3 weeks prior to the date for final submission of the assessment item. This will ensure that students have adequate time to submit their assessment drafts for self-assessment purposes, and to seek assistance with any necessary adjustments prior to final submission.

Once the software has been set up for use for a particular assessment item, all students should be notified in the assessment details and by their lecturer. Information regarding activation and closing dates, how to use the software, where to get support in using the software, and conditions for use and final submission must be included as part of the communication to students. Information regarding activation and use should also be given during lectures and tutorials. Academic Coordinators are responsible for ensuring information is communicated to students in an accurate, comprehensive and timely manner.

Where necessary (in particular for first semester courses) student training sessions on how to use the software for self-assessment purposes should be undertaken within tutorial classes where the software will be used. This will ensure that students are positioned to take full advantage of the developmental capacities of the software. In particular students should be advised of the level of 'match' considered inappropriate and the conditions under which matching may be considered a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy.

Subject Coordinators/Subject Lecturers are also responsible for monitoring the submission process while the software is activated for their course. Where problems occur with the software or submission process, Subject Coordinators/Subject Lecturers are to seek assistance from the relevant Academic Coordinator/Academic Services staff.

3.4 Post-submission

As soon as practical after the final submission date, teachers [or delegates] must undertake a review of the reports for all classes generated by the Turnitin software indicating match percentages for final versions of assessment items submitted by students. Assignments that are determined to exceed match standards as set out by the Academic Coordinator/Academic Manager for a particular assessment item are to be treated as problematic and investigated further by the relevant tutor and in accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy. Academic Coordinators/Academic Manager [or delegates] are responsible for advising tutors of problematic cases.

In situations where misconduct, as defined within the Academic Integrity Policy, is suspected tutors must implement action as specified within Steps 1 and 2 of the Academic Integrity Policy.

Until investigations have been finalised for suspected academic misconduct cases, a mark for the assessment item must be withheld by recording a 'result withheld' (W) mark on electronic results system.

3.5 Access to Software and Reports

All academic staff responsible for courses where Turnitin software is being used are authorised to have access to the items of assessment and match reports under their charge. This includes all lecturers, tutors and Academic Coordinators within a particular course. Relevant Academic Coordinators/Academic Manager are also authorised to have access to assessment items and reports for courses they are responsible for.

The Academic Skills Advisor is also authorised to have access to printed reports to assist students to improve their work in the draft stage, as well as in cases where students have been referred for remedial academic assistance after being found to have breached La Trobe College Australia standards of academic misconduct.

3.6 Student Obligations

All students undertaking assessment items that are subject to assessment by the Turnitin software, are required to submit the final version of their assignment to the software by the nominated due date as set out in the relevant course outline. Students are also required to submit a hard copy version of the same assignment by the nominated due date. In cases where students fail to abide by *all* submission requirements as set out by courses utilising plagiarism and collusion software, they will be subject to standard penalties applicable to failure to submit and/or late submission.

Policy Title	Academic Integrity Policy	
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Key Stakeholders	Academic Staff Students	
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