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Purpose

This procedure describes how potential breaches of academic integrity are reported, investigated and determined, and how appeals are processed.

Applicable governance instruments

Instrument	Section	Principles
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards), 2021	5.2 Academic and Research Integrity	N/A
Student Academic Integrity Ordinance	All	N/A
Statement on Academic Integrity	All	N/A

Procedure

1. Background

The objectives of this Procedure are to:

- a. operationalise the *Student Academic Integrity Ordinance* and the University’s Statement on Academic Integrity;
- b. assist University staff to manage and report on breaches of academic integrity; and
- c. ensure that:
 - i. academic integrity is central to the quality of all of student academic endeavour;
 - ii. all potential and actual breaches and sanctions are reported according to this Procedure; and
 - iii. this Procedure is applied with appropriate regard to discrete and professional handling.

This Procedure applies to:

- a. Academic Integrity Advisers, Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching Performance), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Appeals Panels;

Definitions and acronyms can be found at: <https://www.utas.edu.au/policy/policy-definitions>
 Related policy and procedures can be found at: <https://www.utas.edu.au/policy>

- b. Staff undertaking teaching duties, including casual staff;
- c. Exam Invigilators and Exam Supervisors; and
- d. Academic Integrity Office staff.

To ensure that academic integrity matters are managed consistently and efficiently, a suite of toolkits, forms and templates is available for staff use from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

The University will manage academic integrity matters in accordance with the timeframes set out in this Procedure and the *Student Academic Integrity Ordinance*. However, in some cases, where this is not possible, the student will be kept fully informed.

If there are risks or concerns as to the health, safety or wellbeing of a student involved in an academic integrity matter, the Safe and Fair Community Unit (SaFCU) must be advised (SaFCU@utas.edu.au). The academic integrity matter, however, must still be reported and managed in accordance with this Procedure.

2. Breaches of Academic Integrity

Breaches of academic integrity are defined in the *Student Academic Integrity Ordinance* and include conduct which undermines the principles of academic integrity, including but not limited to, plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating and misrepresentation. Further examples and definitions are available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

All staff involved in the assessment of student academic work, including assessors and exam invigilators, must be familiar with what constitutes a breach of academic integrity under the *Student Academic Integrity Ordinance*.

3. Reporting a Potential Breach

All potential breaches of academic integrity must initially be referred to the Unit Coordinator of the unit in which the potential breach has occurred.

The Breach Reporter (i.e., assessor/marker/staff member) must include the student/s details, brief summary/context of the potential breach, any related evidence, details of the way in which the breach was identified (i.e., breach maker) and any software used to identify the breach.

If multiple students are involved in the potential breach, the relationship between the students and the context in which the potential breach occurred must be explained.

The Unit Coordinator must then complete an online [Academic Integrity Breach Submission](#) which is forwarded to the relevant Academic Integrity Adviser.

A listing of Academic Integrity Advisers for each School and Institute is available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

Student results and final grades should be withheld pending an investigation and determination by an Academic Integrity Adviser.

If the potential breach relates to an exam, the Exam Invigilator must report it directly to the Exam Supervisor. The Exam Supervisor must complete an online [Academic Integrity Breach Submission](#) which is then forwarded to the appropriate Academic Integrity Adviser.

The Breach Submission must be accompanied by relevant supporting documentation which will depend on the type of breach, but may include:

- a. original assessment item/s submitted by the student
- b. unit outline and assessment task outline
- c. Turnitin Similarity report
- d. Turnitin Authorship report
- e. screenshots (e.g., social media, direct messaging, emails)

- f. document properties/metadata
- g. annotated code
- h. official documents (e.g., medical certificates, academic transcripts, placement reports)
- i. photocopies, photos, or video of any relevant materials
- j. photos or video of unauthorised materials taken into an exam
- k. photos or video of the student, if there is concern about the identity of the student sitting an exam
- l. Exam invigilator's report
- m. timelines of suspicious activity.

Further advice on the initial reporting of a potential breach is available from the Academic Integrity Office at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au.

If the potential breach involves an activity that is not directly related to a single piece of assessment but is counter to the expectations of academic integrity (e.g., obstruction/interference), the staff member should contact the Academic Integrity Adviser most closely related to the relevant organisational unit for advice.

