

ACADEMIC HONESTY: POLICY & PROCEDURES (FOR USP STUDENTS)

Policy Number:	3.4.2 [Senate S2/11/3.1]
Responsibility:	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning, Teaching & Student Services
Date approved:	3 rd August 2011 [Senate meeting 2/11]
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Reference:	Policy on Academic Dishonesty S2/11/3.1
Related Policies:	University Discipline Ordinance and Regulations for Students [will add URL]_ and the University Copyright Compliance Guidelines [will add URL]

1.0 OVERVIEW

This policy is designed to inform and provide guidance to students and staff on the issue of Academic Honesty at the university.

Academic dishonesty occurs where students use dishonest practices (such as cheating or plagiarism) in carrying out academic work (coursework, assignments or examinations). Minor academic offences are dealt with in the faculties. Serious cases are referred to the Student Disciplinary Committee which reports to Senate.

Plagiarism and dishonest practice in course work and examinations are serious offences for which offenders will be penalised.

The Assessment and Associated Regulations contained in the USP Official Handbook and Calendar provides the framework for the treatment of plagiarism and dishonest practice in course work within the University.

2.0 SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to all students who are enrolled in a USP COURSE which forms part of a USP academic programme.

2.2 The implementation of this policy and the signing of the University Code of Academic Honesty by the student will serve as a deterrent to academic dishonesty by students and will guide staff in the procedures by which students found engaging in such activities may be dealt with in line with the guiding rules and regulations of the University.

2.3 As a direct consequence the quality of student work will improve as they take responsibility for their learning following the guidelines of formal writing including the use of proper referencing. This will also guide conscientious staff action in the area of academic writing as well as in dealing with cases of academic dishonesty. Staff will also take responsibility for the dissemination of information to students regarding USP rules and regulations.

3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 USP does not condone academic dishonesty. All students are required to prepare and plan adequately for assessment tasks and ensure academic honesty in their coursework.
- 3.2 All written work submitted for a course, except for acknowledged quotations, must be expressed in the student's own words. Students must not submit coursework that has been completed dishonestly using any of the dishonest practices described below.
- 3.3 The University will ensure that all students receive the University Policy of Academic Honesty before they are required to sign online, the University Code of Academic Honesty (Appendix 1).
- 3.4 Every student enrolled in every course and programme offered by USP is required to sign the University Code of Academic Honesty (Appendix 1) prior to commencing his/her first course and comply with the rules and regulations of the University as contained in the Official USP Handbook and Calendar.
- 3.5 It is the policy of the University of the South Pacific to penalise students who are proven to use dishonest practices in carrying out their academic coursework and examinations.
- 3.6 Where a member of USP's academic staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a student is guilty of academic dishonesty in coursework, assignments, research theses or examinations one or more of the penalties detailed in 6.0 below may be imposed.

4.0 ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic Dishonesty includes plagiarism, collusion and cheating when preparing coursework, assignments, research theses or sitting an examination.

4.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's creative work and using it as your own – without explicitly giving credit to the original creator. Work copied without acknowledgement from a book, from another student's work, from the internet or from any other source is plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes the following:

- Copying of the published or unpublished words of another writer without acknowledging the source using acceptable reference citation methods. This includes 'cutting and pasting' from internet sources and 'lifting' of sentences, ideas and sections of a textual source.
- Lifting or cutting and pasting extracts without quotation marks or appropriate acknowledgement of sources.

- Paraphrasing of content and ideas without proper acknowledgement of the source.
- Mention is made of taking of and use of the published or unpublished words, and later refers to a textual source. It is suggested that the use of images, diagrams, photographs and material from blogs and social networks should also be included.
- Copying part of or all of another students' assignment. In this instance 'student assignment' refers to a piece of academic work submitted for assessment purposes for any course, in past or current years at any educational institutional including USP or other University.

4.2 Collusion

Collusion means working with someone else to deceive or mislead to gain an unfair academic advantage. It includes;

- Submission of a paper that has been written by an author other than the author credited for that piece of writing. This includes the use of paid services of a student, or any other person that has been solicited for that purpose.
- Facilitating or enabling another student to plagiarise in any way.

4.3 Cheating

Cheating involves acting in any way that directly contradicts the explicit rules and guiding principles of that form of assessment. It applies to any form of examination including short tests, quizzes and final examinations.

Cheating includes (inter alia):

- Doing anything to gain an unfair or illicit academic advantage in an examination;
- Possessing, referring to or having access to any material, 'crib' notes or device containing information directly or indirectly related to the subject matter under examination other than what is explicitly approved for examination purposes;
- Using a cell phone to communicate with any other student or person inside or outside the examination venue;
- Copying from another student in a test or examination; enabling another student to cheat in a test or examination;
- Soliciting a person to sit a test or final examination in place of the student enrolled; sitting a test or final examination in the place of another student;
- Manipulation of scores in tests or examination or in any other form of assessment; and
- Enabling another student in any or a combination of any of the above.

