

What is Academic Misconduct – Definitions and Examples

Academic misconduct is any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. This includes a wide variety of behaviours such as cheating, plagiarism, altering academic documents or transcripts, gaining access to materials before they are intended to be available, and helping a friend to gain an unfair academic advantage.

Types of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source, for example:

- Wholesale copying of passages from works of others into your homework, essay, term paper, or dissertation without acknowledgment.
- Use of the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment.
- Paraphrasing of another person's characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor, or other literary device without acknowledgment.

Self Plagiarism:

Where a person presents text, ideas or data from their own previous scholarly work or work submitted for assessment, in a different context, as new work, without acknowledging the other work as the source.

Collusion

Collusion happens when more than one student contributes to a piece of work that is submitted as the work of the individual. For example:

- Where a person collaborates with another person to prepare assessment work, beyond the extent of collaboration specifically permitted by the instructions for the assessment task. Where no instructions about permissible collaboration are provided, all of the work must be the student's own or acknowledged as another person's work. Use of learning and study skills support services provided by the University is not considered collusion.
- impersonates another person to sit or complete an assessment task, or by recording the other person's attendance at a class or activity when the other person is absent
- collaborates with another person to enable cheating to occur, or
- deliberately or by not taking reasonable care enables another person to cheat

Exam Cheating

- Taking unauthorised materials into the exam. This can include notes (including ANY information written on a part of your body or clothing), documents, or non-permitted devices.
- Talking or communicating with another student during the exam
- Having another person sit the exam for you
- Through dishonest behaviour before the examination, the student obtains access to the exam question paper
- The student aids or abets another student to cheat

- Otherwise acting in a way that could provide wrongful advantages in connection with assessment or compulsory activities

Contract Cheating

Where one person pays another person or service, or offers them some other inducement, to write or develop part or all of their assessment work that they then person presents as their own work. This can include asking someone else to sit an exam for you or having them write an essay, report or some other kind of assignment, which is sometimes referred to as 'ghostwriting'.

You can be accused of contract cheating if you:

- buy a completed assignment from a tutoring or ghostwriting company
- ask a partner, friend or family member to write part or all of an assignment for you
- pay a private tutoring company to coach you on how to complete an assignment
- submit 'model' assignment answers provided by a private tutor or tutoring company
- get someone to sit an exam for you
- sit an exam for someone else
- buy, sell or swap completed assignments or assignment answers via 'sharing' websites or social media platforms like Facebook and WeChat.

Research Misconduct

Research misconduct may occur in contexts where a student is carrying out a research project or publishes an output from a research project. Behaviours that constitute research misconduct in such a context include:

1. fabrication, falsification or misrepresentation of results
2. plagiarism (as defined in clause (27)e. and f.)
3. misleading attribution of authorship
4. use of others' intellectual property without acknowledgment or with insufficient acknowledgement
5. failure to declare and manage conflicts of interest
6. failure to manage research funds responsibly
7. falsification or misrepresentation to obtain funding
8. conducting research without appropriate written ethics or safety approval, or that deviates significantly from the research process which received written ethics or safety approval
9. risking the safety of human participants, the welfare of animals or harm to the environment
10. deviations from the University's code for the responsible conduct of research that occur through gross or persistent negligence
11. wilful concealment or facilitation of research misconduct by others or
12. repeated or continuing breaches of the University's code for the responsible conduct of research, particularly where the person has previously received counselling or specific direction to avoid such breaches.

Research misconduct does not include honest errors that are minor and unintentional, or honest differences in interpretation of data.

False Information and representation

Fabrication is the use of invented or misrepresentative information. Fabrication most often occurs in the sciences, when students create or alter experimental data. Listing a source in your works cited that you did not actually use in your research is also fabrication.

- Furnishing false information in the context of an academic assignment.
- Failing to identify yourself honestly in the context of an academic obligation.
- Fabricating or altering information or data and presenting it as legitimate.
- Providing false or misleading information to an instructor or any other University official.