If the potential breach involves a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidate, the Unit Coordinator will refer the Breach Submission to the Dean of Graduate Research. For all potential breaches relating to HDR candidates, the Dean of Graduate Research will assume the role of Academic Integrity Adviser. This applies irrespective of whether the alleged breach is in relation to a research thesis or a research coursework unit.

If the potential breach arises in a unit in which only HDR candidates are enrolled, the Dean of Graduate Research will then proceed and investigate.

If the potential breach arises in a discipline specific unit (i.e., an elective unit), the Dean of Graduate Research may refer the case back to the Academic Integrity Adviser in the relevant school. The Adviser should then investigate, make a determination and seek confirmation of breach level/sanction from the Dean of Graduate Research, prior to notifying the student.

4. Investigation Procedure for Academic Integrity Advisers

4.1. Sending the formal allegation letter

On receipt of the online Breach Submission, the Academic Integrity Adviser must conduct an initial assessment of the submission and supporting documentation on face value and determine whether the matter warrants a formal allegation. A submission will require no further investigation in cases where:

- a. there has been an administrative error (such as an incorrect student number or name); or
- b. there has been a misidentification of student/s (for example in a collusion case).

Perceived lack of intent on the part of the student is not a sufficient reason to not issue a formal allegation and may instead point to a low-level breach (poor academic practice) which, nonetheless, requires remediation and educative requirements.

The Academic Integrity Adviser may determine that a potential breach forwarded by a Unit Coordinator 'does not warrant further consideration' as the breach is relatively minor (e.g., a student attempted to reference appropriately but neglected to put quotations marks around two or three sentences due to carelessness). In this instance, the citation error could be rectified in a couple of minutes. In these types of cases, the Adviser should liaise with the Unit Coordinator and suggest appropriate and relevant 'educational advice only' to support the student's understanding of academic integrity.

However, if the student has repeated this behaviour significantly (e.g., multiple examples of inappropriate referencing throughout the task such as seen in a very high Turnitin similarity match) and it is apparent that the student did not have an adequate understanding of the conventions of academic integrity, then this situation would 'warrant further consideration'. In these types of cases, the student should be sent a formal allegation letter and invited to discuss the potential breach.

If the Academic Integrity Adviser decides that the Breach Submission and associated evidence does not warrant further consideration, they must provide a brief explanation to the Unit Coordinator for not progressing the case. The Adviser should also notify the Unit Coordinator that the student's results and/or final grades can be released.

If the Academic Integrity Adviser decides that the Breach Submission and associated evidence does warrant a formal allegation, they must, within 10 working days, inform the student by sending, via email, the following:

- a. an allegation letter using the approved template, which outlines the substance of the allegation.
- b. a copy of any supporting documentation/evidence related to the breach allegation; and
- c. a link to the [Student Academic Integrity Ordinance](#).

If the breach allegation involves multiple students, an identified and de-identified set of supporting documentation for each student must be provided. Each student involved should be able to see their own work in comparison to the de-identified work of the other/s. This should be attached to the allegation letter and sent to the individuals.

4.2. Holding meetings with students

Students should be encouraged to attend a meeting with an Academic Integrity Adviser and/or provide a written response to the allegation.

The student may be accompanied to the meeting by a support person. That person may be a friend, relative, peer or Tasmanian University Student Association (TUSA) student advocate and their role is to provide emotional support and reassurance.

A support person must not be a lawyer or other legal professional. A support person must not make any decisions for, or speak on behalf of, the student.

TUSA student advocates are available to provide advice and assistance to students. A student advocate may assist a student with an allegation by, for example:

- a. providing advice and assistance in understanding an allegation;
- b. explaining the options for resolving the allegation, including referral to appropriate parties;
- c. assisting a student to address a requirement; or
- d. attending any formal meetings relating to an allegation to support the student.

An Adviser may use a video platform if the student is unable to attend the meeting in person.

If the student chooses to attend the meeting, the Adviser should organise to meet within 10 working days. A written record of the meeting must be kept.

If there is a delay in the process, an email explaining the reasons for the postponement should be sent to the student which should also refer to the [Student Academic Integrity Ordinance](#) (information on time limits).

Advice for Advisers on conducting meetings with students is available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

4.3. Making a determination

The Academic Integrity Adviser must make a timely determination in order to minimise student concern and distress.