5.0 PROCEDURE

The internal process to be followed for academic honesty is outlined below:

5.1 Plagiarism or Collusion

- a) When a marker suspects a student of plagiarism or collusion, the piece of academic work **MUST** be brought to the attention of the course coordinator concerned.
- b) The course coordinator will endeavour to locate the sources from which this student has plagiarized. When satisfied that the student has plagiarized, the coordinator will collate the evidence of the breach for record purposes. It will include a copy of the academic work and a list of sources, page numbers and/or copies of the plagiarized sources.
- c) The student will be notified and issued with an official letter stating the allegations giving him/her the opportunity to present his/her case.
- d) If the coordinator is satisfied that the student had engaged unknowingly in such behaviors, he/she may implement a penalty according to 6.0 below.

5.2 Cheating

Every effort must be made to ensure that an acceptable test, examination and assessment environment is provided for such tasks. This includes an uncrowded adequate seating arrangement and test supervision during such tasks.

- a) A student who is found in breach of the rules and regulations of the assessment task assigned shall be answerable initially to the coordinator of the course. The supervisor of the activity shall remove the student from the assessment task at the point of discovery and make a written complaint to the coordinator of the course.
- b) A proven case of cheating will be penalised according to the schedule in 6.0 below

5.3 Mandatory use of Turnitin – plagiarism detection software (see AS2/11/11)

- a) From Semester 1, 2012, students are required to submit all written work in an appropriate format (not pdf) through *Turnitin* via Moodle online to check their work for originality and to ensure that appropriate referencing and citation is used.
- b) Students are actively encouraged to use Turnitin to check drafts of their written work to improve their writing and guard against unintentional plagiarism.
- c) All *Turnitin* reports will be reviewed. A score of 20% or more on Turnitin will trigger a discussion between the course coordinator and student with consequences if plagiarism is proven.

In some cases work with a score of 20% can still contain significantly plagiarised content i.e. 10-15% from one source, to which penalties will apply if proven.

6.0 PENALTIES

1. A suspected case of academic dishonesty will be reported in writing to the course coordinator, Head of School, and Dean of Faculty.
2. The penalties imposed for proven cases of misconduct vary, based on the seriousness of the case and range across they include but are not limited to:
 - Written reprimand of the student;
 - Requirement that the student complete further work, or repeat work, for the course;
 - Deprivation of credit for a course, or for a component of assessment of the course, to which the academic misconduct relates;
 - Cancellation of any previously-credited pass in a course associated with the offence;
3. Significant and repeat offences will be referred to the University's Student Discipline Committee, which can:
 - Impose a fine not exceeding \$500FJD
 - Prohibit the student from using any of the University's library and computing network facilities for a period not exceeding twenty-eight days;
 - Recommend to the Vice-Chancellor that a student's enrolment be suspended for any period and on terms considered necessary by the committee;
 - Recommend to the Vice-Chancellor that the student's enrolment be terminated, i.e. expulsion from the University.
4. When a finding of misconduct is made against a student, this finding is recorded on his/her student record AND in a Register of Deliberate Academic Misconduct (see Appendix 2 example from University of Auckland, a suggested model for USP).
 - A Register of Deliberate Academic Misconduct records the details of all cases where students have been proven to have engaged in deliberate academic misconduct in their coursework and/or examinations, and have received an academic penalty as a result;
 - Details of each case are recorded on a paper form, which includes a student declaration, and the student receives a copy of the completed and signed form once the case is closed. Information from the form is then entered into the electronic Register;
 - After a deliberate offence is confirmed, the Register will be consulted to assist in determination of an appropriate penalty. The Register will be able to identify repeat offenders, with the risk that these students will receive more severe penalties for repeat offences;

- Use of the Register is covered by strict protocols. Staff access is limited to a small number of authorised users, and there is no student access: The record of offence will normally remain in the Register until one year after the student graduates.
5. Students are permitted to apply for a review of any academic penalty to the Student Discipline Committee or, if the penalty has been imposed by the Student Discipline Committee itself, to an ad hoc committee of the Academic Standards and Quality Committee of the University;
 6. This revised policy and procedures supersedes the USP Plagiarism Policy of (S1/11/3.2) Dated: 13 April 2011) and should be read in conjunction with the University Student Discipline Ordinance and Regulations and the University Copyright Compliance Guidelines.

Appendix 1

CODE OF ACADEMIC HONESTY **Valuing the Educational Experience: Upholding Academic Excellence** **The University of the South Pacific**

As a student, I agree to uphold the rules and regulations of the University of the South Pacific (USP). In pledging my agreement to this Code of Academic Honesty, I will strive to uphold the highest standards of excellence in accordance with the core values of integrity, honesty and ethics. In so doing, I embrace my position within the university community and will strive to embody USP values.

Specifically, by signing this statement;

I declare that:

- I have read the USP Academic Honesty: Policy and Procedures (S2/11/3.1) and;

I agree that:

- I will abide fully by the USP Academic Honesty Policy (S2/11/3.1), and
- I will accept full responsibility should it be proven that I have violated this policy.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Student ID#: _____

Date: _____