If the student does not take up the opportunity to attend a meeting, and/or provide a written response to the allegation within 10 working days, the Adviser may make a determination based on the report and supporting documentation alone.

An Adviser's decision should only consider whether or not that particular allegation has been substantiated.

If the Adviser decides the breach allegation has been substantiated, they must:

- a. provisionally assign a breach level (low, intermediate, or high); and
- b. provisionally assign an appropriate sanction and educative requirement using guidance available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

The Adviser must only then check for previous substantiated breaches related to the student, using the [Academic Integrity database](#).

If the student does not have previous substantiated breaches, the Adviser's provisional assignment of a breach level, associated sanction and educative requirement, will be confirmed.

If the student does have previous substantiated breaches, the Adviser may reassess and assign a higher breach level, although this may not necessarily be the case.

The category 'Not substantiated' or 'No breach' will apply in situations in which an Adviser decides that a case does 'warrant further consideration' yet after further investigation and/or a meeting with the student, 'No breach' was determined. This could be in situations such as misidentification of a student (e.g., in a collusion case) or administrative error (e.g., incorrect student number or name). Other cases in which a breach might be 'Not substantiated' is where, after further investigation and/or a meeting with a student, there is compelling evidence or explanation as to why there was actually no breach.

Academic Integrity Advisers should strive to achieve consistency in their decision-making to ensure that outcomes for students are equitable.

In some cases, the Academic Integrity Adviser may impose a sanction and educative requirement even if the student is not enrolled in a unit or course offered by the academic unit in which the Academic Integrity Adviser is employed.

Further advice on assigning breach levels and imposing sanctions and educative requirements is available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#) or by contacting the Academic Integrity Office at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au.

4.4. Notification of the determination

Once the determination is reached, including where no breach is found, the Academic Integrity Adviser must notify the student in writing, using the appropriate determination letter template (i.e., No breach; Low-level breach; Intermediate-level breach; High-level breach).

The letter must clearly state the type of breach, sanction, educative requirement and reasons for the determination (if the allegation is substantiated).

The letter must also advise the student that within 10 working days of the date of the notice of determination, they have the right to submit an appeal application to the University.

The Adviser should also notify the Unit Coordinator that the student's assessment results and/or final grades can be released.

4.5. Procedure for recommending enrolment-level sanctions

If the Academic Integrity Adviser decides that a high-level breach is substantiated and warrants an enrolment-level sanction (such as suspended temporary exclusion, temporary exclusion, permanent exclusion or revocation of award), confirmation must be sought from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) using the Request for Referral to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) letter template, available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

Recommendations for these sanctions, including all documentation relating to the breach, must be forwarded to the Academic Integrity Office at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au for progression through the confirmation process. Advisers will be notified of the outcome by the Academic Integrity Office.

If the student does not appeal against a high-level sanction with enrolment restriction (i.e., exclusion) within 10 working days of receiving a determination letter, the relevant Academic Integrity Adviser must send the student an Enrolment Restriction – End of Appeal Period Notification letter, available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

Further guidance on this process is included in *Appendix A – Process and guidelines for recommending temporary or permanent exclusion from study*.

5. Student Appeal Procedure

5.1. Appeal applications

Students may make an application for an appeal within 10 working days of the date of receiving the determination letter.

An application for an appeal must be submitted by the student by email to the Academic Integrity Office at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au using the Student Appeal Application Form, which is available from the [Student Academic Integrity website](#).

The application for appeal must:

- a. specify the date of the original determination, the student's details and the grounds on which the appeal is sought; and
- b. include a written explanation and evidence in support of those specific grounds.

The Academic Integrity Office must send the student an Appeal Application Acknowledgement letter confirming receipt of the appeal application and notification of the two-part appeal review process.

The Academic Integrity Office will forward the student's Appeal Application Form and associated documentation to the relevant Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching Performance or, in the case of an application from an HDR candidate, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) for consideration.

The Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance) or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) must make a timely decision as to whether the application discloses a reasonable basis on which any of the permissible grounds can be made out. Timeliness is particularly important in cases of high-level breaches involving enrolment restriction.

An appeal can be made on the following grounds only:

- a) manifestly excessive or inappropriate sanction for the level of breach; and/or
- b) evidence that the student did not have at the time of the decision, and which could not by reasonable diligence have been obtained at that time, and that would probably have affected the decision; and/or
- c) material procedural error that would probably have affected the decision.

5.2. If the student's appeal will not be heard

If the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance) or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) does not believe that there is a reasonable basis for appeal, the appeal will not progress. The basis for that decision will be communicated to the student using the Appeal Application Determination letter template. The letter template is available from [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

The Appeal Application Checklist, all supporting documentation including the appeal application and original determination letters must be forwarded to the Academic Integrity Adviser and the Academic Integrity Office at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au for record keeping purposes. This Checklist is available from [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#)

5.3. If the student's appeal will be heard

If the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance) or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) does believe that there is a reasonable basis for appeal, an Appeals Panel will be convened to consider the substantive appeal.

Each Head of College/Division will nominate at least ten (10) members of senior academic staff as members of an appeal pool that will be called upon to serve for an initial period of three years, except in the case of a small College where a smaller number of nominees may be proposed by the Head of College, where agreed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education). All pool nominations will be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) may nominate senior academic staff from another College to an appeals pool, if they believe it requires more diversity (academic or otherwise), or scale to transact appeals processes.

The Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching Performance will form an Appeals Panel of two members from the pool to hear the appeal, in addition to the Associate Dean themselves.

For Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) must appoint two Appeals Panel members from the Research Division to hear the appeal, in addition to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) themselves.

In all cases, the Appeals Panel members must not have had any prior direct involvement in the original breach allegation or determination. If there is a potential conflict of interest for any of the Appeals Panel members (i.e., prior connection with the student such as a teaching or family relationship) an alternative Chair (or other Panel member) must be nominated. Authorisation is to be stated in writing to ensure procedural fairness.

The Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching Performance/ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) may chair the Appeals Panel, or appoint an alternate Chair. The Appeals Panel Chair may select a senior academic member from another appeal pool to avoid a conflict of interest.

The Appeals Panel Chair should request a copy of all materials related to the matter from Academic Integrity Office and any additional materials supplied with the application for appeal by the student.

The Appeals Panel Chair may contact the student to request additional information, and/or invite them to meet with the Appeals Panel. The student should also be notified of their right to be accompanied to the meeting by a support person who is not a lawyer or other legal representative (for example, a TUSA student advocate). If the student chooses not to attend, they must be offered an opportunity to submit a written statement in lieu of attending.

A written record of any meetings with the student/s must be kept.

The Appeals Panel Chair may contact the Academic Integrity Office at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au to request additional information, for example in relation to precedents regarding breach levels and sanctions.

5.4. Appeal determinations

The Appeals Panel must make a determination within 10 working days of receipt of the substantive appeal.

The Appeals Panel may decide to either:

- a. uphold the appeal and direct that no sanction be applied; or

- b. uphold the appeal and direct that the sanction be varied; or
- c. dismiss the appeal and make no change to the sanction.

Once the Appeals Panel reaches a decision, the following will occur:

- a. relevant University staff will be advised; and
- b. the student will be notified in writing of the decision using the Appeals Panel Determination letter template. This template is available from the [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

In all cases, the student will be notified that:

- a. the decision of the Appeals Panel is final;
- b. that they may seek further advice from an external agency; and
- c. the outcome will be recorded.

The Appeals Panel must notify the Academic Integrity Adviser in writing of their decision. The Academic Integrity Adviser must notify the relevant Unit Coordinator if a change to the student's final unit result is required.

In the case of appeals against high-level breaches with sanctions involving enrolment restriction (i.e., temporary or permanent exclusion), the Appeals Panel Chair must send the student an Enrolment Restriction – Appeal Panel Determination letter. The letter template is available from [Academic Integrity staff intranet site](#).

The Appeals Panel members must then complete Section B of the Appeal Application Checklist and forward it and all supporting documentation including the appeal determination letter to the Academic Integrity Office at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au for record keeping purposes.

6. Further Support

Staff who have any queries about this Procedure can contact their Academic Integrity Adviser or the Academic Integrity Office for assistance at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au.

Further information on [academic integrity is available for staff](#).

Further information on academic integrity for students can be found at <https://www.utas.edu.au/students/learning/academic-integrity>.

Versions

<u>Version</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Approval Authority</u>	<u>Responsible Officer/s</u>	<u>Approval Date</u>
1	Approved	Provost	Director, Academic Quality and Standards	February 2020
2	Approved	Director, Academic Quality and Standards	Academic Integrity Manager	March 2020
3	Approved	Director, Academic Quality and Standards	Academic Integrity Manager	May 2020
4	Approved	Provost	Director, Academic Quality and Standards	7 December 2020
5	Approved (re-titled)	Provost	Director, Academic Quality and Standards	9 February 2022
6	Minor amendment approved (position title changes)	Director Governance and Compliance	Director, Academic Quality and Standards	16 May 2022

Appendix A – Guidelines for Recommending Temporary or Permanent Exclusion from Study

1. Confirmation of Enrolment-Level Sanctions

If an Academic Integrity Adviser decides that a high-level breach is substantiated and warrants an enrolment-level sanction (such as temporary exclusion, suspended temporary exclusion, permanent exclusion or revocation of award), confirmation must be sought from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) using the 'Request for Referral to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)' letter template (E1).

Recommendations for these sanctions, including all documentation relating to the breach, must be forwarded to the Academic Integrity Office at academic.integrity@utas.edu.au for progression through the confirmation process. Advisers will be notified of the outcome by the Academic Integrity Office.

2. Points to Consider when Recommending a High-level Breach with Enrolment Restriction:

Is the student international or domestic?

Under Australian government legislation, the University must report the temporary or permanent exclusion of an international student visa holder from the University to the Department of Home Affairs. Once the Department of Home Affairs has been notified, the student visa holder will have 28 days to either provide a new Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) or leave Australia. For this reason, the determination letter used in these cases includes additional support information for students.

One option, instead of a fixed-period of exclusion, is a suspended temporary exclusion. This means that the student receives an 'Zero mark/NN for the unit' in which the breach occurred but can continue studying in other units unless there is a further future breach. If any future breach is substantiated, the original period of exclusion is applied immediately as well as any further sanctions for any additional breach.

At what point in the semester was the sanction determined?

If imposing a temporary exclusion for a fixed period, it is important to consider when the student will be eligible to return to study. It is advisable to decide on a period (i.e., number of months) of exclusion that allows the student to be able to enrol in the next suitable study period/beginning of following semester (as appropriate).

The following points are included in the messaging that lets students know when they are able to return to study:

*The **[X]-month** temporary exclusion period started on **[INSERT DATE]** being the date of the original determination. The temporary exclusion period will end on **[INSERT DATE]**.*

*This means that you are eligible to enrol in Semester **[X]**, **[YEAR]**, on **[INSERT DATE]**, if you so choose.*

A temporary exclusion for a fixed period or a permanent exclusion are effective from the date of the original determination letter. The following grades will be shown on a student's academic record for both a temporary exclusion and a permanent exclusion:

Unit in which the breach occurred: NN (Fail)

All other units in the semester at the time of the determination: WW

If the breach occurred after the census date in the semester, the student will still be required to pay fees for all relevant units.

3. What sanctions and grades will be applied and by whom?

Any serious high-level breach with an enrolment restriction should incur a 'Zero mark/NN for the unit' regardless of how much work the student has already completed at the date of the original determination.

For situations of temporary and permanent exclusion, the Academic Integrity Office will request that Student Systems and Administration place a sanction of:

NXT (temporary exclusion); or

NXP (permanent exclusion)

on the student's academic record once a high-level breach with an enrolment restriction has been confirmed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

The Academic Integrity Office will only activate an NXT or NXP sanction after the 10-day appeal period has ended (if the student does not apply for appeal). If the student does apply for appeal, the Academic Integrity Office will only do this after receiving an appeal application determination from the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching Performance) (i.e., if an appeal application has not been successful).

Unit Coordinators/Course Coordinators should continue to request and apply a grade of 'Zero mark/NN for the unit' in which the breach occurred. The Academic Integrity Office will request that Student Systems and Administration apply a grade of WW (withdrawn without academic penalty) for all other units in which the student is enrolled at the date of initial determination letter.

In some cases, it may be necessary for the Academic Integrity Adviser to notify Unit Coordinators/Course Coordinators in the other units in which the breach *did not* occur of a student's temporary or permanent exclusion and that the student will receive a WW grade for these units.